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**A SPIRITUAL STRATEGY
FOR CROSS-CULTURAL MISSION
IN AFRICA
A CHINESE MISSIONARY'S
PRACTICAL PROPOSAL**

BY

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Summary of Thesis

For all effective and successful ministries that are pleasing to God, whilst it is always important to found our work on sound biblical theory, theology and missiological knowledge, it is equally important for us to place due emphasis on the spiritual aspects. Clearly, all spiritual work must be conducted spiritually and we need to wait upon our Lord for His support. Consequently, the writer attempts to elaborate on the "Spiritual Strategy" which he employed behind all his work.

Chapter 1 gives an introduction of the theme of this thesis and provides some background information concerning the Chinese writer Paul Chiang.

Chapter 2 describes the Chinese cultural and religious background. The first part of this chapter outlines the Chinese country, people, history, philosophy, cultural background and major religions. The second part introduces the Chinese church history. It gives a brief account of how the Western missionaries came to China and why the Chinese rejected the gospel initially. It goes on to describe how the church has grown in spite of persecutions and how opportunities have arisen for Chinese Christians to participate in cross-cultural mission work. This chapter hopes to encourage Chinese churches to play a more active role in world mission.

As we review church history, we knew that the Jews took the first baton for world mission. The Europeans then took over and the North Americans were third in picking up the rein. Now, as we are approaching the ultimate showdown, the Chinese should boldly carry the last baton for world mission. To assume this important role in order to fulfill the great commission of Jesus Christ, the Chinese would have to act as cross-cultural missionaries.

The rapid growth of the Chinese Church since 1977 has no parallel in church history. By 1990, there were already some 30-75 million Christians in China. It is widely known that about 1/5 of the world population today is Chinese. Therefore, if all Chinese round the world were converted to Christianity and if each converted Chinese can successfully evangelize four other people, then the entire world will become Christianized. One of the underlying thoughts of this postulation is that our Lord will utilize all races to fulfill His commission in His time. In particular, He is going to mobilise people from the Third World to reach out to the remaining parts of the world.

Chapter 3 focuses on the life of the Gbandi tribe of Liberia. It describes the characteristics of this tribe and covers the various aspects of mission work amongst them. This chapter also makes comparison amongst the different approaches adopted by missionary groups working in the same region. Understandably, such differences could be quite significant as different missionaries originate from a multitude of nations, cultures as well as having varying denominational backgrounds.

Chapter 4 presents a case study of Chinese missionary working in Indian and Black South African communities. The spiritual strategy that has been developed by them for mission work will be described here. Such strategy covers the training of disciples of Jesus Christ, as well as efforts made in relationship building. In the chapter, it explains how a Prayer Mountain strategy was adopted for uniting the body of Christ and for waging spiritual warfare. Amongst other work, outlines of how a "March for Jesus" had been organized was also mentioned.

In Chapter Five, the writer describes some of his major underlying biblical thoughts and elaborates, as applicable, relevant issues arising from case studies. Inter alias, he covers miscellaneous aspects such as: mission theology, Kingdom mind for world mission, Paul's mission theology, form and meaning, cross-cultural mission through incarnation, practical theology by intercession prayer for unity and revival etc.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE CHINESE MISSIONARY WORK AMONG THE GBANDI TRIBE OF LIBERIA AND THE INDIAN MUSLIM PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this introductory chapter the author gives an overview of the thesis, deals with the motivation for the study and places it in context.

1.2 CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One the writer gives a brief account of his personal cultural background. He also presents an introductory outline of the theme of this thesis.

1.3 CHAPTER TWO – THE CHINESE FACTOR

In Chapter Two, the writer highlights the background of Chinese Christianity as well as the possibility for Chinese churches to participate in the world mission effort. The following aspects get attention:

1.3.1 Why Focus on the Chinese in this Research Study?

Almost all reference books on the topics of anthropology, cross-cultural study, missiology, church planting in cross-cultural contexts, worldview etc. are produced by Westerners. Chinese wrote almost none of them. As a result, most books reflect the Western perspective and worldview. It is high time to hear a Chinese perspective in the matter.

The author wanted to provide Chinese missionaries with an indigenous perspective on the practice of world mission. Also, in the context of the University of Pretoria and more specifically in the Faculty of Theology, this is the first study of its kind coming from a Chinese missionary, Chiang, who is reading missiology.

This thesis is based on the author's participation in two African contexts; his work in the Gbandi tribe of Liberia and that of the Indian areas of South Africa. In a sense, these will function as laboratories in which present and future Chinese missionaries may think about and practice their unique ministry. Case studies of these two contexts will follow in Chapters Three and Four.

It should be pre-empted here that the way of thinking and the writing style of the author will be different from that of Western writers. The way the missionaries immersed themselves in the different situations was also different. The readers are therefore requested to read this thesis with an open mind.

1.3.2 Why this Thesis? The Goal of the Study

Dr Thomas Wang, the erstwhile Chairman of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation (LCWE), also the founder of the Chinese Coordinating Centre of World Evangelisation (CCCOWE), who also preached in Taipei, Taiwan CCCOWE Conference in 1978 said:

“The Jews first took the baton for world mission. Then the Europeans took over and the North Americans were the third. Now, towards the final moment, the Chinese will carry the baton for world mission”.

Dr Andrew Gih who preached in Kau-shuon, Taiwan also said in 1972:

“We know that about 1/5 of the world population is Chinese. If all Chinese in the world were converted to Christianity and if each converted Chinese can successfully evangelize four other people, then the entire world’s population will become Christianized. The Holy Spirit may well choose this very fast route to spread His salvation to all the nations of the earth in the last days”.

Chiang was 20 years old when he first heard this vision. He loved the Chinese and he loved the Chinese churches. The question was in which way could he show his love for the Chinese Churches? As “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35), Chiang realised that if he wished to be a

blessing to the Chinese churches, the first thing he should do was to offer himself for world mission. In turn he believed that God would bless the Chinese churches. "After Job had prayed for his friends, the LORD made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:10). This was Chiang's justification for giving his life to West Africa in 1982.

A passage from the Book of Genesis prompted Chiang to become a missionary. The Lord said to Abraham:

"Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." So Abraham left, as the Lord had told him (12:1-4).

Abraham received abundant blessing from generation to generation, not because he became a pastor or a prayer warrior, but because he submitted to a special calling for World Mission. Chiang's prime aspiration and personal adage of "May the Chinese become a blessing for all nations" has been his motivating force.

Since 1982, and for the next 8 years, Chiang lived and worked in Liberia for SIM, the former Sudan Interior Mission. He was the first Taiwanese missionary that worked amongst black people in villages where there was

neither water nor electricity. He lived with the locals and together they had to dig for water and use kerosene lamps. During that time he also learnt the language of the Gbandi tribe. Due to the breakout of the Civil War in Liberia in 1990, he had no option but to leave the country.

From Liberia he moved to South Africa to work amongst Indian Muslims and black people from squatter camp areas. For the past 10 years the Chiangs' work concentrated mainly on the bringing of the gospel to the Muslim people as well as the imparting of evangelism skills to the existing churches. Chiang currently teaches at the Faith Bible College and ICBM (International College of Bible and Mission) as well as teaching Bible classes at the Moses Marian High School in South Africa.

Unlike most Taiwanese missionaries who prefer to work amongst immigrant Chinese and who do not like working among other races, Chiang felt called to cross-cultural mission work.

1.3.3 The Focus of this Study

This study is a critical evaluation of the spiritual strategy used by missionaries in Africa. More specifically, the question of how a Chinese missionary go about doing cross-cultural ministry work? What method or spiritual strategy can be used to effectively reach the people living in the rural Gbandi area of Liberia, or the Muslim people living in the Indian suburb of Lenasia in South Africa?

The work of reaching out to a rural tribe with the gospel is not new to missiologists or to the Western churches. However, this is no doubt a very new and special subject for the first Chinese missionary working in Liberia. The astronaut Armstrong who first arrived at the moon, was quoted as saying: "One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind". Similarly, it may have been a small step for Pastor Chiang to work in Liberia, but this was a big step in the mission history of the Chinese Churches. Chiang's prayer is that this action may serve as a great challenge to the Chinese churches as well as his future Chinese successors. The basic purpose of this study therefore is to encourage the Chinese Christians around the world – from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore – to start cross-cultural mission work.

In Taiwan, those who teach Missiology are mostly white missionaries. In general, the students tend only to study for exams and have no intention of engaging in any real life missionary work. They seem to be under the misconception that missionary work is only for white people but not for them. As a matter of fact, most missionaries would indeed have told the Chinese churches something like this: "You don't need to go out. You just preach to your own people and it would be enough". One can understand this because about 50 years ago only 1% of the Chinese population in Taiwan was Christian. One can also say that missiology as a focus of study did not play such a major role, given the high population figures of unconverted Chinese in China itself. When Chiang visited churches in Asia he found that the Asian Christian society desperately need someone with many years of field experience in missionary work and knowledge of the subject, in order to teach in the local Bible Colleges. Chiang feels a responsibility to teach missiology in Bible Colleges. He would

be glad to pass on his field experience in order to train and guide the next generation to become missionaries.

1.3.4 The Emphasis on “Spiritual Strategy”

Missionaries usually try to achieve their goals through the use of anthropological understanding, cross-cultural studies and their missiological insights. This would entail the building up of relationships with the local people in order for these people to trust and feel at ease with the missionary amongst them.

Presuming the writer was working in a white area, within Western culture, his strategy would perhaps have concentrated more on theory or science. However, the writer soon realised that in the African and Indian Muslim areas people are very deeply involved in witchcraft. He found that the usual theory is not enough in these contexts. He realised that he needed an expansion of strategy, which he calls “Spiritual Strategy”.

This study will therefore not follow a traditional and well-tested path, but will instead introduce another dimension. In other words, for the purpose of this thesis and during his work as a missiologist, the author has coined the term “Spiritual Strategy” for missionaries to succeed in foreign contexts. The gospel supports him in this regard too - “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12).

The training that Jesus gave his disciples could probably be regarded as the first Bible College for teaching World Mission. After three and half years these disciples had all graduated from Jesus' 'Bible College'. Although they were keen to start their ministry, Jesus wanted them to wait a little longer. Why? They needed further preparation before going out into the world. What they needed was "Spiritual Power". "I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). In Acts: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth" (1:8).

Whilst we need biblical theory, theology and missiological knowledge as the foundation for our ministry, we also need to wait upon our Lord for support. That is what the writer implies by his term "Spiritual Strategy". Spiritual work should be done in a spiritual way.

1.3.5 The Purpose of this Thesis

- **Firstly, to encourage Chinese Christians for world mission**

One of the purposes of this thesis is to encourage and help Chinese missionaries to overcome and break through cross-cultural and traditional barriers. If Chinese become cross-cultural missionaries, they would play an important role in fulfilling the great commission of Jesus Christ.

- **Secondly, for this thesis to be a practical missiology**

The writer has employed his invaluable 20 years of missionary life-work and

understanding and has systematised this in the thesis. The information used here is not pure theories that people dreamed up by stationing themselves in libraries for days, without knowledge of what is happening in the outside world. This study is also unlike the research results that were obtained by chemists or computer experts who locked themselves up within a laboratory or in front of a computer. We note that the Bible did not commend the beautiful mouths, or the beautiful lips or faces or heads, but “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news” (Romans 10:15).

Mere talking or preaching is not sufficient. Instead of just being a thinker, one should be a doer as well. One should accumulate real life experience with one’s own hands and feet. Similarly, swimming or cycling, we can never learn it through correspondence courses. One needs to “go” into the world, dwell amongst people to the degree that one may obtain enough knowledge to change lives. To this end, missiology can also be called an aspect of “incarnation theology or practical theology”.

1.3.6 Are Chinese Capable of Doing Mission Work?

One day, a hawker came to the open market selling many different coloured balloons. He attracted many customers and demonstrated to them how the balloons can fly in the air. A poor little black boy then came up to him and asked, “Sir. May I ask you one question?” “Yes, you may,” the hawker gazed downward and looked this boy in his eyes. Whilst feeling somewhat uneasy and inferior, the boy summoned up his courage and asked, “If the balloon were painted in black, would it still be able to fly in the sky?” The

hawker replied, "Of course! The balloon is able to fly not because of its colour, but because of its 'inside' content".

We can truly take part in world mission not because of the colour of our skin but because of our inner spiritual life! In other words, what is most important is not form but content. So, would the people from one part of the Third World be able to carry out world mission to other parts of other Third World countries? Of course, world mission is neither the privilege nor obligation of the white people, but for people of all races.

The growth of the Church in China since 1977 has no parallels in history. Patrick Johnstone, in *Operation World*, believes that, as of

1990, there were some 30-75 million Christians in China. Estimates from the State Statistical Bureau of China suggested that there were 63 million Protestants and 12 million Catholics in 1992. Comparing this to the previously meager of 1 812 000 Protestants and 3 300 000 Catholics in 1949, we can see that there had been substantial growth. Most of this growth probably came from the unofficial house fellowship networks, as well as through the work of itinerant preachers and numerous local revival movements (Johnstone 1993:164). Praise God for all these wonderful work!

Many underground church members had given their lives to the Lord in the

past decades. For dedicated Christians of this generation, the next step for them would be formal training at Bible Colleges, and equipped in this way, they may go out and be missionaries.

1.3.7 What are the Problems Hindering Chinese from Reaching Out?

Why are Chinese generally reluctant to participate in missionary work? Why do they place such a high emphasis on personal virtue? Why are they strongly patriotic and their world vision extending to only their own nation? Why would Chinese churches focus mainly on family values, instead of having a kingdom mind? Why would Chinese who were raised up in other countries feel reticent to identify with that country as their own? Why are they afraid of learning other languages and perform poorly in teamwork? Why are they lacking mission education?

Missionaries in China generally neglected to teach the converted Christians to assume a world vision. They taught believers to preach to their own people and that would be sufficient. As a consequence, most Chinese churches remain in a receiving mode of existence and were not accustomed to reach out. The Bible however teaches that “freely you have received, freely give” (Matthew 10:8).

Chiang has so far experienced and encountered three different cultures. He grew up in the Traditional Chinese culture that includes Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism amongst other religions. He then worked amongst black Africans in Liberia for an extended period of time, and then amongst the Muslim Indian people in South Africa. It would be useful therefore for us to

give a brief account of the background of these three different cultures. It would be particularly useful to describe his personal cultural background in order to trace the thoughts of the writer.

1.3.8 An Introduction to the Background of the Writer. The First Missionary from Taiwan to Liberia

1.3.8.1 Background

Paul Chiang was born into a pastor's family. His father graduated from Tokyo Theological Seminary. His mother was saved during one of Dr John Sung's evangelistic meetings. Before he was born his mother already dedicated him to the Lord. During his childhood they had a family altar every night. He attended Sunday school and knew Bible stories very well, but at that time it was only head knowledge.

When his father came back from Japan, he told the Presbyterian mission: "I am willing to go where there are no pastors to help the church". The missionary replied: "Most of the churches already have pastors, except the mountain tribal people (who are not Chinese but similar to the Filipino people) where they do not speak Chinese, but only Japanese. Since you studied in Japan that would be an invaluable advantage for you to work there. Are you willing to go?" He answered, "Yes, I will go". So, when Paul was about 10 years old, his father brought him to the mountain tribal people. At that time there was no water and electricity. They traveled there by crossing over a crude and perilous Monkey Bridge. When they arrived at their destination, all

the people of the village milled around them. He felt himself small and insignificant among the mountain people.

1.3.8.2 Born Again

When Chiang was fourteen years old, an evangelist whom he admired, Dr Andrew Gih (the co-worker of Dr John Sung), came to Hualien and preached at an evangelistic meeting. From the pulpit he quoted from the gospel, "Dearly beloved, repent! Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! I tell you: except you repent you shall all likewise perish!" (Matthew 3:2).

That night many people repented with tears, the Holy Spirit was working and Chiang too repented and was saved. That night stands out in his memory as the most glorious and unforgettable night in his whole life because he consecrated himself totally to the Lord. The Holy Spirit inspired him to be an evangelist in order to save souls for the Lord.

In the following few nights the Holy Spirit kept working in his heart and he convicted him of his own sinfulness. He led him to repentance with tears and at the same time revealed the love of God to him. From then on, for more than half a year, he evangelised whenever possible.

Later, during his vacation time, he stayed alone in a hut on their family fruit farm in the hills to pray, fast and study the Bible. The Holy Spirit continued to reveal all his sins and after writing them out on three large pieces of paper, he confessed them one by one. He asked the Lord Jesus to cleanse him with His precious blood. He then burned them with fire and thereafter dedicated

his body as a living sacrifice to the Lord. From then on he had a new life which had changed forever. He began to abhor sin. During his daily devotion, God often showed him the way he ought to go and his life was filled with peace and joy. His family continuously praise the Lord for the change in him.

When he was in high school, his father encouraged him to read biographies of spiritual men and missionaries like David Livingstone and Albert Schweitzer who had devoted themselves and their lives to the people of Africa. Their love for the Lord was so profound that they were even willing to sacrifice their lives for the sake of the gospel. After having seen a slide show regarding mission work in Africa which had deeply touched him. He remembers thinking that "If God calls me to Africa, I will go."

1.3.8.3 Called to be a servant of God

When he was 19 years old, the Lord finally called him. One morning at 4 o'clock, his whole family went to the church, knelt down and prayed for God's will for his future. During his parents' devotion, God spoke to them from a passage in Isaiah.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, for the Lord will go before you, the God of Israel will be your rear guard. See, my servant will act wisely; he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted" (52:7,12).

Through the gospel of Mark, where God used five loaves of bread and two fishes to do a miracle, God also spoke to him. “Though he is a small vessel, but if he is willing to dedicate himself to Him, God will use him to bless many people” (6:36-44).

He also remembered Jesus saying, "If anyone would come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". When he was sure of God's calling, he leapt for joy. Praise the Lord!

Afterwards the Lord led him to study at the Taiwan Baptist Theological Seminary. At Baptist Seminary they have a missions month once a year. All the students dress in different national clothes and report about different needs of individual countries. He dressed as a prince of Africa and shared the needs of that continent. After he graduated from seminary he went back to the countryside and helped his father to minister in his ten churches. Later he went to Singapore and studied at Trinity Theological College.

1.3.8.4 Called to Africa

When he was in Taiwan, he met a girl friend from Hong Kong who had been a missionary to Vietnam, Thailand and Taiwan for 13 years. One day she wrote a letter to him and asked: “Do you want to be a missionary to Africa?” He answered: “I have been thinking about becoming a missionary to Africa since high school. But now I need to pray and ask God for guidance”. So, in 1982, during the Chinese New Year, they had a one-week holiday. During that time he prayed and fasted and asked the Lord: "Do you want me to be a missionary

in Africa? Show me your will and give me a vision to prove that it is you who really called me". His reply came during a time of devotion. While reading through scripture, the Lord's will was made clear to him.

"I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: my purpose will stand and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey, from a far-off land a man to fulfil my purpose. What I have said, that will I will bring about; what I have planned, that will I do"
(Isaiah 46:10-11):

"Yes, Lord!" he answered. God has called him from the east. Taiwan is east of Africa and a far-off land. But he was still uncertain whether God really wanted him to preach the Gospel in a land of a different race and culture! Then the Lord gave him an answer from Jonah, which seemed to tell him "Preach the Gospel to different races and don't disobey". He answered: "Lord! Yes! Thy will be done."

Meanwhile, his parents wrote a letter and asked him to return to Taiwan to help in his father's churches (his father had planted ten Churches in Taiwan). They told him "If you went to Africa, you would face many problems and would become poor". But the Lord assured him from Jeremiah:

"So do not fear, O Jacob my servant, do not be dismayed. I am with you. From them will come

songs of thanksgiving and the sound of rejoicing. I will add to their numbers and they will not be decreased; I will bring them honour and they will not be disdained" (30:10, 19).

He wrote a long letter to his father and explained how the Lord called him to West Africa. So he did not go back to help his father's church. When he went to Liberia and preached among the Gbandi people, they came with the sounds of rejoicing and songs of thanksgiving.

The Lord's word had deeply touched his heart when he had seen the slide show on evangelism in Africa and heard the testimonies of missionaries. He heard how they left their homes for the Lord's sake, discarded fame, position, pleasure and traveled around Africa; how they suffered, were persecuted and later died. His desire to do missionary work was like that of Hudson Taylor, who said: "If I had a thousand pounds, China should have them. If I had a thousand lives, China should have them" (Broomhall 1982:6). It was like a voice saying to Him: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And he said, "Here am I, send me".

1.3.8.5 Mission Field

The Chiangs were engaged to be married at the headquarters of OMF (the Overseas Missionary Fellowship) and Dr James Taylor (the great grandson of Hudson Taylor) later officiated at their wedding. During their one-month honeymoon period, they instead studied and wrote their doctrinal exams.

They went on to join SIM (Society for International Ministry) in October 1982. At that time Paul just graduated from Trinity Theological College and he did not have any supporting churches. Since the cost of a one-year missionary training course in England was US\$7 000, the partners knelt down before the Lord and prayed: "Lord! If it is you who really want us to go to Africa, please provide the money, showing us that it is you who really want us to minister among Africans". From then onwards, many Singapore churches started to invite them to share their testimony about God's call to Africa. After three weeks they received US\$8 000 through these different churches' offerings. Just like Hudson Taylor said: "God's work, done in God's way, will never lack of God's supply". Praise the Lord! God answered their prayers yet again. They went to WEC Mission (World Evangelization Crusade) headquarters for a one-year course on missionary orientation.

After this Paul and his wife Grace went to Liberia, West Africa. His son was born in ELWA (Eternal Love Winning Africa) radio station's hospital in 1984. The Radio announced: "Today the first Chinese missionary's son was born in Liberia". Here they were involved in church planting among the people of the Gbandi tribe for 8 years. When the civil war began, the mission pilot told him: "This is the final mission airplane for you from the countryside to Monrovia. Would you be able to pick up your luggage and leave in two hours' time?" He said: "No, it is too short notice for our family. How about tomorrow morning?" He replied, "OK". That whole night they packed all their possession without sleep. They flew from Monrovia to Taiwan. Afterwards they heard that the rebels took all the property of the mission and the mission director's house became the headquarters of the rebels.

They have been waiting to go back to Liberia but the civil war lasted for ten years. This forced them to move to another missions field, to South Africa in 1994.

1.4 CHAPTER THREE – WORK AMONG THE GBANDI PEOPLE

In chapter three the writer describes his ministry in the Gbandi tribe, gives an account of the problems he encountered, the spiritual and practical needs of the people and the mission methods he developed to answer such challenges.

1.4.1 The Problems and Difficulties Encountered in the Gbandi Rural Area

Some of the problems were the following:

- **Taking a powerless Christianity to the Gbandi Tribe**

Theologically and experientially we were typical Evangelicals. As missionaries we were well prepared in theological, cultural and linguistic studies. As Evangelicals, however, we were totally unprepared to deal with the one area which the Liberians considered most important their relationships with the spirit world. Time after time, the Liberians would turn our discussions around to the disruption in their lives by the cause of evil spirits. The indigenous peoples believe that occurrences such as disease, accidents, death, infertility of humans, animals and fields, drought and the disruption of relationships are believed to be the work of evil entities in their society.

Though the Gbandi church leaders decided that a primary strategy would be to focus on God's conquest of the spirits through Christ, Chiang was in no position to assist them. He tried to understand the perceived reality of the working of the evil spirits, but was unfortunately ignorant of this belief system. He was, the Gbandi people told him, more open than his other missionary colleagues to accept the apparent reality of the spirit world and to appreciate its importance in their lives. Nevertheless, neither his missiology nor his biblical and theological training had prepared Chiang with any constructive approaches to meet their needs.

The power of the Lord to heal and cast out demons was a frequent theme of the Gbandi leaders in their preaching. Unfortunately, we were unable to demonstrate what we claimed in this area. Those we sought to reach were not very impressed with this aspect of our message. There seemed to be more visible power in their old ways than in the ways of Christianity. As missionaries we had brought to them an essentially powerless message to a very power-conscious people.

- **Spiritual views of the Western and Gbandi people**

We have observed that Western peoples pay great attention to the natural world and little, if any, attention to the spirit world. In many non-western societies the proportions seem to be reversed. Biblical societies were much more like contemporary non-western peoples than Western societies in this regard.

Although it may be an oversimplification, Chiang is of the opinion that biblical

societies (approximately two-thirds of today's societies) pay the same amount of attention to each of the three areas of causality. Western peoples, however give much less attention to the spirit sphere and much more attention to the natural sphere.

- **Problems hindering the Gbandi people from following Christ**

There are a number of hindrances due to aspects of their Traditional Religion.

Some of these are the following:

- Their belief in the Devil Society
- Human Sacrifice
- Their belief in Witchcraft
- Their belief in Divination
- Their belief in, and worship of ancestor spirits
- Their belief in Traditional Medicine
- The role of the Islamists
- The many tribal languages

There are also challenges within the Gbandi churches:

- Lack of appropriate Bibles and workers
- Immorality
- Polygamy

1.4.2 The Spiritual Strategy and Plan for Reaching the Gbandi People

The rest of the chapter is devoted to a description of the strategy developed to reach out to the Gbandi. Some of the methods described are:

- Open-air evangelism
- Drama evangelism
- Everyday with Jesus – twice daily devotions and Bible studies
- Funeral evangelism
- Everyday prayer for the sick and medical care evangelism
- Teaching the Bible in schools
- Prayer mountain, prayer house intercession ministry
- Teaching in Disciple Training Centre

1.5 CHAPTER FOUR – WORK IN LENASIA, SOUTH AFRICA

Chapter Four deals with the spiritual strategy the writer developed in order to reach the population in the predominantly Indian area near Johannesburg, South Africa.

During the era of apartheid in South Africa the inhabitants were classified as and separated in four racial groups: "Whites", "Blacks", "Asians" (mostly Indians) and "Coloureds". These racial groups were settled in separated "Group Areas". Although all this was abolished in the 1990s the residential patterns remained unchanged.

The Chiang family elected to stay amongst the Indians in Lenasia. Through daily contact with neighbours and during occasions such as visitation, weddings and funerals, they got to know more about the Indian culture. As a result, it became possible for them to build better relationships with the people

and local churches. Their purpose of staying within the Indian community was to motivate the Christians to care about their neighbours and friends who are Hindus and Muslims and to share the love of God with them. They used the approach of friendship evangelism to win souls for Christ. However, the Chiangs found a large barrier of "class" which hinders friendship building in the Indian culture.

In the Indian culture, people are divided into distinct castes. The three main classes are the upper, middle and lower classes. In Lenasia, Chiang found that the Muslims run most of the shops. The professionals, such as the dentists, medical doctors, school principals and teachers are likewise Muslims. So, the class divisions had something to do with religion: the upper class people in the Indian society are Muslim. On the other hand, most Christians have either a Hindu or a Tamil background and are from the middle or lower class. There is hardly any interaction between people of different religions.

The question is whether there is a way to break this cultural barrier may be broken, so that Christians may visit Muslims and make friends with them, to love them and share the good news with them.

This chapter also calls for a break through. Most Christians do not have any idea of how to win Muslims for Christ. It is conceivable that their low self-image (belonging to the middle or lower classes) has become a barrier that hinders them. However, it is also true that, whilst most Indian Christians enjoy worshipping and praising the Lord together, they are in general not motivated to obey the great commission and reach out to Muslims.

In the first century the early church in Jerusalem was flourishing. Newly converted Christians enjoyed worshipping together, but they somehow lacked the desire to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles. It took some compelling on God's part via visions given to Peter and others, as well as through the great persecution, to scatter the Christians. As a result of these driving forces, the Holy Spirit helped to break through the barrier of Jewish culture. The Jewish Christians finally acquired the vision and burden to reach out to the Gentiles. Therefore, we also have hope in the Lord that He knows how to break through this cultural barrier in the Indian culture.

The problems are also inside the Churches. They are not reaching out towards the Muslims and Hindus. All they are concerned about is just to keep their members from leaving their respective Churches.

Furthermore, even though the Christians constitute just 5% of the population, they still do not feel a need to work together. Instead, they constantly criticise, condemn and fight each other. The big churches would not normally help the smaller churches, but would try to incorporate them whenever there is opportunity. They lack a kingdom mind. Churches there want to build their own small empires. The vision of the local churches is generally very narrow. An effort had to be made to reshape their worldview.

Often the Churches achieve growth through sheep stealing instead of doing outreach work. This type of misbehaviour causes further tension and alienation amongst pastors and churches. The local churches want other churches to come to them whereas they have no desire to reach out to others.

They like to have visitors but do not want to pay visits to others.

To make matters worse, the chairman of the pastor's fraternal Rev. Johnny Challen said: "70% of the church pastors in Lenasia have never formally attended Bible College. Among them, 65% are tent makers and only 35% work full time for the church. Local Christians learn by simply following their priest - through imitation". Religious books are not used. Also Hinduism and Chinese Buddhism are similar in many aspects in that they are based on fixed rituals which exclude book references. Consequently, when Hindus were converted to Christianity, they remain uninterested in study. If they are not nourished by the word of God, how can they nourish others?

One of the main aspects in the mission work concerns the Muslims. In South Africa it is very difficult for Muslims to become Christians. The traditional way of evangelism was to do door to door personal visitation, day in and day out, for year after year. Generally speaking, it takes at least 5 years to convince a Muslim to become a Christian. The (German) missionaries of Life Challenge tried this approach, but they found that they could only manage to win two or three Muslims for Christ in a period of 10 years. After working in Lenasia for 15 years the LC missionaries gave up.

The author regarded this method as unfruitful and a waste of time. He therefore developed a new strategy to win Muslims for Christ. It had the following elements:

- He started a pastor's fraternal prayer meeting.



- He worked for the unity of the body of Christ, by prayer for unity and revival.
- He started a library for pastors.
- He started an Indian Church Newspaper.
- He trained home cell leaders from all different churches with a four months long programme¹.
- He started Prayer Mountain intercession prayer for all churches.
- He started daily morning devotion with a group of brothers from different churches.
- He taught the Bible in high school.
- He taught in three Bible Colleges.
- He started a Prayer Mountain.
- With the prayer warriors he organised a March for Jesus.

1.6 CHAPTER FIVE – MISSIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In Chapter Five the writer systematises and discusses the relevant issues

¹ The training included a home cell leader training course as well as a course on Muslim outreach. Chiang felt that it would be a better strategy to train up disciples rather than conducting door-to-door evangelism. It did not make sense to him that he and his wife Grace should travel several thousand miles from their homeland of Taiwan and Hong Kong to Lenasia in South Africa just to win a few Muslims for Christ. It would be an unreasonable waste of time and money. The best strategy was to train and encourage the home cell leaders and cell members to do Muslim outreach to their neighbours in Daxina and Lenasia on a daily basis. In this way, in five years time they can lead many Muslims to Christ. Chiang put his strategy into practice and trained the cell leaders of 15 churches. About 10 leaders per church attended his course, bringing the total number to 150. With this type of large-scale training for home cell leaders and the building up of Cell Love Net, it is hoped that Muslims will accept Christ and will not turn away easily.



arising from the case studies. This broached aspects such as mission theology, the Kingdom mind for world mission, Paul's mission theology, form and meaning, cross-cultural mission through incarnation, practical theology by intercession prayer for unity and revival, amongst other aspects. This Chapter addresses the underlying Biblical theory and mission theology in order to substantiate the discussions of Chapters Three and Four.

1.7 CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION

In Chapter Six, the writer presents the conclusion of his thesis.



CHAPTER TWO

THE CHINESE FACTOR

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with the unique contribution that Chinese cross-cultural missionaries can make, especially in Africa. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to allow readers to have a better understanding of the background of Chinese missionaries.

The first part of this chapter gives an outline of the Chinese country, its people, history, philosophy, cultural background and religion. The second part introduces Chinese church history. It gives an account of how the Western missionaries came to China and why the Chinese initially rejected the gospel. Describing how the church has grown in spite of persecutions and how opportunities have arisen for Chinese Christians to participate in cross-cultural mission work, this chapter hopes to encourage Chinese churches to play a more active role in world mission.

2.2 THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

2.2.1 The Country and its People

With an area of 9,573,000 square km, China is the third largest country in the world. In this wide country one can find some of the highest mountains and plateau in the world. (Information about Taiwan is not included here, because, although Mainland Chinese regard it as an integral part of China, this island is at present ruled by the Republic of China).

In terms of the population, China is by far the largest nation in the world and comprises almost a quarter of the world's population. Most of these people live in the better-watered central and eastern coastal provinces (Johnstone 1993:163).

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Annual Growth</u>	<u>Density</u>
1990	1,135,496,000	1.4%	119/sq.km
1995	1,214,221,000	1.3%	127/sq.km

The Chinese are mostly peace loving, hardworking and contented people. They respect elders, love children and are patient with their fellow countrymen. Chinese in general are reserved and peculiarly humble. They believe in harmony and avoid confrontation. China was once one of the most superior civilizations of the world, not only the equal to Rome, but far ahead of medieval Europe (Fairbank 1992:2). History tells us that the Chinese are non-militant with regards to the neighbours. (I mean tradition Chinese not Communist Chinese). During the heyday of the British Empire and when the western countries actively expanded their powers to Asia, China became one of the

victims of invasion. The Chinese are generally very proud of their ancient society. They have a great historical tradition (Goodrich 1951:5). Their attitude towards differences in religion and culture is largely open and pragmatic. Foreigners are treated fairly and visitors are welcomed.

China not only has a long history, but also a painful one. The fact is, even now, China remains a very poor country and most Chinese are still suffering from poverty. It is high time for all Chinese to work closely together so that China may catch up with the developed nations and enables its people to live happily and peacefully

(1999 Aug 23 <http://www.index-china.com/index-english/people-s.html>).

2.2.2 Chinese Philosophy

China's culture and religion may be traced back thousands of years before the common era. Before modern religions came about, China had already built up a religious worldview that, in some respects, can still be seen today. In their philosophy, earth is where we all live and work and heaven is where our ancestors live after death. While living on earth, it is important for a person to venerate their ancestors' past; for although they cannot speak, the ancestors have power over the world and have a tendency to send omens to the mortals below. The life of the average person is an escalation to heaven and while one lives one's life, one is also accountable to one's neighbour. The oldest man in a town is seen to be the wisest man and also as one who is most heavenly-minded. However, while on earth, a person must never forget their ancestors and should make sacrifices and acknowledgments to those that

have passed away. Doing so brings about a better balance (Yin and Yang) in the world.

The Yin-Yang Tai-chi symbol has since ancient times represented the Chinese view of the cosmos. The Yin and Yang, shown in the "Diagram of the Supreme Ultimate", or the Tai chi, depicts a basic understanding among all Chinese religions. In looking to explain the forces of nature that dictated life, the ancient Chinese philosophers developed this concept to explain the many opposites in the world. The Yin is the negative force and is the dark, the cool, the earth, the moon, the shadows and female. The Yang is the light, the warmth, the heaven, the dry and male. The Yin and Yang encompass varied forces existing in nature, where each force has a balanced opposite. A balance of the Yin and Yang must be attained for one to find happiness and comfort and is best achieved in the words of Confucius by "taking the middle road".

Chinese philosophers place great emphasis on the "Way of Heaven" and the "Way of Man". "Heaven" is viewed not only as "nature" but also the source of all life and human values. The concept of "heaven" encompasses the "universe", an organism brimming over with creative life force. The creation of life is viewed not as a mechanical, physical process, but a spiritual, purposeful procedure. In other words, "man" is the result of "heaven's" unceasing creation of ever-new beings that have more and more wisdom as time goes by. Relying on the wisdom and virtues bestowed by heaven, man creates an increasingly sophisticated and refined culture and cultural values. New life and new values are constantly brought forth in the universe and in

human society. The former is designated as "birth of new life" and the latter as "playing out one's inherent nature". The combination of the two is called the "unity of heaven and man" or "heaven and man being of one mind"

(1999 Sep14 <http://www.gio.gov.tw/info/culture/cultur21.html>).

"When one cultivates to the utmost the principles of his nature and exercises them on the basis of reciprocity, he is not far from the natural law. What you do not like yourself do not extend to others" (Sih 1957:13).

The above philosophical thought was promoted mainly by the Confucian and Neo-Confucian schools of thought. Proponents of Taoism and Buddhism espouse essentially the same notions. However, the weight of Confucian cultural value concepts lie in the "ethical plane," that of Taoism in the "artistic plane," and that of Buddhism in the "religious plane".

This philosophy of a "unity of man and heaven" evolved into the Chinese worldview of "being contented with one's heaven-ordained lot in life". This view gives the Chinese an enhanced ability to intimately experience the endless beauty of the natural world and to more fully enjoy the richness of feeling in the world of ethics. At the same time they have less resentment plaguing them and are able to work hard at their work with peace of mind. The work of man, after all, is the work of heaven. This view also offers a kind of religious consolation. The new life and values constantly brought forth by heaven into the universe and human society result in an unending cycle of life and a unity of heaven and man

(1999 Sep15 <http://www.gio.gov.tw/info/culture/cultur21.html>).

2.2.3 Traditional Chinese Religions

- **Chinese Buddhism**

Not unlike Christianity, Buddhism is an ever changing and evolving religion that has adapted to fit in with various philosophies and cultures. The religion of Buddhism began in India with the birth of Siddhartha Gautama, also known as Buddha, in 563 BC. Although he was born a prince, his destiny was not to govern but to search for a greater meaning of life. Throughout his search, he reached a stage of enlightenment and began to preach and obtain disciples. Originally, there were four truths in Buddhism and with an understanding of those, one would reach the next level, that of the Noble Eightfold Path. The main goal was to achieve absolute truth and have an understanding of the meaning of life. Several centuries after Buddha's death, the scriptures were finally written down and brought by his disciples to China

(1999 Sep16 <http://www.albany.edu/faculty/lr618/chbud.html>).

Among his main teachings were the Four Noble Truths:

- that sorrow is the universal experience of mankind;
- that the cause of sorrow is desire;
- that the removal of sorrow can only come from the removal of desire;
- that desire can be systematically abandoned by following the Noble Eightfold Path

(1999 Sep16 http://www.pages.com.cn/chinese_culture/buddhism/brief.html).

Buddhism in China can be traced back as early as the first century AD. However, it began to flourish during the Han Dynasty. Although it was met

with much resistance from Confucianist schools, it is thought to have entered China gradually through Central Asia and later by means of trade routes. Once Buddhism reached China, it began to influence the Chinese culture, while also adapting to Chinese ways. Early Buddhism in China was thought to incorporate magical practices and was compatible with Taoism. Chinese Buddhism integrates Taoism, bringing together the Indian concern with self-liberation and the Chinese focus on nature. Some even speculate that Lao-Tzu the founder of Taoism was reborn in India as the Buddha (1999 Sep.16 http://www.buddhanet.net/cbp2_f5.htm).

Buddhism spread rapidly not only in the north but also among the Six Dynasties of the south. In the great age of Buddhism in China, from the fifth to the ninth centuries, Confucianism was largely left behind and the Buddhist teachings as well as Buddhist art had a profound effect upon Chinese culture, both north and south (Fairbank 1992:73). Buddhism reached its peak in China during the Sui Dynasty. During this time, Buddhism was the state religion and many Buddhist monks served as military counsellors.

In the 20th century a reform movement in Buddhism adapted to modern day conditions. It was repressed during the Cultural Revolution and Communism, but has managed to hold its place as a major religion. Since 1976 the Chinese government has been tolerant of Buddhism

(1999 Oct24 <http://encarta.msn.com/find/concise.asp?z=1&pg=2&ti=00586000>).

Buddhist meditation is a technique of actualisation in that it repeats the ceaseless relationship between Emptiness, or "the Absolute" and real

existence. It consists essentially of two parts: the mental phase, "creation", starting from Emptiness, that corresponds to existence and "completion", or return to the unity of the "Absolute". Only the first phase is relatively easy to understand and perform, at least in the purely Tibetan system. The second comprises the practice of psycho-physiological yoga with a view of becoming liberated or entering a state of Nirvana

(1999 Oct 24 http://www.pages.com.cn/chinese_culture/buddhism/brief.html).

- **I-kuan Tao**

I-kuan Tao adherents more or less follow the rituals of traditional Confucianism and engage in ancestor worship. Services are usually held at family shrines and are aimed at both cultivating personal character and maintaining family relations – two key concepts in Chinese culture

(1999 Oct 24 <http://www.Taipei.org/info/religion/13ikuan.htm#top>).

- **Ancestor Worship**

This is the most important form of Chinese religion. It is widely practised across the entire society. The rituals concerning ancestor worship are very complicated and have to be followed precisely. Although in modern times it has been simplified, it appears that it will not easily fade away from the Chinese community

(1999 Oct 24 <http://www.fccj.org/learningresources/chi-elem.htm>).

- **Taoism**

Taoism as a philosophy appeared at the same time as Confucianism. As a popular philosophy, it introduced the fundamental principle of a naturalistic

worldview. The word "Tao" has the same value as the "Way" in Christianity. "Tao" is the main thrust of the whole universe. The philosophical aspect of Taoism suggests that human beings should flow with the universe rather than taking an aggressive attitude toward it

(1999 Oct 25 <http://www.fccj.org/learningresources/chi-who.htm#top>).

Traditionally, Taoism stemmed from Lao-Ze, "The Old Master", who was claimed by his followers to have been an older contemporary of Confucius (Fairbank 1992:53). Later, in the Han Dynasty (around AD 200), Taoism gradually emerged as a religion. As a religion Taoism provided the concept of Yin and Yang, the Jade Emperor, the immortal stage, hierarchical structure of the supernatural world and the connection between life and death. It also took over the role of Heaven Worship. The Tao priest is the major player in the exercise of exorcism.

(1999 Oct 25 <http://www.fccj.org/learningresources/chi-who.htm#top>).

2.2.4 The Current Religious Situation in China

Elimination of all religious groups has always been the ultimate aim of the Marxist government. In the 1950s the government engineered the infiltration, subversion and control of all organised Christianity. By 1958 this had been achieved through the "Three Self Patriotic Movement" among Protestants and the "Catholic Patriotic Association" among Catholics. During the Cultural Revolution these structures were banned and all religious activity was forced underground, giving rise to the house church movement. In 1978 restrictions were eased and the TSPM and CPA were resurrected as a means of regaining

governmental control of the thousands of house churches. This has been only partially successful. The collapse of Communism in Europe is perceived to be due to “religion”, so strict controls are maintained over Christian and Muslim organizations and all unregistered activity is repressed wherever possible. The atheism propagated in the education system ensures that most young people have no religious knowledge (Johnstone 1993:163).

- **Non-religious/other:** 59,1 %. The number of Communist Party members is claimed to be only 50 million - all officially atheists, including non-theists. The atheism propagated in the education system ensures that most young people have no religious knowledge.

- **Different kinds of religions:** 27%. A blending of Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and folk religion.

- **Buddhist:** 3%. Traditional Buddhists 24 million; strong among the Zhu-ang, Manchu, Dai Lahu, Korean, Bulang tribal cultures. Also Lamaistic Buddhists 9,6 million; Tibetans, Mongolians, Naxi, Tu Moimba, Pumi, Yugur Lhoba

- **Animist:** 2,4%. Mainly among the tribal peoples of the south, southwest and far north regions.

- **Muslim:** 2,4%. Dominant in Xinjiang and Ningxia. The major religion of the Hui Uygur Kazak, Kirgiz, Tajilk, Uzbek, Tatar Dongxiang, Salar and Bonan. There are now 43 000 officially allowed mosques.

- **Christian:** 6,1 %. Growth 7,7% p.a.

Protestants: 5,1 %. Growth 7,1 % per annum.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Affiliated</u>
Home meetings	18 800 000	47 000 000
<u>TSPM</u>	<u>7 000 000</u>	<u>11 000 000</u>
All groups	25 800 000	58 000 000
Evangelicals (5%)	25 140 000	57 130 000

Catholics: 0,77%. Growth 10,8% per annum.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Affiliated</u>
Roman Catholic	3 500 000	5 000 000
<u>CPA</u>	<u>2 600 000</u>	<u>3 700 000</u>
All -groups	6 100 000	8 700 000

Indigenous Marginal: 0,18%. Growth 13,3% per annum

<u>Church</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Affiliated</u>
All groups	1 000 000	2 000 000

2.2.5 Political Situation in China

This ancient nation has regained its place of importance in the world after nearly two centuries of decline and humiliation at the hands of the Western powers and Japan. Since the final conquest of Mainland China in 1949, the Communist Party has remoulded the nation along Marxist lines. The Cultural Revolution (1966-76) was the culmination of Mao's policy. It caused

immeasurable suffering and economic chaos. Intellectuals and religious believers were cruelly persecuted. It is estimated that 20 million Chinese lost their lives during that time. The death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the discrediting of radical leftists in 1978 was followed by a more pragmatic leadership under Deng. He initiated a series of economic, political and cultural reforms and developed links with other nations, but all within the limits set by Deng. The crushing of the 1989 student protest in Tiananmen Square in Beijing and also the collapse of Communism in Europe and the USSR left China diplomatically isolated as the oldest surviving Communist regime. The threatened government responded with a reversion of its ideological rigidity and repression of all political, ethnic and religious dissent. Economic reform, with tight political control, emerged as the government policy for the 1990s. In 1997 the British returned Hong Kong to China in 1999 and Portuguese Macao.

2.3 THE “SLEEPING DRAGON NATION” IS WAKING UP

The word “Dragon” is used in the Bible for the enemy of the Child, the Lord (Rev 12:3-9 and Rev 20: 2-3). The concept “Dragon” in China, on the other hand, means “a beneficent amphibian deity of oriental mythology and is an ageless symbol of greatness, royalty, power”. For two thousand years, the Emperors of China had sat on a dragon throne and ruled the “Land of the Dragon” (Dehoney 1988:12).

When Mr Nixon, the ex-US president, made his fourth visit to China as a

private citizen, he told Beijing University students that Napoleon once said, "China is a sleeping giant! Don't awake her! Because when you do, she will move the world" (Dehoney 1988:12). He continued: "Well, China is awake today! And with the help of your generation, China will lead the world in the paths of peace and progress". The Dragon is not only alive and awakened now, but also has abandoned the isolation that has cut off the Chinese people from the rest of the world for centuries. This giant, with more than 1,2 billion people, is joining the world family of nations. China's new openness and turn outward to the West may well be the most significant single event of the twentieth century (Dehoney 1988:13)!

There are significant parallels in China today with the Roman world in the time of Christ. God prepared and used the crosscurrents of history in the Roman world to prepare for the coming of Christ. Today, it is said, the situation in China is similar to that of the time of the birth of Christ. The Chinese are using one common language, Mandarin, for the first time in their history. The roads are open for travel and commerce. Chinese bandits, who from antiquity plagued the remote areas, have been eradicated. There is political stability, a strong central government and internal peace throughout the whole empire. There is also a great spiritual vacuum and it is expected by many that this is the time for the dragon to receive the coming of the Lamb. The Bible says that, "In the fullness of the time ...God sent forth his Son" (Galatians 4:4).

This implies that in God's divine purpose he had perfectly prepared the world to receive the Saviour and the time of his advent has come.

"We Chinese believe that God has now prepared our world to receive His Son. It is God's 'fullness of time.' for China" (Dehoney 1988:172).

The 21st Century seems to belong to the Chinese because of the following facts:

- **Economic Growth**

China, as a consequence of its economic development will become one of the richest countries in the 21st century.

- **Language**

Today, more than one out of every five people is Chinese and they mostly speak Mandarin. Despite English being used around the world, the fact is that Mandarin is spoken by more people.

- **Chinese Emigrants**

The Chinese have emigrated to all parts of the world and wherever they settled, China Towns and Chinese restaurants have mushroomed up all over those countries.

2.4 CHRISTIANITY IN CHINA

Nestorianism first arrived in China and was known as the "Persian religion". The first missionary team that came to China was called the "Jin-Jiao". They arrived during the Tang Empire in 635AD. Jing Jiao means "Luminous

Religion” or “Religion of Light” and it represented Jesus as the light of the world (Covell 1986:30). Nestorianism was a sect condemned as heretical by the Council of Ephesus in 431, because of its belief that Jesus had two distinct natures – that of a distinctly divine and a human nature. The Nestorians separated themselves from Byzantine Christianity and one arm spread into Africa (forming the Coptic churches) and the other arm eastward, into Persia. Their missionaries followed the caravans along the trade routes of Central Asia, crossing into China on the ancient Silk Road.

The China into which the Nestorians came was at the zenith of its power. The then ruling Tang Dynasty was probably the then most powerful and wealthiest empire in the world. Trade with India and the Near East was flourishing. Nestorian communities were established in the trading centres of the empire and for decades enjoyed considerable success. However, in 845, the Emperor, an ardent Taoist, issued an edict proscribing Buddhism and ordered all monks to return to private life. Apparently, Nestorians were included in the persecution since three thousand foreign monks were referred to in the edict. Nestorianism lasted for only 211 years (Brown 1921:15-16).

The second mission that came to China was Arkaun. It lasted for only 91 years, from 1277-1367, during the Yien Empire (Lin 1977:53).

In 1601 the Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci was permitted to reside in Beijing. The Bishop Alexandru Valignani tried many times to enter the interior of China, but the government forbade him. In 1606, before he died, he looked at China and cried out aloud to the Land: “Rock! Rock! When will you open the door for my

Lord? Who are able to use his flesh to hit this Big Rock China"?

Two centuries later, the first Protestant Missionary, by the name of Morrison, a Scottish Presbyterian under the appointment of the London Missionary Society, arrived in China on 7th September 1807 (Lin 1977:301). At that time the Mun-Ching Empire did not allow a white man to stay in China unless he belonged to a shipping company, so he went to Canton, the only city of China that was then open for trade. Further, the Empire did not allow white men to learn Chinese. They also forbade the Chinese people from teaching the language to any white man. If any Chinese transgressed, he was perceived to be one who assisted a spy and therefore sentenced to death.

In 1817, however, the first Chinese pastor helped Morrison translate the Gospel. The government punished him and he was almost killed (Lin 1977:309-310). Because of his linguistic skills Morrison spent his time translating the Bible as well as preparing a Chinese-English dictionary. He started the first Chinese monthly magazine as well. In 1819, twelve years after his arrival, Morrison, with some help from his colleague William Milne, completed the colossal task of translating the Old and New Testaments. In the first twenty-five years of the Protestant missionary effort, only ten Chinese were baptised. These were difficult, lonely years. Morrison's wife died of cholera. Milne's wife died of dysentery. Milne himself died a few years later. All of them were under the age of forty when they died (Brown 1921:15-16). Morrison also died in 1834.

Subsequently, Hudson Taylor had also come to the conviction that God had

called him to China as a missionary. Taylor was only twenty years old when he sailed for the Middle Kingdom in 1853. He was a man of simple, daring faith, who attempted the impossible. He gave little attention to the establishment of institutions although he did believe in the efficacy of medical work. His mission was inter-denominational, conservative in theology, and operated on faith principles for support. He formed the China Inland Mission (CIM) in 1865 (Bacon 1983:5-6). The missionary philosophy of Hudson Taylor was that the Gospel should be spread through evangelistic witness and preaching to the remotest corners of the empire as quickly as possible. CIM soon became the largest missionary organisation in China and its workers covered the region from one end to the other (Brown 1921:33). Hudson Taylor once said "If I had a thousand pounds, China should have it, If I had a thousand lives, China should have them".

After Hudson Taylor there were many more missionaries that came to China. As the focus of this report is not primarily on China and in order to limit the length of this Chapter, only some of the pioneering missionaries in the China's history have been covered here.

2.5 WHY THE CHINESE HAD REFUSED THE GOSPEL

2.5.1 Colonialism in China

When we see a visitor and a robber entering our house at the same time, we may perceive both of them as robbers. In the same way, many people felt

that the missionaries brought imperialism into China, in the guise of the Gospel. The gospel was just a “Trojan Horse” that was used in order that colonialism may be introduced into the region to suppress the Chinese. Quite a number of Chinese felt that the missionaries were spies and lackeys of their empire that tried to colonise the country. This led to serious misunderstandings. Mission work was compared to the Muslim’s “conversion by the sword” tactics; thus the majority of the Chinese harboured hatred towards the Christians.

2.5.2 The Opium War and Unequal Treaties (1839-1860)

The colonial system was introduced into China by the treaties of Nanjing and Tientsin. From the standpoint of many Chinese patriots today, both Christians and non-Christians, Marxists and otherwise, the missionary movement was compromised by its association with the colonial powers and the treaties which they forced upon the Chinese people in the mid-1800s. Events of this time cast a long shadow into the future and affected the reputation of the Christian missions in China for the next hundred years.

As trade increased and opium became a serious social problem, anti-opium campaigns began to spread. In 1839 a new incorruptible commissioner of trade at Canton began to enforce the prohibitions against all opium imports. Meeting resistance from the merchants, he detained three hundred and fifty foreign traders in the Canton Factories for six weeks until they agreed to deliver up their cargoes of opium. Twenty thousand chests of opium were publicly burned. However, this caused the Western powers to fight for their rights of trade. The Chinese had to back off.

In 1979 Zhao Fusan, from the Institute for the Study of World Religions in Beijing, charged that "Christian mission paved the way for colonial aggression into China". Bishop K H Ting (Ding Guangxun), president of the China Christian Council often made the same point (Brown 1921:27).

2.5.3 The Chinese Boxers

In 1898 the government ordered the mobilisation of local militia, the "I Ho Tuan" ("Righteous Harmony Fists", given the name of "Boxers" by Westerners), to defend China against foreign encroachments. The "Boxers" in Shantung Province adopted the slogan, "Protect the country, destroy the foreigner". Reports came into the capital city of Peking that a thousand Roman Catholics had been massacred; that English missionaries were killed and about the destruction of a Presbyterian mission station. When the Dowager Empress gave her encouragement, the movement spread to other provinces.

The Dowager Empress sanctioned these attacks as a declaration of war. Against the moderate counsel of some advisors, she issued an edict on June 24 ordering the killing of all foreigners throughout the empire. More than 30,000 Roman Catholic Chinese and 47 foreign priests and nuns were killed. The number of Protestants who lost their lives is estimated at about 1 900 Chinese, 134 missionaries and 52 missionary children (Brown 1921:37).

Again the Western powers retaliated. China was forced to accept defeat and to pay for the damage done. The so-called Boxer Rebellions were not primarily anti-missionary or anti-Christian but anti-foreign. However, the missionaries and Christian converts suffered the most because they lived in

isolated regions and as such were exposed. In spite of their good works, the missionaries had not been able to rid themselves of the taint of 'foreignness'. Christianity thus was seen as a foreign religion. The China Inland Mission, whose missionaries had been widely scattered, lost many workers and much property but refused to accept payment for damages. They said, "We should forgive them". This really touched many Chinese and opened peoples' hearts to the Gospel.

It is significant that the first modern President of China, Sun Yat-Sen, studied at a mission school and was baptised when he was 18 years old. The second President, Chiang Kai-Shek, was a Christian and married a pastor's daughter. They were all the fruit of Western missionary work.

2.6 THE CHINESE CHURCH TODAY

2.6.1 The Growth of the Church in China

This growth since 1977 has no parallels in history. Researchers estimate there to be 30 to 75 million Christians in 1990. The State Statistical Bureau in China confidentially estimated 63 million Protestants and 12 million Catholics in 1992. Comparing this to the estimated 1 812 000 Protestants and 3 300 000 Catholics in 1949, most of the growth is in the unofficial house fellowship networks and through the work of itinerant preachers and numerous local revival movements (Johnstone 1993:164). Praise God for this wonderful work.

Even the religious policy of the Communist government boggles the mind and defies easy generalisations. Who could have foreseen that after 15 years of obscurantism and the scourge of the Cultural Revolution, more than 2 000 official Protestant churches could have been opened, in addition to hundreds of thousands of informal house meeting points. More than 1,5 million Bibles were printed and even such books as “Bible Stories” and “Pilgrim’s Progress” were printed by the government’s Social Science Press as illustrations of the Western cultural heritage. It has been reported that the initial reprinting of 200 000 copies of *Pilgrim’s Progress* was sold out in just three days (Adeney 1985:7).

Johnstone (1993) alludes to the following elements that could be accredited for this amazing growth:

- **140 years of sacrificial seed-sowing**

Thousands of missionaries have eventually born fruit. At one stage there were 8 500 Protestant missionaries, 1 000 of these being with CIM (OMF). Their labour was not in vain! Yet it was seen wisest by the Lord to remove them before the harvest and that He alone gets the glory!

- **Millions of intercessors** had travailed in prayer for the long-delayed breakthrough.

- **The manifest bankruptcy of Communism**

Colossal blunders and changes in Party policy over 35 years have disillusioned the people. The fall of cult leaders and the failure of promises for

a better future have created a vacuum that only the Gospel can fill. The Church of the Lord Jesus is larger than the Communist Party of China. Ironically, Mao Zedong has unwittingly become the greatest evangelist in history. The nepotism, corruption and factionalism of the present Communist Party have become repugnant to the majority of the population.

- **The Christians stood firm** in what was probably the most widespread and harshest persecution the Church has ever experienced. The persecution purified and indigenised the Church as opposed to the more recent efforts that were targeted to weaken and destroy it. In the 1960s, Wenzhou City in Zhejiang was selected as a model for the campaign for renouncing religion. Nonetheless, it is now one of the most Christian cities in China where Christians officially numbered 300 000 (Johnstone 1993:164).

- **Search for Truth among the educated.**

The tanks at Tiananmen Square crushed any ideas of an idolatrous trust in democracy as a solution and led large numbers of young people to faith in Christ since 1989. The old religions of China have not attracted them, but the claims of Christ have. In the past the growth had mostly been seen among the poor and the rural population. Now, every stratum of society has been affected.

- **The waves of revival** followed every man-induced or natural disaster. The love and testimony of Christians, as well as the power of the Holy Spirit have played their part and manifested in miracles, healing and exorcisms.

- **The fruitfulness of Christian radio** and the remarkable faith of those who continued broadcasting into China for years with little visible evidence of response undoubtedly have played an important role also (Johnstone 1993:165).
- **Barriers to the Gospel have been broken down** by the suffering and distress caused by wars and revolutions during the twentieth century. The harness of the old religions of Taoism, Buddhism and philosophical Confucianism has been broken and the mistrusted “foreignness” of Christianity dissipated (Johnstone 1993:165).

2.6.2 Why Chinese are Reluctant to Participate in Missionary Work

Among the reasons given for the initial reluctance of Chinese Christians to become involved in world mission are the following.

- **The Chinese philosophy**

According to Confucius’ teaching, one should mind one’s own business first, then move on to influence one’s family, one’s society and stop at one’s nation. Never go beyond that.

- **There is more emphasis on personal virtue** than on social ethics, making it difficult for the Chinese to reach out.

- **Worldview**

The Chinese worldview stops at their nation and does not include other nations.

Their worldview is therefore focused on things Chinese only. They would label people outside of China as “Foreign Devils”.

- **Very strong Patriotism**

The Chinese people have a very strong sense of patriotism and are not really willing to become integrated with other nations.

- **Family orientation**

Whenever Chinese go to other countries, they generally feel inclined to work among a Chinese brotherhood instead of working among their adopted country's people.

- **Chinese view of the church**

They focus mainly on family matters, instead of having a kingdom mind. They think in terms of their church, their family and their relatives in their church and not necessarily God's view of their church. They have little regard for the universal church. (Chi-Min Tan, Fuller professor interviewed in 1998).

- **To brave dangers**

Chinese are not like Western missionaries who are willing to take risks and go out to strange lands. One seldom finds Chinese explorers because they normally prefer to follow someone who has experience.

- **Unfinished evangelical work**

As China is the largest mission field in the world, the Chinese churches remain committed to local evangelical work. There is much in-house unfinished work

that needs to be done.

- **Afraid to learn another language**

Chinese are generally not encouraged to learn a new language.

- **Lack of companionship**

Chinese are characterised by doing it alone and lack companionship. They usually find it difficult to work with other Chinese. The only teamwork that they are accustomed to is that of “Family Team Work”.

- **Self-centeredness**

Most Chinese are very self-centered. The word China means “Center Kingdom” i.e. the centre of the world and even that of the universe. All outsiders were regarded as barbarians, foreign and inferior (Dehoney 1988:16).

- **Different mission strategy**

The missionaries of Korea chose to conduct church planting and world missions at the same time. Therefore, the Korean church also conducted world mission at a very early stage. On the other hand, missionaries in China generally did not teach the converts to have a world mission mind. They emphasised the witness to their own people. In the first 40 years therefore, hardly any Bible College had mission courses. At that time, Western missions never accepted any Chinese to join their mission. They were pure white organisations (Lai Chan, 1998 Interview).

- **Problem of children's education**

Arranging proper education for children is very difficult on the mission field. Thus, missionaries may not be able to stay for as long as they wish if they do not have sufficient back-up systems. The children's education problems forced them to leave the field (Chi-Min Tan, interviewed in 1998).

- **Passport problems**

This fundamental problem restricts the free movement of Chinese in and out of their country.

- **Fifty years under persecution**

Mao Zedong believed according to Marxist ideology that "religion is the opium of the people" (Adeney 1985:11). Ever since the Revolution the Communists have emphasised the fact that missionaries are agents of imperialism. It has been often stated that the early Christian missionaries entered China at the point of the bayonet. In 1949 China became communist. Many Christians, Pastors and missionaries lost their lives or were thrown into prison².

² During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1969) church windows were smashed, pews were burned and crosses were taken down. Pastors were required to act as a "walking exhibit", wearing a placard around their necks detailing one or more "crimes" they have committed. Often, they were also made to wear a tall hat similar to a dunce cap. People were paraded as a means of revealing in open public their offences against the Revolution. Many Christians were humiliated and some were beaten to death. Communist cadres and Red Guards searched every house for Bibles, hymnals and other Christian literature. At one time, over twenty YMCA and YWCA secretaries were gathered and forced to kneel in public in front of a pile of burning Bibles. A large crowd stood around and watched this horrendous spectacle. As the flames intensified and exerted their heat towards the victims, they cried out in pain because of the excruciating torment. It was such a pitiful sight. After the Cultural Revolution, there were no more open church meetings. Many Christians hid their Bibles in mountain caves.

2.7 CHINA AND MISSIONS

In a report from the Fuller World Mission Center, Professor Wagner was quoted as saying: “In 2025 AD the largest missionary sending country will be China”.

Adeney adds that

“Based on the most conservative estimates, the church of Jesus Christ in Mainland China has grown more than tenfold since the missionaries left at the end of the 1940s. In comparison, the Church in the free world of the West has had no real growth during the same period. In many places, there was decline instead” (1985:12).

This church is very strategic. Many underground church members had given their lives to the Lord in past decades. Their faith is vibrant and new. The next step for them will be to formally get trained at Bible Colleges with an emphasis on world mission. Thus equipped, they may go out as missionaries. The conversion of the Chinese people (1/5 of the world's population) is a great priority. The Holy Spirit may well choose this very route to spread His salvation to all the nations of the earth.

2.7.1 The Chinese Mission Movement

The emigrant Chinese population is estimated to be at least 56 million. Of these, 28 million live in the four Chinese majority territories/states of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao and Singapore. The remaining 28 million reside in over 100 nations around the world. Worldwide speaking, the movement of Chinese turning to God is very significant and highly visible (Johnstone 1993:165).

The process of Chinese migration is significant. According to the Chinese Coordinating Centre of World Evangelisation (CCCOWE)'s report, Chinese people have been migrating to Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Burma, Malaya, India and other nearby Southeastern Asian regions since the Han Dynasty (202 BC-220 AD) (CCCOWE 1980:13). Since the Sung to the Yuan Dynasty (960-1368 AD) some Chinese migrated to the Philippines, Indonesia and as far as the Middle East. In the late 18th century, which is the time of the Ch'ing Dynasty, many "coolies" (labourers) were sold to Europe and America.

Takaki pointed out that there were two major waves of Asian immigration to America, the first wave in 1848 and the second wave in 1965 (1989:406-471). The news that gold could be picked up in Californian streams sparked the gold rush in 1848. According to the study of Thomas Chinn and Stanford Lyman, the population of the immigrant Chinese in America was 4 825 in 1850, which grew to 237 292 in 1960 (Chinn 1969:19). However, the Immigration Act of 1956 abolished the national-origins quotas and provided for the annual admission of 170 000 immigrants from the Eastern Hemisphere and 120 000 from the Western Hemisphere. This new immigration law produced a

massive increase in Asian immigration. In 1980, the Chinese population jumped to 812 200.

When the Communists took over Mainland China in 1949, the Chinese churches and Christians faced a persecution that was unprecedented both in scope and force in Chinese church history. A mass exodus of Chinese took place in 1949 and many of the Chinese Christians also left their home country. Thomas Wang compares the exodus of Chinese Christians out of Mainland China as one of the "moves" of God in a gigantic game of chess. He writes, "Is God not making another 'move' today? The Chinese have been settling around the world for a long time, but in the last 30 years this number has increased, among them there are many Christians. These have in one way or another planted churches. The Lord has in his mercy sprinkled an unprecedented number of Chinese churches around the world. In this we see His handiwork" (Wang 1992:11-12).

Historians called the migration before 1949 as the "General Migration of Chinese overseas" and the one after 1949 as the "Specific Migration of Chinese Christians". According to the CCCOWE's Research Department, in 1992 there were 56 million Chinese residing overseas and the number of Overseas Chinese Christian churches were 6 639 (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Number of Chinese and Chinese Churches outside of China

Region	Chinese Population	No of Chinese Christian Churches	No of Chinese Christians

Asia	52 102 000	5 625	1 080 639
Europe	540 000	110	12 000
North America	2 425 472	780	138 800
Latin America	477 300	45	N.A.
Oceania	230 000	69	8 335
Africa	68000	15	695
Total	55842732	6644	1240469

(CCCOWE 1992:7-8)

2.7.2 The Mission Expanding Phase (1980-1994)

Whilst there were 5 000 overseas Chinese churches in the mid-eighties, how many of these churches responded to the great commission? Rev Wang estimated that there were at least 10% of the Chinese churches involved in missions, whereas Rev Kenneth Lo considered that the number could be as low as 5%. Edmond Mok, the Executive Secretary of the Hong Kong Association of Christian Missions, believes that the actual situation probably lies somewhere in between. He suggests that the percentage of the mission-involved overseas Chinese Churches was between 5% and 10% in 1985 and 10% to 15% in 1989 (Mok 1992:16). Rev Hay-Him Chan, the Executive secretary of the CCCOWE, pointed out that there were 7 000 overseas Chinese churches in mid-1993 and only 650 churches were involved actively in missions (Chan 1993:2-4).

During the 2nd International Chinese Christian World Missions Seminar under

the theme "Nations Wait, Let's Go!" and sponsored by CCCOWE in Hong Kong, 284 overseas Chinese pastors and mission executives from 22 countries gathered together. They reviewed the past and present situations and discussed the future direction of the Chinese overseas missions. The speakers included Dr James Taylor, Dr Gail Law, Dr Philemon Choi, Dr Titus Loon, Dr Cyrus Lam, Dr Tjandra and Rev Chan Fong. In the seminar some important data were highlighted: in mid-1993, there were 301 Chinese missionaries who worked in Africa, Asia, America and Europe. They were engaged in church planting, pastoral care, training and social work. They served as career missionaries, tentmakers or short-termers.

2.7.3 The New Missionary Movement

With these emigrant Chinese Christians the mission strategy is somewhat different. The traditional missionary had to study at Bible College; they had to learn a new language; they had to learn anthropology, cross cultural; communication, Islam, folk religion, they had to join a mission; adjust to a new culture; and find financial support.

The Chinese who were born and brought up in another country, for instance in Indonesia, Malaysia or the Philippines, are spared the painful task which many missionaries had to face in learning a new language, culture or customs. For example, the Indonesian Chinese, had already "put on" another culture on top of the Chinese culture. These overseas Chinese therefore have an added advantage. All they need to do is to study at a Bible College for three years and then they could become missionaries. The point is made that emigrant

Chinese Christians are an extremely strong missionary force.

2.8 CONCLUSION

- Chinese culture, in essence, is family oriented. This is a common element of the culture of many Third World countries around the world. This similarity in culture will make it easier for the Chinese to adapt in the mission field of 3rd world countries
- The predominant religions of the Chinese people are Buddhism and Folk Religion. In many ways they closely resemble Hinduism and African Traditional Religions. This similarity allows Chinese missionaries to go out to the mission field and understand easily the various religious backgrounds of African peoples.
- China is still a very poor country. There are many underground churches that mushroomed as a result of the communist persecution. These churches are experiencing the miraculous workings of God. Most of these Christians are fully committed and are willing to sacrifice for Christ. Once sent out to work, the Chinese missionaries from these churches are prepared to die in the field without any doubts or hesitation. This is very different to the Taiwan missionaries, or the Western missionaries, who worry about support, kid's education and a salary (Lai Chan, interviewed in 1998, Principal of Dau-Sen Seminary).

- The Chinese people have been in touch with the Western missionaries for more than 200 years now. In all this time, they have come to know both the good and bad approaches used by Western missionaries. Similar to other peoples from Third World countries, they can consider themselves as recipients of the good and the bad. When they go out to be missionaries as well they could take these experiences as good examples to learn from. They should adopt the good points of western missionaries, but try to avoid repeating the mistakes that they made.
- When the early western missionaries came to China, they were regarded as spies and were accused of ushering in the Opium War. Many people therefore were wary of missionaries and wondered whether they might have ulterior motives. They were described as those who came like angels, but carried guns and bombs behind their backs. Today, when Chinese churches send Chinese missionaries all over the world, it is without a colonialist attitude. When Chinese missionaries go out, they act as Christ's servants and serve the people in the field. The Chinese will never forget historically painful experiences brought about by colonisation, but this should become a driving force instead. As Confucius once said, "Do not do to others what you don't want others to do to you"... a lesson that is also thoroughly Biblical.
- The lessons learnt in Chinese history have become a great benefit for the Chinese people and for the work of Chinese missionaries. The Third World Mission is geared to reach out to the various people in Third World Countries. Whilst many Arab countries may resent the Americans and other Christian countries, they do not have the same resentment for the Chinese people.



CHAPTER 3

A CHINESE MISSIONARY IN LIBERIA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with the role Chinese missionaries can play in the cross-cultural setting of Africa in particular. It is also based on specific experiences of the author, who under the circumstances may be cited as a pioneering missionary. Therefore this Chapter will constitute a case study.

Chinese mission as a whole is still in its infant stages because there is so much for the Chinese to learn in terms of mission work. Missionaries must be encouraged to step forward in faith and not to assume that cross-cultural missions are only reserved for Western missionaries. The understanding underlying this work is that the Lord will use all races to fulfill His commission. In particular, He is going to mobilise people from the Third World to reach out to those parts of the world.

The author would like to also use this Chapter to develop a spiritual strategy for Chinese missionaries in the Third World mission fields. An evaluation will be made to assess the possibilities for Chinese missions to serve other countries both now and in the future.

This chapter will focus on the Gbandi tribe of Liberia. It will describe the tribe, deal with the different aspects of the mission work among them as well as make comparisons between the approaches of different missionaries working together in that region. Differences amongst missionaries can be quite large as they come from different nations, cultures and denominational backgrounds. The purpose of this Chapter is not meant to look down on missionaries from other countries, or to boast the capabilities of Chinese missionaries over others. On the contrary, Chinese missionaries look down upon their own abilities. Some lack the confidence to work with other races and is very reticent of doing cross-cultural work.

3.2 LIBERIA

3.2.1 The History of Liberia

Liberia was founded as a political nation by the American Colonization Society in an attempt to return freed slaves to the African continent. Multiple motives were behind this action, among others, to get rid of the "Negro problem" in America, to spread Christianity and also, out of goodwill, to enable blacks to return to their native land. As a result of this close relationship, Liberia was heavily influenced by American culture. As one can see, the pattern of the Liberian flag very much resembles that of the American flag. On their bank notes are written: "The Love of Liberty brought us here". The capital city, Monrovia, was named after the fifth American President, James Monroe, who was a major supporter of the society.



The Kru	40,5%. Over 18 ethnic groups with the largest the Bassa 348 000.
The West Atlantic	7,5%.
Others	2,7%.
Non-tribal	2,3%. English-speaking.

- Literacy is 64%, the official language is English. All languages total 34. Languages with Scriptures stand at 1 only with a Bible, 10 with New Testaments.
- The capital Monrovia (421 000 in 1984) is now inflated to 1 000 000 by the internally displaced (Johnstone 1993:352).

3.2.3 The Liberian Situation

3.2.3.1 Economy

The mining of iron ore and diamonds, export of rubber, timber and coffee and a large "flag of convenience" fleet of ships could have made this land prosper. Yet years of institutionalised corruption, control of trade by Lebanese and exclusive control of politics by the elite have prevented expected development. The destruction of the economy by the civil war may well take decades to restore.

3.2.3.2 Politics

In 1847 Liberia became Black Africa's first independent state. The dominance of Liberians of American origin ended in the coup in 1980. Subsequently, the military government became increasingly unstable.

(<http://allafrica.com/liberia/> June 6, 1999)

In 1980, Taylor from America returned to Liberia and became one of Doe's advisers, On Christmas Day, 1989, he led NPFL forces in an attack on Liberia's northern Nimba County. Within months Taylor's rebels had taken control of most of the countryside, and Doe was effectively trapped in Monrovia, the capital. Prince Yormie Johnson, leader of a rival rebel group, assassinated Doe in September 1990

(http://www.africana.com/Articles/tt_507.htm 23 Aug. 1999).

Massive corruption and repression of the Mano and Gio peoples provoked the 1989 revolution led by Charles Taylor. The war engulfed the country in an orgy of inter-tribal killings and ultimately three dominant forces contended for power. The military intervention of the West African States (ECOWAS) has proved a costly stalemate, with the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces controlling Monrovia and Taylor's forces controlling much of the hinterland. Charles Taylor won elections held on July 19, 1997.

The Liberian Ministry of Information reported what President Charles Taylor said on 5th of June 2001 that if West African leaders became complacent about the war in Lofa, northern Liberia, the entire region could be endangered.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has called on Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to hold a summit as a confidence-building measure toward achieving

peace in and between their nations. His call came in the form of a report on displaced populations in the three countries that have one million war victims, including refugees and IDPs. Ordinary Liberians now subject Sierra Leonean refugees in neighbouring Liberia to daily maltreatment. Their security personnel following the recent escalation of fighting in the northern town of Zorzo, Lofa County Reports say the fighting was spear headed by Liberian dissidents aiming at overthrowing the NPFL rebel leader cum President Charles Taylor.

The UNHCR Representatives in Sierra Leone announced on 22 May that they have registered about 12 000 Liberian refugees who fled the ongoing war in Lofa in northern Liberia (<http://allafrica.com/liberia/> June 6, 2001).

3.2.3.3 Religion

Liberia was founded as a Christian state. There appears to be freedom of religion in theory, but in practice there is pressure on Christians to conform to occult secret societies. As many Christians and Muslims have fled the country, figures provided below are estimates only.

Traditional religions	49,4 %, of which maybe 10-15% claim to be "Christian". Secret societies are strongly entrenched and institutionalised. Relatively few Liberians are uninvolved.
Christian	37%.
Protestant	20,6%.

Roman Catholic 3%.

Growth 6,2%.

Missionaries to Liberia 353 people.

Muslim 13,3%. Majority are among the Mandingo and Vai.

Baha'i 0,3%.

(Johnstone 1993:352).

3.2.3.4 The Bloody Civil War

This is a political cancer poisoning much of West Africa. The military stalemate with mounting casualties, suffering and 50% of the population living as refugees, makes a compromise solution urgent. Lust for power, deep ethnic hatred and divisions among West African states about future strategy prevent peace. It is in everybody's interest that those leaders who prolonged the agony of all people for selfish gains to be disempowered and wise leaders should arise and bring peace and foster redevelopment (Johnstone 1993:352-353).

3.3 A CASE STUDY OF THE GBANDI TRIBE

3.3.1 Introduction

As the author worked in the remote countryside locale in the midst of the Gbandi tribe, some general information about these people is necessary.

3.3.2 The Gbandi Tribe

The Gbandi tribe migrated from the North and East of Africa and the Middle East to their present location many centuries ago, bringing with them remnants of the ancient cultures of Egypt and Arabia. Their dialect is a branch of the greater Mende languages of West Africa and is closely related to the Mende dialect of Sierra Leone, as well as the Loma and Kpele languages of Liberia.

The Gbandi tribe is made up of several clans. Those to the south include the Hassaalo and Lukasu, who have had strong Islamic influence coming in from Sierra Leone through the Mende and Mandingo peoples. The larger Tahamba tribe to the north has been resistant to Islam and has held more strongly to their traditional animistic beliefs, primarily due to the stronghold of the Poro (men's) and Sande (women's) Secret Societies.

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the great majority of the Gbandi people. The Gbandi tribe is a society that has undergone tremendous social and economic changes in the past 20 years. Although they are still involved in Secret Societies, they are showing signs of becoming more receptive to change (Correy, interview in 1988, area director of SIM).

3.3.3 Geographic Location

The Gbandi tribe is located in North West Liberia. In the north it is bounded by the Republic of Guinea, in the east by the Ivory Coast and in the west by Sierra Leone, between the Kissi tribe to the West and the Loma tribe to the East. The population is about 71 000 and they occupied between 500 and 600 sq. miles of tropical forest and somewhat hilly land. They live surrounded by other tribal peoples. These regions range from 1 000 feet to 1 200 feet above sea level (Stapf 1969:12).

3.3.4 General Information

Approximately two-thirds of the respondents in a survey conducted by Hendrickson made no claim of understanding English, Liberia's official language. Only 10 % claimed to have more than a primary school education (1980:166). The Gbandi peasants have little formal education. Less than 10% of the peasants have 3 years of education, most of them are illiterate.

The Gbandi are farmers, hunters and businessmen. Agriculture is important, but less so than earlier days. The rural dwellers engage in four major occupations: Agriculture – 85 to 90%; Hunting – 2 to 3%; Coffee, Cocoa – 4 to 5%; Rubber – 8 to 9% (Gwinn 1992:642).

3.3.5 The Gbandi Religious Beliefs

“In the elaboration of cult and cosmological ideas there is a very widespread substratum of basic ideas that persists in the rituals, myths and folk tales of Liberia's West African peoples” (Ottenberg 1960:116).

In the following much use is made of the 1972 book by BG Dennis.

3.3.5.1 The Gbandi's Concept of Deity

Religion is very important and pervasive among the Gbandis, and unless a person understands it thoroughly, he will find it difficult, if not impossible, to understand Gbandi Devil Society. The Gbandi religion involves ultimate values for this people because it is intertwined in the fabric of their lives. There is neither an established day of worship nor a hut in which to worship. The Gbandis do not have a paid religious functionary person or can any village or any separate group be considered a typical community of worshippers. The entire Gbandiland constitutes the religious community and all the Gbandis are the worshippers. Nonetheless, a discussion of any religion, whether or not it has any of the above attributes, must rightly begin with the deities, the supernaturals, or the gods (Dennis 1972:167).

The Gbandis recognise at least four types of deities in the hierarchical structure of their society.

- First, there is God, the creator, who is supreme and who is the giver of all things, good and bad.

“Gbandis believe that after God created the heavens and the earth, he left the world and went to heaven. He left behind however three powers for mankind:

- the Spirit of the ancestors;
- the power of the mountains and the rivers; and

- the powers of witchcraft and the Devil (Chan 1997:182-189; translated by Chiang).

- Second, there are the ancestor spirits. These spirits are the intermediaries between the living and the supreme God. The Gbandis believe that the living can never communicate with the supreme God because they are too sinful to associate directly with God. The ancestors, who have been purged by the penalty of death, are now in a position to intercede on behalf of the living members of their kin group. They are always in the presence of the living members of their families, to mete out punishments or rewards to them. The ancestor spirits are always just in their judgment, and they are ardently devoted to the protection and well-being of the members of their kinship groups. They must be consulted by either the whole kinship group, the family, or the individual members of the family before any undertaking, large or small, is begun. Before the family members eat or drink these spirits must be fed or given drink by one member's spilling a little on the floor. The elder of each household addressed the ancestor spirits by name when a big decision is to be made or an important matter comes before the family. They are consulted about everything in the affairs of life. They are said to be very jealous and very demanding at all times, and therefore they must be satisfied. The Gbandis firmly believe that the living is only happy if the ancestor spirits are made happy. Therefore, in Gbandi society written rules or laws are not needed to regulate an individual's behaviour, nor is anyone needed to enforce such rules or laws. The watchful eyes of the ancestor spirits are forever upon every adult in Gbandi society. One cannot bring disgrace upon one's ancestor; hence there is a built-in social control

system in Gbandiland that needs no explicit law or policemen to enforce it.

- The next group of deities, third in importance, are the non-ancestor spirits. They are, at times, unpredictable in behaviour. They can be mischievous and unrestrained, harmless nuisances, simply to amuse themselves. They are said to have the ability to transform themselves into any form they desire - a man or woman, a young or old person, an animal or a plant, or any other object. Because of their flexibility they are said to be unpredictable in their behaviour. The non-ancestor spirits can also be manipulated by some individuals who claim to understand them either through a friendship with such spirits or through some secret powers which they have over these spirits. Such individuals are said to have complete control over these spirits and they can use them to benefit either themselves or their friends, or to harm their enemies. On the whole, these spirits are unlike the ancestor spirits in that they are controlled by those individuals who understand them. They neither punish nor reward; they only do what is requested. They may be extremely good or extremely bad, depending on what their manipulator wishes. They are said to live under water or in a very thick forest, but they can usually appear to those who know them, either in a dream or in a pre-arranged meeting at some secret place.
- The fourth group of deities are the natural forces or natural phenomena such as lightning, thunder, rain, rocks, trees, or a particular forest. All these are also subject to manipulation. Because of their presence in the bush, one cannot have sexual intercourse there or do anything else which might

pollute the bush, thereby offending them. They are a bit more difficult to understand and they are not particularly friendly. They can be used by the ancestor spirits or non-ancestor spirits as well as by those of the living who are trained to deal with them (see Dennis 1972:169).

3.3.5.2 Death

The death of an adult among the Gbandis is an affair which brings together all the members of the kinship group. Reasons are sought for the death. There are usually three possible reasons given for the death of an adult: the ancestors wanted him, someone bewitched him, or a witch within himself killed him. The third cause of death is relatively easy for the Gbandi to test. A piece of the liver of the deceased is placed into a receptacle of water. If it sinks, then his death was caused by a witch within himself, but if it floats, then someone else killed him.

No one ever deliberately joins with a witch. Those who have a witch never know they have one. It is found that the deceased had a witch, the family is deeply shamed. In that case the body is usually buried very carefully by a doctor to make sure that the spirit of the deceased does not wander aimlessly to harass the living. However, later there may be disturbances, especially at night. Sometimes a whole village is believed to be harassed by such a spirit. It usually starts with the members of one household who, for one reason or another, start yelling very loudly. Once such a cry is heard, the whole village joins in. If the villagers continue to be restless at night, a doctor is employed to help the situation. He usually recommends that the body be removed from the

grave and burned in a designated place. The burning of the corpse, in most cases, ends the harassment of the village. It is believed that such a person does not join the ancestor spirit hierarchy and does not become reincarnated. Those who die because of being bewitched by other witches do join the honoured group of ancestor spirits and do become reincarnated as children (Dennis 1972:174).

3.3.5.3 Life After Death

The Gbandis do have a concept of heaven and hell, but both heaven and hell are part of the social world shaped by the living and the dead. Heaven is designed for most people because the creator wants his work of creation to continue throughout eternity. This gives rise to belief in reincarnation. Those who are reincarnated are those in heaven, because they never die. Those whose bodies are subject to cremation are those in hell, because they are subject to eternal death by total destruction. For the Gbandis, heaven means eternal life and hell means fire. Hell does not mean everlasting fire, as implied in Christianity; for the Gbandis, destruction by fire is complete and immediate extinction. Therefore, those whose bodies are judged unfit are cremated at once, and their destruction is complete and final.

The Gbandis do not believe that death is an end to everything except for those who are cremated. They believe that there are individuals who are not ready for heaven, the spirit community, or cremation. These individuals are said to leave their community for a faraway land after death. There they remain as living persons and send gifts to their families. These individuals are ready and

willing to meet any of their old acquaintances who are still living and have not yet heard of their death. At times, it is believed, these dead who return to life can send gifts and messages via these old acquaintances to their families. They may even live a happy life with a new family and pursue a business life in their new environment. They may live in such a condition as long as no one who knows about their death sees them; if this should happen, they are said to die again immediately and go to live in another community. They will continue to do this until they are ready to settle down in their own community with the ancestor spirits (Dennis 1972:178).

3.3.5.4 Magic and Religion

The use of the terms "religion" and magic as though they were separate concepts is a Western creation with a Western bias. They are one and the same to the Gbandis, as is probably the case with other indigenous Africans. Magic is but another phase of religion, not a different realm of a belief system. Magic as religion may be used to promote good or to promote evil. It may be used to help, to cure, or to harm. The magician may be an individual with epileptic seizures who, when he has a seizure, is considered to be communicating with the spirit community. The individual may be a *towonggbe*; the most appropriate English equivalent of this word would be "fortune-teller". There are many forms of *towonggbe*. Some practitioners may use ashes; others sand; others a calabash (a gourd) with other paraphernalia; and still others may use rocks or stones, and so on. The Muslims use writing from the Koran and beads for the same purpose. One can readily see the lack of a distinction between religion and magic. Magic, as well as prayer to the

ancestor spirits, may be used to manipulate people, as in the case of love potions or harmful medicines. Magic may be used to control spirits. Charms and amulets are employed by the practitioners of magic to ward off injury and evil. A mother may obtain a talisman from a practitioner to protect her infant from harm. A person may employ a magical technique himself or he may seek the services of a regular practitioner.

Closely related to religion and magic is sorcery or kala. It is even more closely related to what is called "witchcraft." As a matter of fact, the distinction between witchcraft and sorcery is an academic one, because the Gbandis do not usually differentiate sorcery from witchcraft. If such a differentiation is made, it is on the basis of one's becoming a sorcerer or a witch, rather than on their function. In the case of sorcery, one has to learn the practice consciously; in the case of witchcraft, one does not consciously become a witch or practice witchcraft (Dennis 1972:182).

3.3.5.5 The Devil Society

The Poro is (one of the Devil Society's name) present when a boy is born, as he grows up, when he is initiated, when he joins the adult society, when he marries, when he is involved in disputes, when his children grow up and marry and when he dies. In some cases, the Poro may be further in the background, in others more dominant, but it is always there, confirming and authenticating his actions (Gay 1967:12-13).

The Taninahun village of the Gbandi tribe was once filled with witchcraft and evil spirits. Just behind the Chiangs' house was the meeting place of the Secret Society, also known as the Devil Society. The society spoke of a Male Devil and a Female Devil. Almost once a week either the Male Devil or the Female Devil would arrive at the village. When a so-called Devil came, they would shout, dance, jump and sing until morning. The Devil's messenger would announce the Devil's imminent arrival 5 minutes in advance by ringing a bell and saying, "The Devil is coming, everyone should run indoors". When the "Male Devil" came to the Taninahun village, all the women ran into their homes, closing their doors and windows. No one stayed outside and no one was allowed to see the Devil. If you saw the Devil, the Devil would kill you or curse you. The only exception to this rule was Gbandis belonging to the Devil cult, these people were allowed outside. When the "Female Devil" came, all the men ran indoors instead. Missionaries would also hide whenever the bell announcing the coming of the Devil was rung.

This Witchcraft/devil-worship was the main hindrance to the Gbandi believing in the Gospel. Villagers were often not allowed to come and attend worship in church, fearing that disasters caused by witchcraft may befall them (Grinker and Steiner 1997:304). "The SOS Children's Village reported that some of their children had been 'eaten by the Devil' .

3.3.5.6 The Ways of the Secret Society

The Secret Society is also called the Bush Society. When boys are 8 years old, they are considered qualified to join the Secret Society. Before the boys

join the Society, their parents would prepare spears and javelins for them to fight the monster of the bush. The monster is actually the leader of the Secret, or Devil, Society. Although children are generally panicky and frightened before this initiation rite, they are encouraged by their parents to handle this situation with bravery. The night before the rite, the child's mothers would utter the ritual words: "My son, I believe you are able to kill the monster" and the fathers would say: "Remember to bring back the skull of the monster". The grandmothers would shout from the next room: "Remember to bring back some teeth of the monster for me to use as a plug for my jar". The child would then answer in a trembling voice: "Yes, Yes".

The next day all the boys gather together in a big room inside the bush where they remain for four days. At night, the voice of the devil comes to terrify the children while they are sleeping. Some children are completely terrified while they are in the bush, but most try to be brave. After the voice of the monster was heard, there comes a command that every child must obey and not defy. Firstly, the monster will order them to imitate the voice of a frog and learn to swim on the floor, or to fly like a bird in the dark room. When they are tired, the children fall asleep again. Some time later, a big hand may suddenly throw the children a basket of hot peppers and say: "All those that are heroes, take and eat". Different commands are issued every night. As days go on, the commands get more difficult. On the last day, the monster would shout to the boys, "Open the gate and come out". When all the boys come out, the monster moves ahead of them and goes into the gate of a fence. Inside the fence is the Bush School.

When the boys enter the Bush School, two voices of the monster can be heard, saying, "I am going to eat them all"; and "I believe you will be able to make it". The first voice says, "Who is the first one that has come here to die"? Then there comes a terrible sound, "Ha! Ha! I have eaten one now". The monster "eats" the children one by one and their childhoods are considered to be dead and buried. From then on, the children become new persons (Chan 1997:193, translated by writer).

The children learn from the Bush School how to rule their families. They learn about the secret of sex, as well as the rituals of devil dancing and witchcraft. They also gain knowledge of country medicine, agriculture and the worship of heaven and earth (Gay 1973:123-140).

When the children come out of the bush school, the whole village would be very happy. This is the moment of great family pride and all the elements of family rivalry are demonstrated at this time. First, each family tries to buy the best and most expensive suit for its graduate(s). Second, each tries to present such gift to its graduate(s). And third, each tries to contribute conspicuously to the public feast that terminates the school session in order to gain public praise and recognition. The feast lasts about two weeks at the end of which, each graduate is given a new name (Dennis 1972:140).

The child is painted with white clay and remains in the thatch shelter until the 'moon shines'. At this point, they are dressed in new clothes, given new names and brought back to the town for a grand celebration. They wear the finest clothes their relatives can provide, as well as a white cloth

draped around the head and body to show they are 'new-born' to the tribe. In effect, the 'forest thing' has been persuaded to give them back to their people, to disgorge them after this period in his stomach, to give them new birth. There would be a great dance and feast in the village, lasting through the night. Guns are fired, goats and sheep are killed, old women would shed their dignity and dance, girls look at boys and boys at girls for the first time in months or years and the town welcomes back those who were 'dead'. During all these activities, the children maintain unusual sobriety and restraint (Gay 1967:18).

3.3.5.7 Muslim Influence

The Mandingo people (a tribe of roving traders everywhere in West Africa) are very strong Muslim traders as well as being great promoters of their faith. They often stop the village people from believing in Jesus. The Gbandi tribe in the countryside is considered to be unreached. They can be divided into the following religious categories:

Muslim	50%
Devil Society	49%
Christian	1%.

3.3.6 Life Style

The Gbandi people have come into contact with the outside world since 1970. Soon afterwards, they were cut off from outside influences. These people are

stocky and extremely hardy. They like colourful clothes and are very friendly to their guests. Whilst they are starting to embrace Western values, particularly materialistic ones, many of them are still staunch Secret Society members (Correy 1988 D.S interview by author).

The Gbandi tribal people speak Gbandi. The Gbandi grammar has 85 pronouns and 40 tenses; its grammar is more difficult than that of English. They are very friendly, they greet each other everyday with handshakes. Polowu is a Muslim town. People there take baths twice a day, one before sunrise and one after sunset. Most of the Gandhi people are farmers. They plant rice, coffee, cocoa and palm oil. They hunt at night.

Since the Gandhi do not have kitchens, they normally cook outside of the house. Three stones hold up the pot. One missionary once used these three stones to explain about the Trinity. Pre-marital sexual relationships are prevalent.

3.4 CHRISTIAN MISSION AMONG THE GBANDI

3.4.1 Introduction

Because of its early history as a country that repatriated freed slaves, Liberia played a significant role in the evangelization of West Africa. There is quite a mission history connected to the country. However, as SIM (the original Sudan Interior Mission) is the pioneer mission in the Gandhi area, we are here only paying attention to that mission.

3.4.2 History of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM)

Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) is the former name of "Society for International Ministries". Its pioneer missionaries, Walter Gowns, Thomas Kent and Rowland Bingham set out in 1893 to try to open Africa's vast "Sudan" area to the Gospel. The result – two graves for the three brave pioneers. The only survivor, Bingham, made a second attempt later to bring the Gospel to Sudan. That, too, ended in defeat. Indeed, the difficulties encountered then were so great that the mere fact that the Sudan Interior Mission could be planted in Africa was a miracle in itself. In the first seven years only one African came forward to accept Jesus. There was once a grievous remark which goes like this, "dead missionaries are greater in number than the Africans who are won to Christ". Some also gravely commented that, "Africa is the tomb of the white man" (Bingham 1991:68).

Apart from the other work that the SIM did in Liberia, they especially became known for their radio programmes. Until its destruction in 1990, SIM's Radio ELWA (Eternal Love Winning Africa) used to be Africa's best-known station, with 270 hours per week broadcasting time in 46 languages. It was a serious loss when this whole centre was looted and destroyed during the civil war. Although it was later put back into operation, it is now only a shadow of its previous success.

On the ELWA campus was established also a hospital with 50 beds, an operating room, an X-ray room and a delivery room. This mission station also served as the SIM headquarters with a number of missionaries connected to

the different departments. They also established an ELWA Missionary Kids School.

One of the significant outreach areas was on the Firestone Rubber Plantation. This is the biggest rubber plantation in the world, with one million acres of land and a hundred thousand workers. There are about 94 villages surrounding the plantation; each village has 1 000 to 2 000 residents. Missionaries are called to teach the Bible and to help establish churches there.

Bible Translation work has been gravely disrupted by the civil war. There were ten existing translation projects, but a further 11-13 were yet to be tackled (Johnstone 1993:353). Because of the disruptions many pastors and Christians have lost all their belongings. In particular, there is a great lack of Bibles, New Testaments and other Christian literature. The Christian Literature Centre (CLC)'s bookstore in Monrovia was looted at one time although it was restocked later. As a whole, local believers need the provision of more Christian literature (Johnstone 1993:353).

3.4.3 History of SIM's Work among the Gbandi

Although SIM started their work in Monrovia at a much earlier date, it was only in 1981 that John Correy started researching the Gbandi tribe. For almost thirty years SIM had not reached out to the rural tribal people. Outreach to the Gbandi is a very recent endeavour and the Gbandi church has only existed for about ten years. Indeed, church planting to the Gbandi tribe who lived in Northern Liberia is a pioneer ministry. The Chiang family arrived at the end of 1983.

The area where the Gbandi tribe lives is approximately one day away from Monrovia by car, or one and half hours by airplane. In this area, there is no supply of either water or electricity. Some of the village people still live a very primitive life and do not wear any clothing.

3.4.4 Difficulties Faced by Missionaries in the Cross-cultural Environment

3.4.4.1 The White Man's Grave

In the early days of missions, missionaries to Africa died within 1 year of their arrival, not because of violence or civil war, but mainly because of malaria, yellow fever and hepatitis. For example, the Church Missionary Society sent 79 missionaries to Liberia in 1830; 44 died in the first year. The American Presbyterian Mission sent 75 missionaries; 31 died in the first year. In 1988, the first Methodist Missionary groups cried out, "Even though thousands of missionaries die in West Africa, we will never give up Africa".

In his diary, Willis R Hotchkiss said, "In Africa I was sick 30 times in 4 years and was attacked by wild animals 3 times. Yet I will exalt Jesus' name in this dark land" (Chan 1997:169-170 Translated by writer).

3.4.4.2 Cultural Adjustment

- **Cultural Adjustment**

In the 1980s the team of missionaries working with the Gbandis had 19 people altogether. Some were from America, others were from Canada, England, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. These missionaries came from different cultures, backgrounds and denominations. One of the big problems was that different missionaries sometimes gave different instructions and confused the African church leaders. Despite their high respect for missionaries, African church leaders would likely consider missionaries more difficult to work with than the African people.

- **Cultural Shock**

The missionary team for the Gbandis came from 9 different countries and have varying cultural backgrounds and languages. They all experienced cultural shock from associating with each other as well as living with the Gbandi tribe. Eventually, the Mission's Director considered it better for different country's missionary groups to be separated into different villages. As a result, they were all isolated but lost their teamwork motivation. Some of the missionaries ended up getting spiritual depression and became easy prey to Satan's power.

3.4.5 Religious³ Reasons Hindering Gbandi People from Following Christ

3.4.5.1 The Devil Society

The society forces every child from 8 years old and above to join the Secret

³ In this section the material from anthropological studies have been consulted on the Gbandi tribe.

Society. “The Poro School is indeed the highest arbiter in Gbandi. The Poro leaders are respected by kings, chiefs and commoners alike” (Dennis 1972:142). Children have to live in the bush for 2 years and separated from their families. After that these children become dedicated members of the Devil society for the duration of their lives. Both male and female children are circumcised and some children ended up dying because of this. In some ways, this arrangement is similar to enrolment into the army or the Muslim Madressah. “The sign of membership of the Devil Society is, therefore, a most painful ordeal” (Maugham 1969:240).

3.4.5.2 Human Sacrifice

There are scholars who write about the prevalence of ritual murder and human sacrifice as part of the “ancient and blood-thirsty religious order of the Leopards” (Junge 1953:185). From time to time someone may report that So-and-so was bewitched and killed himself or even simply that so-and-so was killed by witchcraft (Grinker and Steiner 1997:306).

There are also many sensational stories to this effect. For instance, there was a missionary couple who lived in the countryside. The Devil Society came one day and tied their bodies up with ropes. Then they used knives to dig out the victim’s eyes and hearts for making country medicine. The former President, Samuel Dou, also came to the village one day to meet the Secret Society. The “Devil” gave him country medicine (made from children’s eyes and hearts) and said, “If you eat this medicine you will have more power and will continue to be president”.

3.4.5.3 Witchcraft

Gbandis believe witches can leave their bodies and fly about doing harm, or turn into animals for doing mischief. They also believe that witches can cause lightning to strike their enemies. In addition, people think an old person may attempt to bewitch and 'eat' his children or grandchildren, without being aware of the deed he is doing at the time. It is also believed that every witch will eventually die of witchcraft himself (Gay 1967:23).

It is believed that when a piece of the liver of a dead person is placed in a receptacle of water and it sinks, then his death was caused by a witch within himself; but if it floats, then someone else killed him (Dennis 1972:174).

3.4.5.4 Divination

On the subject of divination, Gay has the following to say:

"Divination is an important aid in decision-making. We have already seen how a question may be answered by using two split kola nuts. They are thrown on the ground and their position, facing up or facing down, determines the answer. All the while the diviner talks to the kola nuts and consults his medicine, which may be an herb or some other charm wrapped in a leaf.

More common however is the use of ordeals. In this, the accused person is required to undergo an ordeal in order to establish his guilt or innocence. He may be required to drink a liquid containing a poisonous

substance. If he vomits it and thus lives, he is innocent. He may be required to put his hand in a pot of boiling liquid. If it does not burn him, he is innocent. He may be required to have a red-hot cutlass laid against his skin. If he is not burned, he is innocent" (Gay 1967:24).

3.4.5.5 Ancestor Spirits

It is well known that the spiritual realm is very important in the African world-view. Human beings are also in a sense spiritual beings, especially after their death. "A human being is usually held by 4 parts: the soul that survives; the soul that lives as an animal wild in the bush; the shadow cast by the body; the soul that acts in dreams" (Kingsley 1901:170).

"Life for the African means 'life force' or 'life potency', which comes primarily from ancestors and is passed on to descendants" (Nida 1990:60). Mbiti describes the deceased as the "living dead" - they remain part of the community. The ancestor spirits are considered always just in their judgements and they are ardently devoted to the protection and well being of the members of their kinship groups. Before the family members eat or drink, these spirits must be fed or given drink by one member spilling a little of the food and drink on the floor. The Gbandis firmly believe that the living can only be happy if the ancestor spirits are made happy. Therefore, written rules or laws are not needed in Gbandi society to regulate an individual's behaviour, nor is anybody needed to enforce such rules or laws. The ancestor spirits' watchful eyes are forever upon every adult in Gbandi society (Dennis 1972:168).

3.4.5.6 Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine is based on the witchcraft practiced in the Devil Society. Whenever Gbandis are ill, they will use country medicine, which is closely tied to their religion.

3.4.5.7 Hindered by Islamic Faith

Islamic faith came to the Gbandis from North Africa. "The Muslim religion crossed the Sahara desert about the eleventh century AD. The Tarik, a history of the Western Sudan written in the 17th century by Amir Es Sardi contains a reference to a prince of the Songhai Kingdom, who about 1000 A.D., became a follower of Muhammad" (Ellis 1914:95-96). In Islamic schools, boys are taught Arabic and some of them become quite proficient in it. Instruction is given in this language in order that the Koran and other works in Arabic may be read.

How did the Muslims reach the interior villages of the Gbandi tribes? It seems as if Mandingo Muslim merchants moved into the Gbandi villages and influenced the people to become Muslims⁴. What were the reasons why Islam was so easily accepted by the Gbandi? (Dennis 1972:179) gives a few reasons :

⁴ An additional reason that the author has identified, regarding why a village would not convert to Christianity, is because missionaries do not want to live inside the village. This is contrast with the Muslim traders who live in Gbandi villages.

- The Islamic religion represents a source of power arising from the sought-after ability to read and write.
- The Islamic religion also gives one the power to tell fortunes and to make charms, which are imbued with magical powers to accomplish various things.
- One does not have to leave home to become a follower of Islam.
- Islam allows men to have up to four wives.

Islam's rapid expansion seems to have slowed down. The Muslim Mandingos's support for the previous, regime and their relative wealth provoked a cruel response from other tribes. Nearly all the Mandingo have been killed or fled to Guinea and up to 1 000 mosques destroyed or damaged. Liberia was once a major centre for Islamic growth in West Africa and this was one of the factors that provoked war (Johnstone 1993:353).

3.4.6 Problems Found in Gbandi Churches

3.4.6.1 Nurture

There is a great need for Bibles but the rural churches are very poor and cannot afford to buy them. Even if they managed to get hold of a Bible, it is still not very useful to them because many of them can neither read nor write English. Because of this need, Bible translation is urgently underway. The Lutheran Mission has completed the translation of the four gospels.

Apart from reading material, there is a great need for workers too. Most of the young workers do not have sufficient theological training (Corey 1992, SIM area director).

3.4.6.2 Morality

Sexual promiscuity in Gbandi abounds and in most cases, Gbandi women are relatively free to have extramarital sexual relations with other men (Dennis 1972:86-87). Polygamy is accepted in Gbandi society. The town folk give a particular explanation of this: When the first wife gets pregnant, she cannot work in the rice farm nor cook for her husband. According to the Bush Society's law, the husband will not be permitted to sleep with his wife for 2 years after she has become pregnant. Often therefore the wife will suggest for her husband to marry another woman in order to get a helper. The first wife has more power and can lord over the second one.

It is the desire of almost all Gbandi young men who may have a claim of high birth to get two or more wives. At the same time, every Gbandi young woman of high social standing may also wish to marry a man who has a number of wives. The number of wives is indicative of high social status. Some Gbandi people become polygamous not because they want to but because they are encouraged by relatives and friends to do so (Barrett 1986:325).

Most Gbandis have no more than one or two wives. The chiefs, however, may have 20-30 wives. The number of wives a chief has is directly related to the size of his rice farm (Dennis 1972:84). The first gift a Gbandi will give to a town chief is usually a chicken. As a second gift a goat will be offered; the third time the chief will receive a cow and the final time the chief will be offered the daughter of the villager as a gift.

The Bible stipulates that church leaders cannot have more than one wife and this turns out to be one of the biggest problems that the Gbandi Churches have to face. With such a cultural hindrance, one can hardly find anybody within the Gbandi Tribe who is willing to be a leader of the church.

3.5 A COMPARISON OF THE CULTURES OF THE GBANDI, THE ASIANS AND AMERICANS

3.5.1 Regarding Family Structure

- Gbandi people are generally more family and people oriented than Westerners. Grandparents and relatives live together in an extended household arrangement. In comparison, the Chinese are also family oriented while Westerners are more insular.
- It is not unusual for the Gbandi people to have about 25 people all living under one roof. The Chinese, on the other hand, usually have about 10 people, including grandparents, living in one house. The Americans tend to have at maximum about 4 persons staying together. It is true to say that "Western industrialisation has destroyed traditional family structures" (Bauer 1992:66-67).
- Gbandi people live in a polygamist society. As for the Chinese, many people were also polygamists in the earlier days. Americans, on the other

hand, are monogamists.

- A Gbandi bride on her wedding day traditionally wears brown, a Chinese bride wears red, while an American bride wears white.
- For funerals, Chinese wear white instead of the black of the traditional American.

3.5.2 Social Behaviour

- Generally speaking, both Gbandi tribal people and Chinese welcome visitors on an informal basis. Americans normally prefer people to make appointments beforehand.
- When mistakes are made, the Gbandi would prefer private rebuking. Similarly, Chinese also prefer to be criticised in private, as they do not want to lose face. As for the Americans, they normally choose to rebuke people openly to clear any dispute in public.
- Gbandi people seldom keep their promises. Chinese sometimes are inclined to forget what they have promised. Americans generally are more serious in trying to keep their promises.
- Both the Gbandi and the Chinese traditionally conduct business through verbal agreements and trust. Americans, on the other hand, prefer to base agreements on written documents, receipts, letters, certificates etc.

- The Gbandi people treat hospitality as a priority. Chinese commonly like to urge visitors, regardless of whether they were invited or just came by themselves, to eat something at their house. Americans usually do not practice an open house policy, but would show hospitality if you were invited into their homes.

3.5.3 **Business Ethics**

- Both Gbandi and Chinese people traditionally like to do things through relationships. If cross-cultural relationships have not been established, both cultures would prefer not to work with strangers who are new to their society. Americans, however, would evaluate cooperation opportunities more on credentials and ability. They rely on laws, principles and standards as the foundation for getting business done.
- The Gbandi are not good at planning and tend to do things impulsively. Chinese people do plan, but do not often carry out their plan as originally intended. Americans generally plan and then carry out their plans.
- Both Gbandi and Chinese people commonly accept bribes as if it is something natural. On the other hand, Americans mostly consider accepting bribes as unethical.
- Gbandi people do things jointly. For example, on rice farms everyone from town chief down to the common folk's children are able to work together in harmony. Chinese people tend to be rather individualistic and lack teamwork skills. As for Americans, they generally have good teamwork skills

and in all circumstances are able to maintain certain degrees of relationship amongst structured working teams.

- Both Gbandi and Chinese people are relatively weak in organisational skills, while Americans in general are very good at organisation and administration.
- When Gbandi people receive their salaries, they like to spend it quickly. Chinese people, on the other hand, prefer to save their money. They may appear poor outwardly, but actually hoard their money. Americans adopt a more balanced approach in handling their money.
- The Gbandi people do not care about the future. They cut down the banana crops while they are still green; it's hard for people to buy a long banana in Liberia! When the papayas are still small, they cut them down quickly and they kill hens which have not yet laid eggs. Chinese people are the exact opposite of this. They are so concerned about the future that they do not enjoy the present⁵. The Americans are more practical.

3.5.4 Differences of Character

- Gbandi people easily express their feelings to others. They would openly

⁵ This is illustrated by the following story. When a Chinese beggar sees an egg, he will start to dream about that egg. He thinks, "If this egg delivers a hen, the hen will deliver another 20 eggs. Then I will have 20 chickens. And when they grow up I can start a Chinese restaurant. Then I can sell chicken rice every day. I will earn a lot of money. I will get a girl friend, buy a new house, a new car...I will become a millionaire". He jumps for joy, but carelessly tramples on the only egg.

reveal their emotions of joy, anger, sorrow and delight. As for the Chinese, they tend to behave just the opposite. They hold back their emotions, in particular in public and are thus reserved. In the case of the Americans, they express their emotions as and when they see fit.

- Both the Gbandi and Chinese people tend to be more emotional than rational, whilst the Americans appear to be more rational than emotional.
- Gbandi people love hearing stories and at the same time, have difficulty comprehending mathematics or logic. The Chinese are inclined to love story telling also, whereas the Americans, on the other hand, are more attracted to serious matters such as theories, logic and methodologies.
- The Gbandi people normally have difficulty with numbers and statistics. If you ask a Gbandi his age, he will probably answer, "I don't know". Since they do not have birth certificates, they may also say: "My mother told me that, at the time when I was born, the tree in front of my house was still short. But now you see it is taller than our house. So this is my age". Chinese generally do not like numbers too much, whereas the Americans in comparison work with numbers well.
- For Americans in general, the number 13 is regarded as a bad (unlucky) number. Chinese take the number 4 as an unlucky number.
- Gbandi people have a relaxed concept of time. They can easily be one or two days late for appointments. For example, if they say, "we will meet

tomorrow", their tomorrow means when the sun next rises. If the following day is very cloudy, you will be kept waiting for an extra day. The Chinese tend to be late by about 20 minutes, whilst the Americans are usually punctual.

- Gbandi people are never too serious. When someone dies the relatives and friends of the deceased will cry for a while but will start singing and dancing very soon afterwards. They tend to play various games and sports at funerals. The Chinese people, on the other hand, take everything very seriously. When someone dies, they may cry for a whole week and then continue mourning for a whole month. Americans seem to have disciplined schedules for mourning.

- Gbandi people are generally unselfish and willing to share what they have. For example, if you give one banana to a Gbandi boy and he subsequently meets five children, he will share a piece of the banana with each child. As for the Chinese, they will probably finish eating first before going out. In the case of the American, it is likely that they would continue eating the banana while the five children are watching.

- Americans generally are more conscious of other people. They would turn down the volume of their radios, or perhaps use walkmans. They would make an effort to avoid disturbing others' quiet lives. Gbandi people, on the other hand, prefer to buy big and powerful cassette recorders. They say: "We turn the radio up loud so that everyone in town can hear it. Unlike the white man, we are willing to share. White men are so selfish - they play music just for themselves on their walkmans". As for the Chinese, it is a usual

practice for their music shops to turn up their music louder than nearby similar shops in order to attract the attention of potential customers.

3.5.5 Matters of Authority

- With the Gbandi people, a town chief possesses great authority and can lord over others like a dictator. In earlier days, the Chinese followed a similar pattern as can be seen in the dictatorial authority of Communist China. As for the Americans, although they respect able and talented people, they would prefer democracy and are against dictatorship.
- Both the Gbandi and Chinese people use corporal punishment to discipline their children. In 1994, a Los Angeles newspaper once reported an incident of a grandfather who came from Mainland China to America for just one week, during which time he was put in jail for physically punishing his naughty grandson. The child's schoolteacher considered the grandfather guilty of abuse. The American educational law backed up this opinion. In Chinese culture, though, physical punishment is accepted as a legitimate disciplinary method.
- Gbandi people worship heroes. Chinese in general also worship and follow the example of authoritative heroes. As for the Americans, they favour democracy and are against authority although they do have heroes who set trends.
- Both Gbandi and Chinese people pay great respect to the elderly. Young

men do not speak freely in front of the aged. The Americans respect a person's ability and credentials more than his age.

- While the Gbandi people tend to rely on witchcraft for guidance, Chinese like to seek counsel from fortune-tellers. Americans, on the other hand, normally seek guidance from pastors, counselors or lawyers.

3.5.6 Issues Regarding Worldviews

- The Gbandi world centers around self, family, the universe and spirit. As Dr Kalu once said, "A man's life comes from reincarnation. Men revolve from walking on the face of the earth to beneath the earth and then back up to the earth. Death is not the end of life; instead, our lives are brought back to earth after we have lived under the earth for a period of time. We come back to the earth again in bodily form. The responsibility of mankind is to keep the balance and harmony which exists between self, family, the universe and spirit" (Chan 1997:227, translated by Writer).

- The worldview of Chinese people is composed mainly of their family and their own country. The Americans tend to have wider worldly concerns and many are interested in international politics.

3.5.7 Regarding Men and Women

- Gbandi tribal men and women do not work together. Each sex has different jobs and roles to perform. Chinese and American men and women

normally work together.

- The society of the Gbandi tribes is a male-dominated society in which women have hardly any rights. Chinese society is traditionally also male-centred. American society however pays more respect to the genders - "ladies first" is one of the mottos of their culture and feminist movements give equal rights to women.
- Gbandi people are married through matchmaking. In earlier Chinese culture, people were married through matchmaking too. Americans prefer having freedom of choice regarding life partners, considering their choice of marriage to be an exclusively personal right.
- Gbandi men normally would not help with any housework. In the early Chinese culture, men would not do any housework either. In America, both men and women usually share the housework.
- Gbandi people usually greet one another with a hug. As for the Chinese, they tend to greet each other with a bow. Hugging is considered embarrassing and even sinful, as Chinese culture does not encourage body contact. Americans quite often greet each other with hugs and even kisses.
- Gbandi people are generally sexually ignorant. Chinese culture stresses chastity and people are encouraged to avert sex issues. Americans on the other hand are very open about sexuality.

- In the Gbandi culture a woman who is dissatisfied with her marriage may leave her husband and return to her family. The family must pay back any bride price received, as well as pay the court costs. The man is almost never wrong in such cases (Gay 1967:13). In America, though, men normally have to pay women in order to settle divorce cases.

3.5.8 Regarding Religion

- Gbandi people believe in the Devil society and ancestral spirits. Similarly, Chinese have polytheistic religions and ancestral spirits. Instead, the Americans normally believe in either monotheism (one God) or atheism and regard science highly and in many cases as the final authority.
- In Gbandi culture, either the entire colony turns to Christ, or no one at all. If the town chief accepts Christ, then the entire village will probably turn to Christ. This phenomenon is similar in China. Americans, on the other hand, are more individualistic and independent. This is why Americans prefer evangelism methods such as door-to-door personal evangelism.
- Gbandis believe in reincarnation. Chinese Buddhism also stresses the importance of reincarnation and takes it as a central belief. Americans, however don't believe in reincarnation.

3.6 STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY AMERICAN MISSIONARIES

3.6.1 Pioneer Work of the American Episcopal Mission

The American Episcopal Church mission was the first mission that came to the Gbandi land. Their Liberia headquarters was established at the Bolahun town. The leader of the Episcopal missionaries was Father Parsell. He is now 85 years old. He was the pioneer missionary in Gbandi and started working there in 1935. He established 18 churches. The missionaries he sent to preach in different towns did not have any Bible college training.

When Father Parsell finally retired and left Liberia for his American homeland, all 18 Episcopal mission workers eventually returned to their former occupations. As a consequence, no church leaders were left in Liberia. Former church buildings were used for other purposes. Clearly, the problem with the Episcopal mission was that they have not made disciples to ensure work continuity.

3.6.2 American Lutheran Bible Translation

Lutheran missionaries made an attempt to translate the Bible into the Gbandi tribal language. This is very difficult because the Gbandi do not have a written language. The missionaries had to first construct a written language for the Gbandi people before they could start translating the Bible. Ten years later this work is still not completed. The book of Matthew has already been translated although it was not yet published.

The missionaries in charge of this Gbandi translation work, Don and Diny Kovac, reported a strange phenomenon. Don said that every time he and his wife came to stay in Taninahun, his wife got sick. Every time they went back to the mission headquarters, though, his wife would recover. This probably can be attributed to spiritual affliction. The important lesson to be learnt from this is that the translation of the Bible will have to be accompanied by spiritual warfare.

3.6.3 American Missionaries of SIM

- The houses of the American missionaries were far better than the Gbandi village houses. The Americans opted not to live in Gbandi town houses, but to build their own houses 10 km away from town. In doing so, they ensured that they could enjoy more privacy.
- Anyone wishing to visit the American missionaries had to make an appointment. Unexpected visits would normally not be entertained.
- The Americans normally had no desire to learn the Gbandi language. They thought that English would be good enough. They expected Chinese missionaries to learn and use English as well.
- The Americans routinely drove some 30 to 50 km to different villages for open-air evangelism. They would generally conduct such evangelism once per week to each of the seven villages.
- When American missionaries were planting churches or planning

outreach strategies, they would only invite missionary peers to join them. They regarded the local leaders as not able to participate.

- When American missionaries visit a village, the Gbandi people would always show their hospitality and prepare food for them. But when a black church leader once visited the house of an American, they told him, “Sorry, it is our lunch time, please sit in the living room and wait until we finish our lunch”.
- The SIM team was composed of American, British, Australian, German, Korean, Chinese and Taiwanese members. Most of the missionaries, however, chose to follow the strategy of the Americans, because they are always in the majority and regard the American way as the best way in the world.
- A major problem which Western missionaries normally have great difficulty overcoming is their sense of racial or cultural superiority.

3.7 STRATEGY ADOPTED BY THE CHINESE MISSIONARIES

This thesis is basically about the cross-cultural work of Chinese missionaries, the lessons learnt and the contrasts with the traditional Western missionaries. For the purpose of this study, emphasis will be placed on the Chinese approach.

3.7.1 Living Among the Gbandi

For the first four years of their mission, the Chinese missionaries lived in Taninahun among the Devil Society town people. They rented the old chief's town house, which had no kitchen and no inside toilet. So, with the helping hands of a visiting American friend, the Chinese missionaries dug their own toilet holes and wells, as well as constructed a better kitchen. Since there was no power supply, the missionaries had to use kerosene lamps for evening church services and Bible studies. They spent three years learning the Gbandi tribal language. The most important thing in working with Gbandis is to learn and blend in with their culture. For example, daily greetings are part of their culture. Even the Town Chief would have to greet the 200 to 400 people every day. If missionaries do not greet the Gbandis in accordance with their custom, they will be considered proud and unapproachable. When the Chinese missionaries first arrived at the countryside, the entire village came out to meet them. Never before had they seen Chinese people and Chinese babies!

For their second term, the missionaries moved to another village - Polowu. The population of Polowu was about 927 people. This was both a Devil Society and a Muslim village. The town chief told Chiang, "You are welcome to stay in our village. We have longed for a white man to stay in our village and now I am so glad to see you here. I believe you will be a great blessing to our town". Chiang replied, "I am not a white man, I am yellow". However, the town chief insisted that, "If you are not black, then you are white". Chiang looked around for lodging in Polowu. The town chief offered, "You may choose any house in Polowu". Chiang was alarmed and asked, "If the house that I like already has someone living in it, what will you do?" He said, "I will

drive them out so that you can move in". For the love for the Gbandi people, the Chinese could not accept this offer, but moved into a vacant new house. The kitchen of this house had a screened window built by a German missionary friend who also helped the Chiangs to build a Chinese style stove. The first afternoon when the Chiangs were at home and his wife cooked a Chinese lunch, the kitchen suddenly turned very dark. It was because all the villagers came gathering outside the kitchen window to watch Chinese cooking and they were blocking the sunlight!

When the missionaries intended to take a little rest at noontime, their room also became dark because of the many town folks outside their window. For a while, the Chinese felt like they were living in a zoo and the whole world was looking on.

The missionary's wife provided medical care for the town folks from morning to evening. One afternoon a loud crying could be heard across the town. A woman came to knock on the missionaries' door and requested them to go out and see what was wrong. They found a dying old lady surrounded by people who were trying to feed her with rice despite her coughing and vomiting. These people said, "We must feed her, otherwise when she dies she will become a hunger Devil and come back to haunt our town". Grace told them, "Stop feeding her; let me pray for her instead". She then prayed to God over the old woman, returned home and administered pneumonia medicine to her. The next day the woman felt better and after a few days she recovered completely. All the town people said, "Grace is a good doctor". Whenever Grace prescribed medicine to her patients, she always laid hands on them and

prayed for them. The school principal once made this comment, “Grace’s medicine is different from country medicine as it includes prayer”.

3.7.2 Bridge Between Man and God

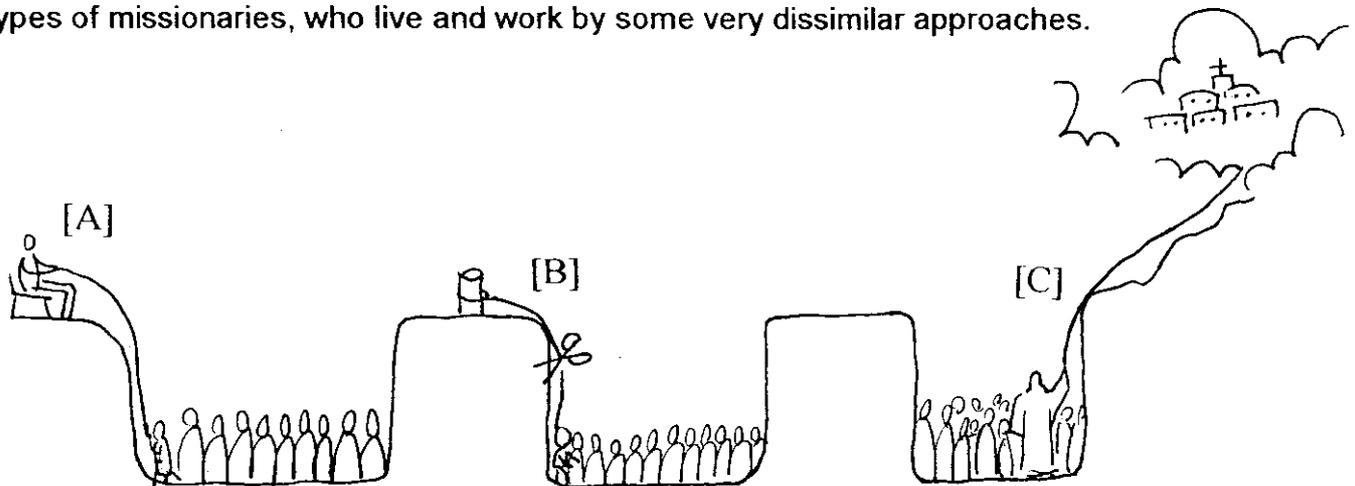
Everyday, from dawn to dusk, many patients came to the Chiang’s house for medical care. On the other hand, through the announcements from the Chiangs’ radio contact, they knew that there were at least two to three deaths that occur daily at nearby villages. If the missionaries placed too much emphasis on theology and preach by reasoning and logic only, the Gbandi people would find it very difficult to understand what they were teaching. They may have felt that the missionaries’ God is not practical and does not care about their needs. They may even form a biased view about God as being unfair, merciless, cruel and not truly an incarnated God, “The Word became Flesh and made his dwelling among us” (John 1:14).

Missionaries have a duty to bring people to the “Word” and that include becoming “Flesh”. This is not an easy task. Practical things need to be done, such as living in the midst of people, being humble, experiencing miracles through faith and prescribing power healing. In other words, we have to act in accordance with the Bible’s teaching, “Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says” (James 1:22, New International Version).

Christians should be “in the world” and not “of the world” in order to be pleasing to God. While Christians are enmeshed in the activities of their surrounding

worldly cultures, they at the same time should also possess and act on a set of value other than that which the world holds.

From what Chiang had observed in the mission field, there are three major types of missionaries, who live and work by some very dissimilar approaches.



(Three Type of Missionaries)

- **The first type of missionary** sticks to his own culture, customs, language and way of doing things regardless of where he dwells. For example, some American missionaries in Liberia made no attempt to adapt to an African life style. Such missionaries may still bring in the Bible and Gospel, but the African will not be able to understand it too well. While they read the Book, they cannot see their life in it. While they hear the Word, they cannot see how it teaches. This is because there is no incarnational life of Christ being lived out before them. Under such circumstances, we found that not many people turned to Christ.

- **The second type of missionary** behaves just the opposite. They give up their own culture, customs, language, life style and standards and accept the foreign culture completely. They do not see themselves as different from

the African people and may even marry locals. As a consequence, the African people feel there is nothing special about the missionary and may even look down upon him. People may also fail to see the missionary's cultural roots or his relationship with God. We have observed burnout cases that happened under such circumstances. This type of missionary may have tried too hard to please people and, in the meantime, forgot that it is crucial to receive power from above.

- **The third type of missionary** is like Jesus who, while keeping his identity, became a human being and conformed to human culture. He knows who He is but, where necessary, would be willing to give up His rights. This is the essence of incarnation – the message comes not only in words, but also in flesh and life. If truth is only proclaimed in speech and not put into action in daily life, it would have no real meaning. Wisdom would be emptiness unless it is lived out in deeds and actions. Therefore, God has always chosen to use human beings instead of mere words to witness His grace. God uses the message, but also the messenger; not only the Bible, but also the church. Jesus was in the world, but not of it. As a summary, “The Christian message is a life message, not simply a word message” (Kraft 1991:41).

3.7.3 Working Together

3.7.3.1 To Serve and not to be Served

Almost all missionaries in Liberia have hired either a housemaid or a houseboy. A missionary once said to Chiang's wife, “Grace! You seem to be doing

everything by yourself. Why not get a housemaid?" Grace replied, "We don't want to have a servant because as Jesus said, 'The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve' (Matthew 20:28). If we hire a housemaid, then the people may say, 'We serve them. They don't serve us'. We would prefer to be able to say to them, 'You are our bosses and we are your servants. Our coming isn't about you serving us, but about us serving you. It is not what you can do for us, but what we can do for you'". The Chiangs preferred not to act like early day colonialists who had slaves to serve them; they wished to see people living and treating each other equally. It is as Joinet said (in Kritzing, Meiring, Saayman 1994:67):

"Then bit by bit, painfully, I try to learn how to listen, how to give my opinion when it is asked for, without imposing it, leaving the decision to those who I have come to serve".

3.7.3.2 Having Dialogues with Local Leaders

It is wrong for missionaries to plan church growth strategies without seeking the views of the local black leaders. Chiang always went to see the leaders first, so that they could work together with them for devising church growth plans. He gathered the leaders' opinions and tried to do it their way as far as possible.

3.7.3.3 Understanding People

We cannot expect to communicate well with a person, unless we know something about how he looks upon the world and why he responds to it as he

does. One cannot communicate with people without knowing either their traditional language patterns, or their views of the world (Nida 1990:220).

Missionaries should therefore learn and understand the culture in which they serve. Sometimes Gbandi people came up with better ideas than the missionaries. A black church leader once said to a missionary, "You white people say you are one in unity, but actually you are not in unity, because amongst you everybody has a different idea of how baptism should be carried out. As for us, we Gbandi people are really in unity because we all work together, sleep together, eat together and have the same mind and heart, so there is no division among us". It is necessary to work together with the Gbandi people and to observe their standards and needs. When we humble ourselves and listen to them, they would listen to us in return.

Therefore, "How does one become a successful missionary"? The answer is to "take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:29-30). Many missionaries fail in the mission field not because of their lack of abilities, talents, or academic qualifications, but because of their attitudes of superiority. They regard their ways as the only ways of doing things. When the locals do not accept their way, they then become angry. They fail, because they are not gentle and humble enough. They are "not gentle", so the burden becomes heavy. They are "not humble", so the yoke becomes too heavy and difficult to bear.

3.7.3.4 Walking with Jesus Day by Day

Chiang led Bible studies every morning. At 6:00 am people would come for a one-hour devotion and they would come again at 8:00 pm every night for another hour of Bible study. From Monday to Sunday, 14 times a week, the people would be able to study God's word.

This routine started one day when a church leader came and asked Chiang, "The Muslims pray five times a day. What about Christians? How many times should we pray together?" Chiang answered, "If we pray two times, it should be enough. Come every morning at 6:00 am for our one-hour devotions and every night at 8:00 pm for our one-hour Bible study". So, from that day onwards, the leaders started coming from Monday to Saturday, 14 hours a week, to study God's Word. Every morning, the leaders would ring the church bell. When the town people heard the bell, they would come to church faithfully. This routine continued for 8 years. They would come for Bible studies, despite heavy rain and bad weather. Once the leader rang the bell at 4:00 am in the morning. Chiang woke up and asked him, "Why did you ring the bell so early?" He answered, "Because I don't have a watch!"

3.7.4 Making Disciples

3.7.4.1 Disciple Training Centre

In 1984 a disciple-training center was commenced. 15 students from 10 different churches came together for discipleship training. They were taught how to live together in the Disciple Training Center and the missionaries ate together with the Gbandi church leaders every day.

3.7.4.2 Building up Disciples

It is important to equip the believers so that they may conduct ministry by themselves in the future. Chiang taught Simble, the school principal, every day about the Bible, how to preach and how to become a good shepherd. A few years after Chiang left Liberia, Simble became a sturdy church leader and preacher.

John Nevius (1958:27), the 19th century missiologist, said:

“Young converts, before they are advanced to positions of prominence and responsibility, should also be trained. A man may be carried through a course of theological training, freed from the struggle of ordinary life by having all his wants provided for and yet get very little of this disciplinary training which is so important”.

3.7.4.3 Training Gbandi Sunday School Teachers

Chiang's wife conducted a personal Bible study for women and Sunday school teachers. She would first teach them Bible stories in English. The Sunday school teachers would then teach the stories to Gbandi children in their own mother tongue.

3.7.4.4 Providing Learning Materials

In order to sustain their growth, the Chinese missionaries provided the Gbandi

believers with the Bible, spiritual literature and theological books. They also helped with scholarships.

3.7.5 Open Air Evangelism in the Villages

Among the Gbandi tribes it is customary for all the relatives of a sick patient to join together around his bed and to have the medicine man chanting on and on through the night until the patient either shows definite signs of improvement or dies instead. As for the Christians, they would also meet together when a person was critically ill. They would sing hymns and pray while many of the sick person's relatives looked on. Throughout the whole night, while many of the relatives stay on, scripture readings on records would be played on and on. By morning, most of the people would be able to recite by memory the repeatedly played scriptures (Nida 1990:112).

One day the old town chief died. All the village people mourned him. According to the local custom, no one was allowed to leave the town or go to their farm. The school was closed; everyone had to help with the preparations for the 7-day-long funeral. Most people from the other 10 towns also came. Simultaneously, the Devil Society leader came for a Bush funeral and the Muslim leader came to conduct a Muslim funeral. At night the people brought a big cassette recorder to the town hall and placed it near the dead body. To them there is no essential difference between a living and a recently died man. The dead person only lacks the power to move and speak; but so does the sleeper.

Because of the radio announcements of funerals, many of the other villages would also come. In just a few hours, a variety of activities would start, including: dancing, a big feast, a football game, a baseball game, the arrival of the Muslim leader and the members of the Devil Society, loud pop music dancing. Funerals are considered to be ideal dating occasions, because it is not easy otherwise to meet so many potential girlfriends and boyfriends from 20 different villages.

Chiang seized the opportunity and asked them: "As you already have so many activities, would you like to have one more?" They asked him, "What kind of programme do you have?" He replied, "An open-air evangelical meeting for funerals, with a slide show". They then said, "OK". So, Chiang put up a big light and started an open-air meeting. A lot of people gathered around, as they had never seen a slide show before. Almost everyone, including people from other towns, came to join the open-air meeting. The dead man's family was very glad to have a heavenly blessing upon them and they were proud to have Chiang presenting the open air programme at their relative's funeral. From that day onwards, whenever someone died, the people would come and ask Chiang if he would like to do something for the funeral. Chiang would use a 12-volt battery for power in order to present a slide show concerning Jesus' story. On one occasion the Muslim people showed keen interest in this and told Chiang: "We now need to go inside the Mosque to pray. Please wait for us. After prayer we would like to continue viewing your slide show."

3.7.6 Bible Study / Bible Teaching in Public Schools

The Lord opened the door for Chiang to teach in five different public schools. Chiang taught the Bible and all students got the necessary books and other materials. The schoolteachers were very eager to have Bible studies for themselves also. Therefore, Chiang held a special Bible study class for the teachers as well.

3.7.7 Recognising Indigenous Ways

- **Drama**

With the Gbandi drama is a highly important means of religious communication and expression. However, in the church it is lacking and therefore falls outside their concepts of communication (Nida 1990:61).

- **Dance**

In addition to music, dance is also a good means of communication.

- **The younger generation**

The younger generation of the Gbandi tribe is very different from the older generation. They are influenced by the Western lifestyle. The traditionalists stick to the old patterns of culture and prefer to remain in the villages, or are at least emotionally tied to them. On the other hand, the "school people" are trying to adjust to the ways of the predominant culture, namely, the white way of life, with its Christian worldview. These more educated young people have completely repudiated traditional African concepts of authority and leadership. This causes serious problems in Gbandi society, so many Gbandi parents stop their children from coming to church. The parents are afraid that their children will leave traditional ways behind. Such attitudes increase the difficulty of

missionary work among the youth. Many young men are like coconuts - their outsides are black, but their insides are white.

- **Self esteem**

The black men did not know that they were black until the day they first saw a white man. They then started to feel inferior. Sometimes the Gbandi paint their naked bodies white and go without clothes to emulate white men. However, after they have taken a bath, they of course would become black again. The missionaries have to help the people to regain self-esteem and not estrange them from their roots.

3.7.8 March for Jesus

Gbandi people will beat drums, cluster around the witchcraft man who, surrounded with all his paraphernalia - rattles, wands, sticks and drums – chants over a small fire, cuts a big tree down and carries it and all the people look on in amazement and wonder.

Chiang did something similar in the march. For night programmes, he brought a car battery with a powerful light, drums and all kinds of musical instruments for the church people to use. They began singing aloud and marching around the town – like the Israelites did around the city of Jericho. About 20 children followed the adults. Soon there were 100 to 400 people marching and singing aloud. More adults joined them. Finally, the whole town came out for an open-air meeting.

The lesson we have learned from this is that in order to win people over we need to let them become involved in familiar activities, in order to conform to their own culture. Influence does not come merely through words, but also through effective music, drama and indigenous art.

3.7.9 Music Ministry

"Music is a kind of language which, with its distinctive messages, is a remarkable means of communication. Although the component parts of music cannot be equated with the words and syntax of a language, nevertheless, music is a kind of code. Each type of music has its own elements and manner of encoding" (Nida 1990:39).

and

"The growing body of literature devoted to African music is unanimous in pointing to the exceptional position which it occupies in the life of the African people. Music infuses all the activities of the African from the cradle to the grave: 'whatever the occasion, music will be there, not as an embellishment, but as a functional part of his activity; it is the only constant factor which permeates the very fiber of African social and personal life" (Hailey 1956:67).

Gbandi music is composed mainly of two key verses that are repeated again and again. Some of the songs are probably for the worship of the Devil. This is why Chiang made an effort to translate Gospel songs into Gbandi and taught these songs in five different public schools. All the students loved to sing these kinds of Gospel songs. During their National Day, all of the students would sing Christian songs while marching around the Muslim towns.

3.7.10 Gbandi Tribe Conference

The Church leaders and missionaries usually organise four conferences per year. The Gbandi Church Conference camps are held in very remote regions and usually last from 3 days to a week. About 15 Gbandi churches unite together for these camps.

3.8 THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Harry Boer, in his book *Pentecost and Missions*, speaks about the importance of the Holy Spirit in mission:

...the Spirit of life, the Spirit of power, the Spirit of witness, the Spirit of fellowship, all of which speak of the dynamic of action. It is not we who gather the Church, but He, through His Word and Spirit. We may be bound by our limited vision, the Spirit is not bound (Boer 1961:208).

And:

Because the Spirit indwells the Church, the Church is a witnessing Church (Boer 1961:213),

The Holy Spirit is the essence of the missionary proclamation of the Church. It is He who bears the witness of the Church, His is the life that her witness transmits, His the communion that unites the saints, His the unity that make the Church one. For He is the life of the new creation, He is the power of the new aeon, He is the glory of Christ (see Boer 1961:254).

3.8.1 Gbandi Church Leaders

The satanic realm should be taken quite seriously. An old man Pehe was the church leader for the Polowu church. When Chiang started a church, Pehe was the one who rang the bell for morning devotions every day and was very faithful to serve the Lord. Pehe even offered his house for church meetings. He once was an important member of The Devil Worship Society.

About every 5 years there is a grand sacrifice ritual of the Secret Society. Those who belong to the Secret Society must come and join the ritual. When Pehe was summoned to participate, he said, "No, I will not go to the sacrifices any more". They were shocked and asked, "Why?" and he answered, "I have become a Christian and so now I belong to Jesus. I have already dedicated my life to Jesus". They then threatened, "If you do not come, you will be in danger! The Society can hang you in the bush, tie you on the tree and burn you with fire, or hang you on the tree without food until you die". This church leader firmly replied, "I belong to Jesus. I have no part in the Devil Society. If they want to kill me, it is okay, because I am old enough. If I die I can go to see Jesus. How sweet it would be to be with Jesus in heaven".

Hearing this, all the missionaries and church people prayed very hard on his behalf. The most dangerous period was the final week of their Sacrifice Time. The missionaries asked God to send His angels to protect Pehe from harm. The Lord answered their prayer. No one came to kill Pehe and he is still alive today. This is a miracle that is made possible through prayers. Jesus overcame Satan's power.

3.8.2 Power of the Gospel

The major reason for the explosive and extensive spreading of the Gospel in Gbandi society was not due to social and political changes, or human's thirst for worshipping God, but the power of the Gospel itself. The majority of the rural Christians turned to Christ mainly because the missionaries witnessed through their own daily life and also the people had personal experience of miracles and signs. For instance, research done in Gbandi showed that about 70 % of the Gbandi Christians were converted after they were healed from a certain illness. The love, faith and abundant life of Christians are also good testimonies and attract people to Christ. In a few years time, the church had grown from just 1 church to 20 churches (Corey 1992, SIM area director).

3.8.3 A Witch Accepted Christ

As already indicated, the village witchdoctors and their witchcraft act as a hindrance to the Gbandis' believing of the gospel and because of this the village people are not allowed to come to church to attend worship.

On one occasion, after Chiang finished giving a speech, an old witch woman came up to give her testimony. This woman said she had had an unusual dream one night. In her dream, a group of male devils wanted to come into the village of Taninahun. After making a lot of noise with their drums, the devils somehow still could not enter. She thought to herself, "That's strange; why can't they come in"? Then she saw there was light shining down from above. At first she wondered what kind of light it was. Then she realised that "Oh! It's the light of the church"!

We know that Africans believe very much in dreams and that Witchcraft and the Secret Society are things that belong to darkness. Through dreams people discover that the true light of Jesus Christ is more powerful than the darkness of Evil Spirits. The town chief therefore said at one time, "Thank you for bringing the light to our village". We hope this light of truth will continue to shine upon Africa, the land of darkness.

3.8.4 A Man Risen from the Dead

One night Chiang went to conduct a service in a village called Dambu. As the service started, Chiang led in the opening prayer. After he prayed for a little while, he suddenly felt that the place was exceptionally quiet. He opened his eyes and found that everyone had left except his interpreter. He asked what had happened and was told that someone had died in town and that it drew the attention of all the people. Chiang asked his interpreter, "Shall we go also and pay our respects as well?" So they went. When they arrived at the dead man's house, the whole town was already there - about 900 people in

total! Chiang could not enter through the front door, so the interpreter led him around through the back door and found an old man lying on the floor. He then asked all elders to kneel and pray together with him before the Lord. After about 10 minutes, Chiang suddenly found that the old man's eyes had opened and after a while he stood up. The whole town jumped with joy and sang aloud together: "Victory, Victory! Hallelujah!" Chiang asked the old man, "We are having a meeting tonight. Would you like to join us?" and he said, "Yes". As this man went behind Chiang, the whole town followed. God is very humoured, the old man may have just fainted but all his wives thought he was dead. After this incident, the place soon became very crowded with worshippers and the old man came to the meetings as well.

3.8.5 Worship of the Tree God

We learned from a young man that there was an old woman who lived in a big 'Spirit Tree' at the edge of his village. This old woman allegedly could bring babies to women who brought sacrifices to her and performed the necessary rites. This example highlights how myth has been used to solve the problem of sterility faced by many people. If a woman wants a child, she must go to this tree at dawn to plead for a baby. After beseeching the old woman, she must pick a small branch from the tree, tie it to her back for a whole day and then put it under her mat at night. Through this use of imitative magic she hopes to become pregnant. The underlying assumption is the congruence between ritual actions and pragmatic results" (Gay 1967:20, 22).

There was a church leader of Fasavolu who was called Hina. He once read the Bible aloud under a big tree. A group of women from the Bush Society came to worship the tree and sing and dance around it. The church leader asked the women: "What are you doing here?" They said, "We are worshipping our Tree God." Hina then said, "How can the tree be a God? The tree can fall any time. We should worship instead the True God who created the heavens and the earth". However, the women would not listen to him and they continued their dancing. The next morning, the women found that the three big trees had fallen down and they were filled with anger. They ran up to the Town Chief and accused the church leader, saying: "Our trees fell because this man cursed our Tree God". The Town Chief then asked the church leader: "Why did you curse their God?" He answered, "I did not curse their God, I just said that the tree is not a true God. Rather, the one who created the tree is the true God who is worthy of worship". The chief agreed with him and said, "Yes, you are right". Maybe the best explanation for this event is the faithfulness of the church leader who brought spiritual warfare to the entire town.

3.8 CONCLUSION – POSSIBILITY OF THIRD WORLD MISSION

- In the SIM Liberia headquarters, John Shea once said to a Chinese missionary, "I am so glad to have Asian missionaries joining SIM. I found your culture closer to the black culture than the white culture. The Chinese culture is also easier for local black people to accept. We hope more Chinese would come to Liberia and join our mission so that the Chinese can be a bridge between the White and the Black people".

- A Chinese story about how human beings were created goes like this. God made men out of flour and baked them inside the oven. At the first trial, because of over baking, the product was a black man. At the second trial, God took it out too soon and the product was a white man. At the third trial, God took it out at just the right time and the product was a yellow man.

This story illustrates that Chinese are both neither too white nor too black – just in between. Chinese philosophy also emphasises the importance of “the Golden Mean.” Therefore, it would be good for Chinese people, being the middle people, to become missionaries.

- Once an artist looked at a picture Chiang had just painted and commented, “It is good. However, if you put more colour in it, it will become more beautiful”. Yes, as we are approaching the last days, we need to put in more efforts, such as intercultural and interdenominational missions, in order to beautify our work. For the sake of God's kingdom, we need to break through racial differences. What a wonderful unity it would be!
- In the more than one hundred years of service SIM has had in general only whites working amongst the blacks, just like there were only black and white TVs in the old days. In recent years, as the yellow race “Chinese” has joined, SIM no longer features black and white TVs only, but have colour TVs also. Hopefully, the mixing of different cultures in SIM would make SIM more beautiful than before!



CHAPTER 4

A CHINESE MISSIONARY IN LENASIA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the mission work of the Chiang family in the community of Lenasia will be recounted. It will be a case study of Chinese missionary work in Indian and Black South African communities.

The spiritual strategy that was developed will be described, which includes the training of disciples of Jesus Christ, as well as relationship building. It also built on the experience among the Gbandi of Liberia. This Chapter will also explain how a sort of spiritual warfare was developed, using, among others, a Prayer Mountain strategy, prayer to unite the body of Christ and the organisation of a March for Jesus.

4.2 SOME BACKGROUND ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA

4.2.1 Economy

Presently (2001) the SA economy is growing at the rate of about 2% a year and the level of inflation has dropped. This is a turnaround from the

preceding years when a negative growth rate was reflected. But this is not a high enough growth to create the jobs needed to eliminate poverty. To eliminate unemployment an economic growth rate of 8,8% a year would be necessary (Froise 2000:16).

4.2.2 Politics

The Union of South Africa was formed in 1910. A white minority parliamentary republic was created in 1961.

- **Apartheid**

In 1948 the National Party (NP), with its ideology of apartheid, won the (Whites only) general election. That brought on an even more rigorous and authoritarian approach than the segregationist policies of previous governments (S. A. Yearbook 2000/01:30). In the mid-1950s the Government took the drastic step of overriding an entrenched clause in the 1910 Constitution so as to be able to remove coloured voters from the common voters' roll. It also enforced residential segregation, expropriating homes where necessary and policing massive forced removals into coloured "group areas" (S. A. Yearbook 2000/01:31).

- **The End of Apartheid**

The introduction of apartheid policies coincided with the 1949 adoption, by the African National Council (ANC), of the Programme of Action, advocating a renewed militancy. The Programme embodied a rejection of white domination and a call for action in the form of protests, strikes and

demonstrations. There followed a decade of turbulent mass action in resistance to the imposition of still more harsh forms of segregation and oppression. Matters came to a head at Sharpeville in March 1960 when 69 demonstrators were killed by the police. A state of emergency was imposed and detention without trial was introduced. Black political organisations, like the ANC and PAC (Pan-Africanist Congress) were banned and their leaders went into exile, or were arrested.

F W de Klerk, who had replaced P W Botha as State President in 1989, surprised Parliament and the country at large by unbanning the liberation movements and releasing political prisoners, notably Nelson Mandela, in February 1990 (S. A. Yearbook 2000/01:33).

- **Birth of a Democratic South Africa**

After a long negotiation process South Africa held its first democratic election in April 1994 under an Interim Constitution. Nelson Mandela became the president. A significant milestone of democratisation during the five-year period of the Mandela presidency – after which he voluntarily retired – was the exemplary constitution-making process. On 2 June 1999 a second democratic election was held and President Thabo Mbeki took the reigns (S. A. Yearbook 2000/01:34).

4.3 LENASIA

The history of Lenasia dates back to the early apartheid period. The White

government moved Indian soldiers from Johannesburg to this area where a military camp was built. At that time the land owner's name was Mr. Lenz and because the soldiers came from India, people called him "Lenz of Asia", hence "Lenasia" got its name.

The population in the area was 76 038 in 1999. At that stage it could be divided into Lenasia (48 710), Lenasia South (26 787) and Zakariya Park, which had just started (Statistics S. A. 1999).

The Lenasia vicinity has been divided by apartheid into different areas: the Indians had to stay in Lenasia, Daxina and Zakariya Park, while the Coloureds lived in Eldorado Park and Ennerdale. In time some so-called "Squatter Camps" of Black people came into being around these suburbs.

4.4 THE RELIGIONS OF LENASIA

According to the census the religious composition of Lenasia (predominantly Indian population) was 70% Muslim, 25% Hindus and 5% Christian (Statistics S. A. 1999). In the Black areas Christians are in the majority. The people from the different communities live in isolated groups. They don't talk to each other. Every group keeps to its own practices. (Interview Pastor's Chairman Johnny Challen 1999)

4.4.1 Hinduism

As about a quarter of the Lenasia population is Hindu, we give some background to this religion.

- **Introduction**

Hinduism is one of the oldest religions in the world. It is not a missionary religion, but its numerical growth is marginally slower than the birth rate. The orthodox view is that one can only be a Hindu by being born a Hindu – a Hindu is born, not made (De Beer 1996:27).

- **Hinduism in South Africa**

What makes an understanding of Hinduism in South Africa so important is the fact that, outside of India and Sri Lanka, South Africa has the second largest Hindu community in the world, after Malaysia (De Beer 1996:27). The great majority of Hindus in Africa, approximately 568 000, live in South Africa. 61% of the Indian population in South Africa is Hindu (Johnstone 1993:498), while 99% of South African Hindus are of Indian extraction and a mere handful are of other races (De Beer 1996:28). Brijlal calculated the following demographic profile of the South African Indian population: 62% Hindu, 19% Muslim, 13% Christian and 6% other (De Beer 1996:28).

Most Indians came to South Africa as indentured labourers for the sugar industry in KwaZulu-Natal and later stayed to make this their home. Since then, Hinduism has spread to all the provinces of South Africa, but KwaZulu-Natal remains the centre of South African Hinduism with more than 80% of South African Hindus residing there (De Beer 1996:28).

Most South African Hindus are descended from southern India and are of Dravidian descent – resulting in the practice of a form of Hinduism typical of that region. Due also to the working class origins of the community, a popular ritualistic form of Hinduism predominates over the more philosophical forms. The South African Hindu community and language groups can thus be broadly distinguished in two main classifications (De Beer 1996:29):

- The Dravidian community (63%), originating from South India, with the main language groups: Tamil from the Madras area in Tamil Nadu (45%) and Telegu from Andhra-Pradesh (18%).

- The Indo-Aryan community (37%), with origins in the North and Central India. The main language groups are Hindi from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (30%) and Gujarati from Surat and Kathiawad (7%) (De Beer 1996:29).

The South African Indian community has suffered three main uprootings. The first was the departure from India and their settlement in South Africa. The second was removal from the countryside and resettlement in the cities. The consequent disruption of community ties and the attenuation of the family structure, or *kutum* and the acculturation process under the pressure of Western influence led to the breakdown of the Indian network of communities (De Beer 1996:30). The third great uprooting was the result of the socio-political apartheid legislation. During the period 1961-1970, half the Indian population of greater Durban was uprooted and removed to other areas, as a rule far from their places of employment and traditional places of worship (De Beer 1996:30).

“No religion in the history of the world has had so many diverse forms and local varieties of expression as Hinduism, which might be spoken of as the syncretistic religion par excellence. Throughout its history Hinduism has been able to incorporate various deities and thousands of local traditions, but despite such incredible diversity, it has nevertheless maintained certain essential features which make it distinctive. These characteristics may be described on the basis of Figure” (Nida 1968:34-35).

[Picture]

- **Hindu Religion**

This is not the place to deal extensively with the ancient world religion of

Hinduism,⁶ rather it is to introduce this religion here with the purpose of understanding the people of Lenasia.

Hinduism was not "founded" in the strict sense of the word. It has no fixed creed and defies definitive or coordinated systematisation. Hinduism grew out of human observation of nature and life. In the background is a form of animism and it includes a multitude of religions, beliefs and religious customs. Furthermore, the religion differs from place to place. That of North India is quite different from that of the South, while the most diverse ideas are to be found within it: animism and polytheism; philosophy and ritual; worship of the All-Spirit and of demons; mysticism and possession (De Beer 1996:30).

- **God and Worship**

A Hindu worships all the deities. This is referred to as *puja*. It is conducted to an idol made of gold, silver, bronze or even clay. Since God is omnipresent, He is present in stones, animals, i.e. everywhere. A person sees divinity in every aspect of creation whether it is animate or inanimate. Worshippers would commit a grave error by seeing an essential distinction between the idol and the Supreme Lord, for they are one and the same

(<http://www.uni-giessen.de/%7Egk1415/hinduism.htm> 2000 Feb 14).

John Dawson in the Hindu Classical Dictionary observed that:

"The Aryan settlers were a pastoral and agricultural people and they were keenly alive to those influences

⁶ An extensive literature exists describing different aspects of Hinduism. The work quoted here (De Beer), is a popular introduction which can be used for more in-depth studies.

which affected their prosperity and comfort. They knew the effects of heat and cold, rain and drought, upon their crops and herds and they marked the influence of warmth and cold, sunshine and rain, wind and storm, upon their own personal comfort. They invested these benign and evil influences with a personality; and behind the fire, the sun, the cloud and the other powers of nature, they saw beings who directed them in their beneficent and evil operations. To these imaginary beings they addressed their praises and to them they put up their prayers for temporal blessings. They observed also the movements of the sun and moon, the constant succession of day and night, the intervening periods of morn and eve and to these also they gave personalities, which they invested with poetical clothing and attributes. Thus observant of nature in its various changes and operations, alive to its influences upon themselves and perceptive of its beauties, they formed for themselves deities in whose glory and honour they exerted their poetic faculty”

(2000 Feb 15 <http://www.uni-giessen.de/%7Egk1415/hinduism.htm>).

- **Cults and Rituals**

Sacrifices play a major role in Hinduism. The Vedic sacrificial cult specified that the ritual was necessary for the ordering of nature, the dominating

principle being that the world is full of beings and powers which must be favourably inclined (De Beer 1996:34).

A *samskara* is a series of rites that have to do with purification, protection, family ties and social position. Originally there were 42 such *samskaras*, which ordered life from mother's knee until long after death. Various rites are observed during pregnancy and the birth of a child, significant of which are the naming ceremony, the first cutting of the hair and piercing of the ears. At age 12, a son will receive the sacred cord which will protect him throughout his life (De Beer 1996:36).

Complex rites surround *death and funerals*. After the funeral further rites will be observed, 16, 40 and 365 days after the death, rites which will especially be aimed at the provision of a new body for the departed (De Beer 1996:36).

Hinduism is essentially an individualistic and not a congregational religion, so the temple is visited only sporadically according to the needs of the individual or family⁷. Visits to the temple may take place when the name of a child is to be determined; in cases of illness; when a child falls at school; in cases of unemployment; in times of marriage; when financial embarrassment strikes; when a new car is to be blessed; when an unexplained catastrophe or accident

⁷ It may be interesting to find out how worshipping in the temple has affected the Indian churches. I have often wondered, "Why do the Indian churches lack unity?" For example, when one denomination opens a Bible College, other denominations do not join in, but they form their own. A further question I have is why are the churches unable to work together? There is a lack of teamwork. Even churches within the same denomination do not have unity. Is it the individualistic nature of the people's religious background?

befalls a person or family and so on (De Beer 1996:36). Special festivals, however, begin at the temple. In South Africa there are the regular festivals of Kavadi and Draupadi (De Beer 1996:37).

- **Sorcery**

Sorcery is so common in Hindu folk religion that it cannot be ignored. Although philosophical Hinduism rejects sorcery as alien to Hinduism, Tantric literature, among others, allows for it. If someone has a case against another (usually one of jealousy), the sorcerer is visited to obtain the necessary medicine for the enemy. The medicine is then sprinkled on the food of the unsuspecting victim, or hidden in the target's workplace or house, or buried on the property. The victim, having been smitten by illness or mishap, may in turn consult a sorcerer who will arrange a reciprocal spell to be cast on the attacker (De Beer 1996:38).

- **Books and Philosophies**

The Sutras, of which the Brahma Sutra is the chief, are brief aphorisms or maxims. They contain interpretations of philosophic systems and refutations of opposing beliefs. Orthodox thought was later developed in the Samkhya philosophy and attained its climax in the Vedanta Sutras (2000 Feb 16 <http://www.uni-giessen.de/%7Egk1415/hinduism.htm>).

The **Bhagavadgita** gives much attention to Krishna as an *avatar*, or incarnation, of Vishnu. The book also includes, among others, the doctrines of the three paths of Yoga towards union with the divine (De Beer 1996:33-34).

The **Ramayana** is the work of a single author, Valmiki. The story represents the endless struggle between good and evil, the gods and demonic powers. Rama represents the ideal man and is worshipped by millions of Hindus, while Sita represents the ideal woman (De Beer 1996:34).

The law books. The best-known law book is the "Laws of Manu" which deals with such matters as marriage, inheritance and so on (De Beer 1996:34).

- **Some of the Main Doctrines**

As previously indicated, Hinduism contains within itself the most conflicting of concepts of divinity, from belief in a multitude of gods (polytheism) to the divinisation of all things (pantheism); from belief in an impersonal divinity to belief in a personal God (theism), from worship of the gods to a deep involvement in the occult and belief in demons (demonism); from sophisticated philosophical concepts to the most primitive religious practices imaginable (De Beer 1996:38).

There is a view that there is only one all-spirit, Brahman, who is in everything and everybody, The most appropriate idea is that God gave birth to the universe and accordingly the universe is referred to as the "egg of Brahman", effectively divinising humankind, the world and everything that occurs in it (De Beer 1996:40).

Karma, the belief in the law of cause and effect and *Sansara*, or reincarnation, are some of the basic beliefs. When someone dies, the soul is reborn in another form of existence. Depending on the previous life, the new life will be

a progression or retrogression. The wheel of rebirths turns inexorably, knowing no beginning and no end (De Beer 1996:42).

- **Castes**

Although the Indians are very friendly people the community is strictly divided among class and religious lines. There is very little friendship and contact across these boundaries.

4.4.2 **Islam**

• **Introduction⁸**

Five times each day, hundreds of millions of Muslims all over the world face Mecca to pray. They are part of an Islamic community that spans the entire globe, numbering about 900 million adherents and continues to spread its message successfully throughout Europe, Asia, Africa and North America. There are more than forty-four Muslim countries (Esposito 1991:3).

It was especially since the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 that the Christian world has become increasingly conscious of Islam and the hundreds of millions of Muslims living especially in the lands of the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Asia. Since the 13th century the Christian Church saw the so-called Saracens, Turks and "Mahometans" as no longer a serious threat. Today the whole spectrum from the modern secularists to conservative evangelicals seem to have very little sympathy with what appears to be a

⁸ The same applies with Islam. This can form a study on its own but only the background to it is given here.

troublesome people with nothing to offer the modern age but hijackings, hostage crises, terrorism, fanatical fundamentalism and the like (Gilchrist 1994:1).

Lenasia is a strong Muslim area of which 70% are Muslim. The tensions are high. A young Muslim man in Lenasia became a Christian and pastor. The Muslims burned his house and wanted to kill him. Eventually, he has built a big church in Lenasia (Shabier Wadee, Pastor in the Church of Shalom Ministries, oral testimony, 1997).

- **The History of Islam**

The two great world powers in the Prophet Mohammed's time were the Byzantine and the Persian Empires. Mohammed was involved in the trading business and he definitely had knowledge of Christianity because of the flourishing caravan trade routes running north south and east west through Mecca (Nehls 1994:2). Unfortunately, however, he had contact with a Christian Church that was then deeply divided over doctrinal disputes, especially the doctrine of the Trinity and the person of Christ, while the Byzantine Emperors fiercely persecuted the different heretical sects (Nehls 1994:2).

Mohammed is thought by Muslims to be the last and final prophet, after prophets like Abraham, Moses and even Jesus. He was born in AD 570 in a humble and deprived family. His father died before he was born and his mother died 6 years later. His grandfather and uncle, Abu Talib was responsible for his upbringing. In AD 582 Muhammad began travelling to

Syria with trading caravans. On one of these journeys he met Bahira a Nestorian Monk, who stated that Muhammad was a prophet. In AD 595, at the age of 25, he married Khadijah, a wealthy widow. He worked in her trading business.

In AD 610, while Mohammed was meditating in a cave on Mt. Hira near Mecca, he received his first call to be a prophet (Sura 96:1-5). A few years later persecution from Mohammed's own tribe forced him to flee to Medina. In time he became a political leader and in 629 he returned to Mecca as conqueror, destroyed all idols in the Ka'aba and declared Mecca as a holy city of Islam. In 632 AD Mohammed died in Medina and his followers immediately began with an aggressive crusade of expansion.

- **The Quran**

For the Muslims the Quran is the eternal, uncreated, literal word of God sent down from heaven and revealed to Muhammad in Mecca by the angel Gabriel who dictated it to him. It consists of 114 chapters (Suras) of 6 000 verses (Nehls 1994:4).

- **Basic Muslim Beliefs and Practices**

The word "Islam" actually means "submission" or "surrender", and a Muslim claims to be a person who submits to Allah. Anyone who lives in complete obedience and submission to Allah's will, whatever race, colour, community, or country, is a Muslim (Nehls 1994:6).

A Muslim believes in **Allah** (Sura 37.35). He is One; far superior than and

removed from man's accusations, desires and love. He is not three, he begets not, nor is he begotten (Sura 112:1-4). Allah decrees everything, both good and evil. Fatalism remains very strong in the Muslim world (Nehls 1994:6).

The Angels (Sura 35:1) include four archangels (among them Gabriel) and an indefinite number of ordinary angels. About 25 biblical persons are mentioned as prophets by name. Muhammad is not only *Nabi* (prophet) but also *Rasul* (Apostle or Messenger) of Allah.

There is a **Last Day** (Sura 2:62), the Day of Judgement, when all people will be judged according to their deeds.

The Five Pillars of Islam are:

- **Recital of the Creed** (*Shahada*): "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger".
- **Prayer** (*Salat*) The recital of the ritual prayers five times a day (Surah 17:78-79).
- **Alms giving** (*Zakat*): (Sura 2:271-273).
- **Fasting** (*Sawm*): Prescribed during the month of Ramadan for all. The fasting is between sunrise and sunset (Sura 2:183-187).
- **Pilgrimage** (*Hajj*): All Muslims are expected to make the pilgrimage to

Mecca once in their lifetime (Surah 2:196-197).

Sometimes the Holy War (*Jihad*) is also included among these basic beliefs.

4.5 CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IN LENASIA

4.5.1 The Churches in Lenasia

The Church of the Nazarene was the first to be established in Lenasia in 1958. This Church does not seem to be growing because they did not succeed in forming more branches or attract many people. The same is the case with the Dutch Reformed Church (now the Reformed Church in Africa), which started in 1962. The third one is the Brethren Church. For a long time they remained at approximately 30 members. Only last year did they start a branch. The Faith Evangelical Church started in 1970. They have also remained stagnant. Only last year they started a new branch (Johnny Challen, Chairman of Pastors Fraternal, interview, 2001).

Since then about 40 new churches were established in Lenasia. Most of these churches are about 30-50 members strong and they use school buildings. Only a few have more than 100 members and with their own buildings (interview with Johnny Challen 2000).

Johnny Challen said:

“Most of the churches are not orientated towards reaching the Muslims and Hindus. They only try to

keep their members from moving out of their church. Even though the Christians are only 5% of the population, they do not want to work together, instead they are fighting, criticising and condemning each other. The bigger churches swallow up the small churches. Everyone wants to build their own small empire"; they do not have God's kingdom mind. They lack a vision of the world and the Kingdom" (Interview the Chairman of the Pastor fraternal).

"The result is that they isolate themselves. They want other churches to come and visit their church, but they do not reach out to others. The Churches that grow usually do it by "sheep stealing" and this causes even more division between pastors and churches. So, when one church started a crusade and tried to invite all the other churches, the other churches also started their own crusades. It seems that the purpose is to stop their sheep from moving out of their church" (Chiang's research in the pastor's fraternal).

It seems as if most Indian Christians prefer spending money on new clothes and on interior decorating. They change curtains about twice a year, buy furniture on hire purchase and take bank loans to purchase cars and give their houses a facelift. Consequently, most give very little to the church. The result is that the pastors' salaries are very low, on average about R3 000 per

month and the figure is even lower in the smaller churches. The pastors are left with no money for books, let alone a full theological education. This is sad because the pastors need to be educated in order to educate the congregation. Due to the low salary of pastors, most have to work part-time. The ministry appears to be an unattractive job. People are reluctant to make a total commitment to the church – they hesitate to become God's servant or even consider going to Bible College. Society looks down upon this job because of the meager salary it brings. A change of attitude is required within the Indian churches.

The Indian churches in Lenasia are mainly Pentecostal. The focus is not on the teaching ministry, but on "praise and worship" and this takes up most of the time. When visiting an Indian Rhema Church, the singing lasts for two and half-hours. When it is time for the message, the pastor merely asked if the praise and worship blessed everyone, even today the Lord didn't give me a message? The response was "yes". The ZCC church sings the whole afternoon and has either a short message or no message at all. The music is repeated every week. Since the pastor has no study books, he encourages the congregation to sing more. Music is like drinking wine: enjoyable, but leaves you feeling empty the next morning. Indian churches are similar to

ZCC in that they have much singing but little preaching and teaching (Research from Pastor's Fraternal 2001)⁹.

4.5.2 Mission in Lenasia

It is important in the context of this thesis to relate the mission work of Life Challenge (LC). A German missionary Gerhard Nehls established this ministry in 1975. The attempt was to motivate, mobilise and assist churches in sharing the gospel with Indian and Cape Malay Muslims in South Africa. At present, there are still six missionary families with one lady involved, although a total of eleven families have been involved since starting the ministry. Even though the number of full time workers seems to be small, many people from various churches are presently active as co-workers. Many more have been going through the programmes of Life Challenge.

In 1985 Gerhard Nehls together with Uli Lehmann started work in Lenasia. The two soon realised that they would never reach the Muslims in Lenasia by themselves, so they paid attention to training and evangelistic materials instead. In the course of the years extensive training material for Muslim

⁹ The writer proposed a solution for this problem. He encouraged pastors to divide the Sunday service into 20 minutes of singing followed by 40 minutes of preaching in the first hour. In the second hour, the church should be divided into their various home cell groups. It is advisable to use an environment of different classrooms, so home cell leaders can locate their members easily. This will help to solve the problem of low home cell attendance on weekdays. Some churches have no home cells, only cottage meetings. The above strategy will give new believers an opportunity to participate in home cells. When they gather on a weekday, they will be familiar with each other and eagerly look forward to coming together.

evangelism had been produced, with an emphasis on practical issues. In addition various small handout booklets, tracts etc. have been published that are especially geared to explain the Gospel to the Muslims in a contextualised but uncompromising manner.

Basically their strategy for Muslim outreach was the following:

- The church must reach out to the Muslims.
- The public must be educated about Islam. Islam had to be exposed for what it really is in order to counter the influence of Islam.
- The method of Muslim outreach was to systematically visit "door to door" and to keep record cards of each home.

It was mainly young students from the White communities who were trained by LC to do the visitation. They were given clear guidelines of the following

Muslim "Dos" and "Don'ts":

- Always show respect for your Bible, never place it on the floor, nor handle it in a disrespectful manner. If you have a marked Bible and the Muslim friend sees it, explain why you did so (Muslims never write in a Quran).
- A good knowledge of the Bible and the way of salvation is necessary. Do not give the impression that you know all the answers, rather be honest, pray

and search for a suitable answer.

- Jesus told stories or taught in parables. This might be a very useful way to present the gospel to the Muslims because they enjoy stories. Use illustrations from every day life that may convey biblical truth.
- Learn to ask good questions. Many times a well-placed question can stimulate people to think and promote conversation.
- Muslims differ in what they believe, especially when it comes to an explanation of their faith. It is wise to clarify concepts by asking the person, "What do you mean by that?"
- When entertaining Muslims, never serve them food containing pork or bacon, or offer them any alcoholic beverages and do not present food with your left hand. This is considered to be the dirty hand and is not used for taking or receiving food.
- Use literature wisely! Promote the Bible. Use only literature designed for Muslims and read it yourself beforehand! Return to find out whether it was read.
- It is not advisable to discuss politics with Muslims. This may build up unnecessary obstacles.
- If you like writing personal letters, do so. Even a postcard from your holiday can be a meaningful way of showing care and interest (Nehls 1994:8).

Through the literature published by Life Challenge, its influence was felt in many churches in South Africa and it has touched lives throughout the world. Consequently, the ministry of Life Challenge was constantly confronted with action and reactions from the Islamic Propagation Centre International (IPCI). This centre was spearheaded by Mr. Ahmed Deedat, a self-proclaimed scholar of the Bible and is known for his public debates with various Christian leaders. Because of this confrontation and the effects of the IPCI on Muslims and Christians, the LC missionaries had to do a large amount of research and writing to be able to give sound answers to Islamic objections.

In 1986 Life Challenge merged with SIM (Society of International Ministries) and the reasons were more or less the following:

- SIM had a new office in South Africa and they had missionaries who were willing to work with Muslims.
- SIM had the administrative ability to handle the financial area, making it possible for Life Challenge to do door to door personal evangelism.
- Only Germans and Swiss worked in Life Challenge. Whereas LC had only seven couples, SIM had 2500 missionaries. Hence it was advantageous to be merged with a bigger mission and to benefit both spiritually and financially.

Despite all the good work done over an eight-year period, the work of the LC missionaries in Lenasia practically came to an end in 1994 when the Chiang

family joined the SIM work in Lenasia.

4.6 THE WORK OF THE SIM CHINESE MISSIONARY IN LENASIA

4.6.1 The Beginning

4.6.1.1 A Personal Biographical Introduction

During the holidays of 1983, while Chiang was studying at Fuller Theological Seminary, he attended a Vineyard Conference. Among the speakers were Dr. Peter Wagner, Dr Ed Silvano and two other speakers who had the gift of prophecy. One of these told Chiang to stand up in the meeting. His prophecy went something like this:

You are God's handiwork. God has done good work in your life. His call and His purpose is much bigger than your geographic area. God sees you as a good spy. He will allow you to know the inside of the situation. You will know what needs to be done and how to see through the enemy. God will send you to many places. You are going to take back some hostages who will become very important people of God. You are part of God's 'Special Forces' and the Lord is going to use you to go deep into the enemy's territory, because there are some men God wants you

to bring out. You carry a very unusual anointing. You have the presence of a military man and are a good servant. There are some people who want to serve with you. You will inspire many young men and you will see these young men do great things for the Lord.

The following day, a second prophecy was made by another speaker:

I can see there are some broken pieces and God is calling you to put them back together. You are a patient man who will be able to handle it. The Lord wants you to know that some of the churches are shattered and scattered and you will help put them back together. God is giving you a ministry of reconciliation because you are a reconciler. You will bring people back together by the power of God that is in you. God will lead you with a new determination to do His purpose. Next year, when God recommissions you and sends you back into the battlefield, you will be better equipped with new weapons. Your destiny is in His hands.

The next year Chiang came to South Africa. In 1995 one of his prayer warriors, Brian Marian, told him that he had a dream about a warrior who took his arrow and shot it from another country. The arrow landed in Lenasia. He

understood it as meaning that God has sent Chiang to come to Lenasia and bring a revival through his ministry.

4.6.1.2 The Beginning

In 1994 the SIM missionaries the Chiangs, who previously worked in Liberia, began their new ministry in Lenasia, South Africa. This was the year that politics changed in South Africa and many people expected that this would cause a civil war. With regards to religion, the Muslims participated in many strikes and demonstrations against the government. Life Challenge also experienced a very dry season in ministry at this time because many churches did not want to co-operate with the missionaries. The Muslim outreach mission gave up and changed to other kinds of ministry.

The Chiangs lived in ext. 4 in Lenasia which is a middle class area. Opposite ext. 4 is ext. 2 where there is a high crime rate and a high rate of drug and alcohol abuse. This meant that Chiang could minister in both the middle and lower classes and was also able to do outreach work in these areas. The Chiang family started to attend the CRC (Christian Revival Church).

When they arrived in Lenasia they lived in an outbuilding. They spent 2 years looking for a house. They looked at 55 houses without any success until, in 1996, the mission bought a mission house that was bigger than the outbuilding. The size of the house made it possible for a Bible study and disciples group to be started.

Their son, Daniel Chiang, attended the government school in Lenasia, but found that the level of education was two years lower than that in Singapore and so, after one week he moved to the Anglican Primary School in Rosettenville. The school fees are very high, but the Lord provided a 70% scholarship for Daniel.

The Chiangs were very depressed in their new mission field. They feared that their ministry was hopeless. At that time Life Challenge missionaries came to Lenasia only twice a week. There was nothing much to do – the ministry was very easy, but they were not satisfied with this type of structure. During this difficult time, the Lord taught them to wait upon Him and to learn ministry through prayer. Since there was not much outside ministry, the focus was on the inside prayer ministry. The Holy Spirit guided them to pray for a new vision, a new direction for the family, for co-workers for the mission, the country and its political situation, society, the different races, the removal of hatred, for the pastors, the believers, the removal of barriers between churches, the unity of the churches and co-operation and teamwork ministry among the churches. They prayed earnestly for churches to come together to preach the gospel, to serve people of all nations and to fulfil the great task of the world mission. The purpose was to change the difficult situation by faith, by prayer, by leaning on God and trusting in His Word according to Genesis 18:14 which says: "Is anything too hard for me?" He created a dream by faith. Within 4 years they were able to testify to God's faithfulness and His wonderful miracles. He changed people's hearts and history.

SIM Missionary Pastor Tuan said that he had worked among the Indian pastors

for 3 years in Lenasia before they began to accept him. Pastor Chiang also need time to change the image of LC into SIM for the pastors accepted him and invited him to the pastors' fraternal. They were pleased to accept his discipleship strategies and goals. He became a part of them and he considered this a big breakthrough.

4.6.2 The Spiritual Strategy of the Chiangs

4.6.2.1 Introduction

- **The difficulties of working among Muslims**

Life Challenge worked for eight years amongst the Muslims but they found that the church responded coldly. The LC/SIM missionaries worked among the Indian Muslim community in Lenasia. They promoted the vision of Muslim ministry to all Indian pastors and Christians. They gave training and held seminars in the churches regarding the Muslim outreach, as well as the follow-up for Muslim converts. A Bible study was held every week for new Muslim converts. He continued with this approach, but even where he has made some Muslim friends, few of them were willing to accept Christ.

Anybody who takes part in Muslim evangelisation will agree that it is a strong spiritual warfare. There are many difficulties and obstacles as well as strong resistance and opposition from the Muslim community itself. Christians are being persecuted – some even lose their lives. This ministry appears to be fruitless and hopeless, causing many believers to become discouraged even to the point of giving up, due to depression caused by a loss of interest.

- **The Start of the Work**

In 1995 the director of the Mission came from Cape Town to consult with all the pastors in Lenasia. They encouraged the pastors to do a ministry evaluation with the purpose of seeking a co-operative method of witnessing to the Muslim people. They came to do an evaluation of the past 15 years.

After much thought and prayer Life Challenge mission decided to withdraw their team and change their work to some other form of ministry. The Chiang family also made a decision to leave Lenasia, move to Pretoria and teach in a Black Bible college. This meant that all the missionaries were to leave Lenasia.

The directors had a discussion about this with the Indian pastors. They stated that all the missionaries of Life Challenge were free to leave, but they requested that Paul and Grace Chiang stay. The Chiangs were very disappointed, but the pastors insisted that they liked the Chiangs and preferred them to stay because of the similarities between Chinese and Indian culture. The pastors went on to say that they approved of the ideas of the Chiangs as well as their strategy that was appealing. They also said that because the Chiangs lived among the Indian people they felt they were part of the Indian community.

So, finally only the Chiang couple was left in Lenasia. He said to the directors: "I want to leave, but you want me to stay, so I have one condition. If you really want me to stay, I request that you allow me to use my own strategy instead of the strategy of Life Challenge". The directors wanted to know what the new

strategy was, so Chiang outlined his strategy which was to train the home cell leaders of all churches to do Muslim outreach. This meant that Muslim outreach would no longer be the sole responsibility of the mission. Chiang stressed that he wanted to co-operate with the pastors to train home cell leaders first and then teach them Muslim outreach. The directors agreed to allow him to implement this strategy for a period of two years on a trial basis. If there were no results, he was to adopt the Life Challenge tradition. He has been using his strategy for six years now and he has not been asked to return to the old Life Challenge tradition.

4.6.2.2 Outline of the New Strategy

The strategy developed by Paul and Grace Chiang can be systematised under four headings, which will be discussed in more depth: The incarnational approach; The building up of the Christians through home cell groups and Bible study; The emphasis on prayer; The striving for unity.

4.6.2.2.1 The Incarnational Approach

- **Colonial and Incarnational Approaches**

There were differences between the Chiangs' approach and the traditional approach. He used the incarnational approach, whereas the LC missionaries used the old colonial missionary style.

There seems to be two types of missionaries in the mission field. One type stays in the missionary compound far away from the local people. That may be

likened to God coming in the form of an angel. The other type is the incarnate missionary who does not live in a mission compound but among the local people. That was how Jesus functioned.

The LC strategy was to work independently with their own door-to-door personal evangelism. They neither co-operated nor communicated with local Indian churches or pastors. The result was that when Muslims became new believers, they did not have shepherds to look after them. This caused the new converts to revert to their old ways.

Another difference with the Life Challenge missionaries was in lifestyle. They prefer to live 50km away in White areas, which are cleaner, safer and have better houses. This meant that they lived far away from the Indian people and all of the prayer meetings and co-workers meetings were held in White areas. The LC missionaries did not incarnate with Indians, but they expected the Indians to follow their style. They communicated that theirs was the best way. As the Indian people could not function in that way, they gave up. Eventually the Johannesburg LC missionaries, feeling ineffective, decided to leave the ministry.

In contrast with the LC method, SIM's way was a more incarnational and democratic method. The Chiangs followed the SIM pattern, so when they arrived in South Africa they moved directly into the Indian area. The main reason why the Chiangs did this was so they could be available to the Indian

people¹⁰.

- **The advantages of the Incarnational Approach**

There are many advantages of living among the people.

- a. Missionaries are able to learn the culture through daily contact and also through special occasions such as weddings, funerals and dinners. They have learned to cook many Indian dishes, because Grace asks the neighbours many questions about Indian cooking herself. Consequently, the people soon accept the missionaries as a part of their community.
- b. It is natural for the people to go to the missionaries when they are in need because closer relationships and friendships are built. Many people have come to our home in need of counseling and prayer. One Christian woman used our guestroom for a day of fasting and prayer. A pastor's daughter came and spent a week with us because she suffered from back pain. Grace ministered to her in prayer and counseling and also gave her a massage. She has been healed and refreshed.
- c. Grace is happy to be a part of the Indian community. She always socialises with people on the streets and in the shops and also gets to

¹⁰ One conversation that Paul had with one of the LC missionaries was as follows: Chiang: "You come to work in an Indian area for two days a week, for 4 hours each time, but we stay here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We are always on stand by, going to funerals, weddings, visiting the sick, or accident victims. The Indian people can come and visit us anytime and we are able to have morning devotions and daily Bible studies to help make disciples every day. You only come here 8 hours a week, that means we do more here in one year than you have in 7 years".

know different families.

- **Incarnational Ministry and the Church**

Incarnational ministry also implies that the local church needs to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. Chiang found that in South Africa the missionaries exercised too much control over the local church, especially in the Indian areas. The church and the Christians have totally lost their own culture and language and totally copied the lifestyle and rituals of the Western missionaries. It was as Roland Allen described such a situation a century ago:

“When we establish a mission abroad we make a European the bishop of an enormous diocese and the diocese is ruled by him essentially in the same way as a diocese is ruled by a bishop at home. He has under him a certain number of white priests who are in charge of districts which they habitually call their parishes and they govern their parishes on essentially the same principle as the parish priest at home governs his. They conduct their services in precisely the same way as their brethren at home. They use the same Prayer Book and the same ritual”

(Allen 1991:136).

The result of it all was that the control of the LC failed. Conversely, the SIM missionaries, in an incarnational way, tasted the fruits of success.

The following describes some of the aspects of the ministry of Grace Chiang. This will illustrate what living and working in the community could accomplish.

Grace was invited by 6 churches to lead the ladies Bible study group. Her prayer and dream however was to use her own house as a prayer house. Eventually she was able to establish a prayer group and a Bible study group in her house. By 1998 this group had grown to 5-7 ladies.

A new ministry has taken root every Wednesday morning, after the normal Bible Study. This is a ministry to visit the sick, pray for them and share the gospel with them (by the ladies Bible Study group). This resulted in actual requests for visitation from sick families. It was discovered that some sick people had left the church for a long period because they were not clear about salvation. Every Tuesday, Grace and the other 5-7 ladies divide into 2 groups and proceeded to visit these families. God really answered her prayer because Grace wanted to be involved in teamwork.

Every Wednesday afternoon the Ladies group cooked food for the poor and for the Black students in the squatter camps. Neither SIM nor the Indian churches had ministered in squatter camps before. After 2 years of prayer, the Lord sent a Black lady called Gertie to Grace. Gertie had a burden for her own people, so every Tuesday morning we joined forces and did door-to-door personal evangelism with her,

Grace taught the ladies about the parables of Jesus Christ from 9 -10am. Then from 10 -12 am they went to the squatter camp where they taught the same parable. This is the most practical method of training co-workers.

Several Black ladies were willing to accept Christ into their hearts. After a while a Christian lady called Ellen declared that she also wanted to use her home for Bible study, so it was started there too. Consequently, she became one of our co-workers. Between 9 and 11 am visits are done and at 11am a Bible study group meets at Ellen's house. In this way the Lord opened up work also among non-Christian Black ladies to enable them to grow and accept Christ.

In time Grace was also be instrumental in establishing a Christian Women's Club. The purpose was the promotion of unity among the churches, as well as drawing non-Christian members through the discussion of different and interesting topics. Even a Bible Study group for Muslim women could be established through the contacts already built-up.

Another unique ministry was what can be called "Massage for Message". When Grace went to Hong Kong, God provided sisters in Christ to teach her about massage ministry. On her return to South Africa she began teaching the Ladies Bible Study Group how to combine the use of massage skills with sharing the gospel. In this way not only were many helped towards healing, but also even Muslim ladies come to Grace for a massage. Grace got many opportunities to share the gospel through massages.

- **Understand the Culture Differences**

We may wonder why did Life Challenge (LC) fail to achieve its mission goals in spite of 8 years of good effort? Why would the local Indian church leaders

reject the operation mode of the LC missionaries? The key problem was probably a matter of cultural misunderstanding.

David Hesselgrave (1978:204), when thinking about the cultural gap, muses:

It must have been the great gulf which divides Eastern and Western ways of thinking that Rudyard Kipling had in mind when he wrote his oft-quoted lines: 'East is East and West is West, And never the twain shall meet'.

He quotes FH Smith who espoused "not two, but three cognitive approaches to reality: (1) the conceptual; (2) the intuitional or psychical; and (3) the concrete relational". He differentiated between Chinese, Indian and Western thinking, and thought that the priorities of the cognitive processes in the West, China, and India are as follows:

West: Conceptual, Concrete Relational, Psychical

China: Concrete Relational, Psychical, Conceptual

India: Psychical, Concrete Relational, Conceptual

On the other hand, ER Hughes agreed with Smith in the larger dimensions of his analysis, but offers what seems to be a more likely order in the case of Chinese thinking, namely that the conceptual takes priority over the psychical mode of thought. Hesselgrave accepted Hughes's order or priority, and then digrammes the three ways of thinking as follows (Hesselgrave 1978:207-208):

[Picture]

4.6.2.2.2 Home Cell Groups and Bible Study

It is very difficult for Muslims to become Christians. Missionaries tried to do door-to-door personal evangelism every week for years. They found that in a period of 10 years only two or three Muslims were won for Christ. LC (Life Challenge) missionaries used youth from white areas to evangelise Indians in their own neighbourhoods in a door-to-door fashion without using local Indian church members.

Chiang realised that this method was unfruitful and a waste of time. He is from Taiwan, Grace from Hong Kong, so it does not make sense that they traveled thousands of kilometers to Lenasia in South Africa just to win only a few Muslims for Christ. To him this would be a waste of time and money. Anyway, this method had been tried for more than 20 years with no results. Why not Indian to Indian? His plan was to train home cell leaders from all the different churches. Training should include a home cell leader's training course as well as a course in Muslim outreach. The home cell leaders and

cell members had to be trained and encouraged to do Muslim outreach every day to their neighbours in Daxina and Lenasia.

He has already put this strategy into practice. He has trained the cell leaders of 15 churches. About 10 leaders per church attended. In this way the total number of 150 leaders were already trained. With such large-scale outreach from the Christians, Muslims will accept Christ and will not easily turn back to their old ways because the Cell Love Net will be around them.

It was not easy to arrive at this point. One has to accept that the local Indian church has no interest in Muslim outreach, but the question is why. The Indian people are divided into three classes: high, middle and low class. The Muslims are the higher classes and the Hindus – from which group most Christians came – belong to the lower classes. This is a stumbling block for the Christians in relating to the Muslims.

That is why Life Challenge tried in vain for 8 years to interest the local churches in their Muslim outreach seminar. Nobody was interested. Some of the pastors told Chiang that whenever they saw Life Challenge missionaries, they saw a Muslim face and they were tired of hearing about Muslim outreach. Chiang was initially seen as having the same focus, so he decided to change his approach. He said that he did not come to talk about Muslim outreach, but more focus on church Growth! Chiang told the pastors that he studied church growth under Peter Wagner and if they wanted their churches to grow, he would help them. The pastors were happy to hear about this. Chiang explained to them that this would involve a 4-month training course for all

home cell leaders. The training course was about becoming a good home cell leader and it included training on how to do outreach to Muslim and Hindu people. The outreach training was not the main focus of the training. The churches became excited about this and within 2 years about 15 churches invited him to train their home cell leaders.

Many old believers still lack systematic Bible knowledge. They only know small parts of the Bible, so Chiang decided to teach them the Bible chapter by chapter. Home cell leaders were also trained to teach the Bible systematically. This method was also adopted from Korean churches.

He found that most Christians do not really lack evangelism skills and methods, but they feel no burden for the lost. There is a lack of love and patience towards perishing souls. He encouraged them to start Bible study groups, to love and obey God's Word and to take responsibility for honouring God's Great Commission, with a willing heart. From this followed an encouragement to do door-to-door evangelisation amongst the Muslims and Hindus. He wanted them to experience the challenge and the joy of sharing the gospel with unbelievers.

They experimented with several different methods of doing Muslim outreach. Recently they encouraged Christians to reach out to their lost neighbours and to share God's love with them. Neighbours and friends are invited to home meetings. When a cell group reaches the number of 10 people, it is to divide into two groups. The cell groups form a kind of love-net, showing concern for neighbours mainly through friendship evangelisation.

Chiang is invited increasingly by 42 different churches for preaching in Sunday services and provides training for Home Cell leaders from Lenasia in Zakaria Park and Ennerdale. He thank God for allowing him to be servants of all churches for the purpose of church growth - 16 Churches have joined the training course.

The training course is a four-month course: one month on Muslim Evangelism and three months on leadership and Bible Study. The more Chiang does training work the more leaders get involved. Many pastors said to Chiang: "Since you came to train us, our spiritual life has grown and revived". Another 6 churches are still in the waiting list. He prays with pastors over the telephone and some of them come for counselling.

The Bible study in small groups led to an enlargement of the vision. As already said, 70% of the church pastors in Lenasia have never been to formal Bible College; 65% are tent makers, only 35% are really working full-time for the church (interview with Johnny Challen).

Hinduism does not encourage studying. People merely follow the priest. Religious books are not used. They are based on fixed rituals, which exclude book references. Consequently, when Hindus convert to Christianity, they continue this approach. In 1998 Chiang established a pastor's library in Lenasia, but only two pastors responded by borrowing books. Pastors do not only dislike studying, but they are intimidated by the idea. And if they do not study, how are they going to feed their 'lambs and sheep' and care for them? If God does not nourish them, how can they nourish others? (Based on

research by SIM conducted by Grace Chiang, 2000).

Jesus' strategy was to build up workers and not buildings. He built up disciples for three years. This implies that making disciples is the greatest commission, so before He went to heaven He said to His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. If He told them to make believers of all nations, without making disciples, maybe the church would only have lasted for the first century. But because the disciples in turn made disciples the church grew by geometric multiplication.

Chiang's vision for Greater Lenasia was to encourage all the pastors to work together, to break through the cultural, denominational and racial barriers. And he prayed that a university level Bible College would be established in the South area of Ennerdale, Eldorado Park, Lenz and Daxina. In Ennerdale there are 27 churches, Eldorado Park 26 churches, Lenz 22 churches, Daxina 21 churches and Zak Park 4 churches, totaling about 100 churches. If each church sent 10 youth to Bible College, there would be 1 000 students at the Bible college. If in one year, 100 students graduate from Bible College, in ten years 1 000 students will be able to start 1 000 churches. By that time all the mosques and Hindu temples will close down. The city will have been taken for God's Kingdom. The churches had to develop a kingdom mind and not only "my-church" growth, but also God's Kingdom growth.

One church could not start a Bible College on a BTh degree level. They needed each other. The College physically had to be in a neutral area belonging to every denomination. If it were held in a church, some churches

would not send their youth for fear that it would be affiliated with that denomination. By having a non-denominational building, each denomination will more readily support the college.

Although not yet off the ground, some progress has been made in giving shape to these dreams. In 1998 God opened the door for Chiang to teach at the Faith Bible College. In 2000 God opened another door for him to teach at the International College of Bible and Mission, as well as at the Moses Marian Bible College. Here he is teaching the high school students the Word of God and training the teachers to teach the Bible to the students. There are 1 200 African students in this school, but there is a lack of teachers to teach the Bible.

4.6.2.2.3 Prayer Ministry and Prayer Mountains

- **Introduction**

The concept of Prayer Mountains originated in Korea. People there go in great numbers to actual mountains but sometimes other facilities may be called "Prayer Mountains". Usually the Prayer Mountain consists of the prayer houses, caves and a large capacity prayer hall but it does not have a kitchen, because the purpose of people going there is for fasting and prayer (Chio 1981:49 translated by writer).

In Korea many pastors fast and pray at Prayer Mountains for 30-40 days at a time (Chio 1981:8 translated by writer). Many church members from different churches go to Prayer Mountains in Korea. Dr Yongi Cho's church has about 5 000 people at a Prayer Mountain daily and about 2,5 million went to the

Prayer Mountain for revival every year (Chio 1981:14 translated by writer).

For many years already Chiang has put a great emphasis on personal prayer. In 1968 when he was 18 years old, he used to pray on his house roof every morning, noon and evening – like the Apostle Peter did in Acts. In 1975, while studying at the Baptist Seminary (built half way up a mountain), Chiang went to pray at the top of the mountain three times a day for three years with his prayer partner Mr. Chai. Still to this day, the students of the Baptist Seminary use the Prayer Mountain. Chai has also built some prayer mountain caves for students. In 1987, while in Liberia, Chiang built a mountain Prayer House for the use of the Gbandi church members. During 1990 Chiang went to Korea to several Prayer Mountains to learn first hand about the "power through prayer". In December 2000 he also erected a Prayer Roof on his house.

- **The Prayer Mountains of Lenasia**

In 1994 Chiang came to South Africa. The following year, Chiang and Brian Marian started the Prayer Mountain Ministry in Lenasia. From the top of the mountain they could see 12 suburbs below the mountain. They learned from Moses to raise up their hand for spiritual warfare and intercession prayer for all the churches from different suburbs. They prayed for unity and revival, that there would be no more division or hatred against each other. Through this Prayer Mountain Ministry some 40-prayer warriors came forward, 70% of which went to Bible College.

In 1996 Chiang and Pastor Johnny Challen went to Daxina (Lenasia South) to look for a site for a Prayer Mountain. At first only Chiang, Brian Marian and a

few others went to the Prayer Mountain to pray. After Chiang encouraged the pastors, 5 to 6 pastors joined in. For the next two years there were about 5 -10 people attending the Prayer Mountain.

On one Easter morning in 1998, a group of 175 prayer warriors came together from different churches and denominations. They met on the Prayer Mountain at 5 am. It was a wonderful time of praising God for the resurrection of Jesus. Prayer included intercession for all cities as well as prayer for revival. After this Easter service there was an increase in the number of prayer warriors going to the mountain. Irrespective of weather conditions, which can sometimes be very cold, at least 35 - 45 people gather on the Prayer Mountain every Saturday.

In Badplaas in Mpumalanga there is a Prayer Mountain called "Emmanuel Prayer Mountain". It was started 10 years ago by Pastor Kim, a Korean. Through the Emmanuel Prayer Mountain and the Mountain Bible College they already established 119 churches in South Africa, Malawi and Mozambique (Kim 1998 interview by writer). So, in November 1997 Chiang led 59 prayer warriors to Badplaas for a two-day prayer retreat. In September 2001 they established 320 Churches (Kim 2001 interview by writer).

On the 20th of August 1998 Chiang handed the leadership of the Prayer Mountain over and proceeded to start another one in Zakariyya Park (or Zac Park). On the 23rd of August 1998, Chiang went to Zak Park to meet with Pastor Johnny Moodley about the Prayer Mountain ministry. Chiang and Pastor Moodley prayed together on the mountain. After this they met with a group every Saturday for one month. Chiang at first took the leadership in

order to teach Pastor Moodley the concept and then handed it over to him. Pastor Moodley was responsible for the prayer group and it is still continuing today.

In 2000 Chiang went to the Roodepoort Pastors' Fraternal to talk about the Prayer Mountain ministry. Young Pastor Dion was very interested in this and prayed with Chiang and some prayer warriors about this matter. Pastor Dion fell in love with the Prayer Mountain ministry and instead of praying every Saturday morning, he now prays every morning at 6 am on the Prayer Mountain. When he tried to encourage other pastors to join him, they said that he was crazy and they could always pray at home. However, after 6 months a few pastors did join him every Saturday to pray on the mountain. Later 2 SIM missionaries joined Pastor Dion, together with the other coloured pastors to continue with the Prayer Mountain ministry in Roodepoort.

In Dec 2000 Chiang started another Prayer Mountain with the coloured pastors and the Black people of Ennerdale. They first went to the mountain with the intention of visiting the people of the squatter camp on top of the mountain. When asked whether they went to church, some said they went to the Redemption Centre Church below the mountain. The following week Chiang invited Monty (the first Prayer Mountain leader) to go with him to the Prayer Mountain in Ennerdale. While climbing the mountain they invited the Christian squatter camp people to join them on the mountain to pray together. At the first meeting 12 people attended. Some of the Black ladies prayed before the Lord with tears. When we came down from the Prayer Mountain and passed the squatter camp, some of the Black brothers asked Chiang why

he did not call them to this because they wanted to join in. So, the following Saturday Chiang invited more prayer warriors from the Indian area to go with him to the Ennerdale Prayer Mountain to pray together with the people from the squatter camp. In the end 12 Indian people, 6 Coloureds and 15 Blacks attended, making it a total of 33 people.

All of these prayer ministries are still continuing today and none of them have closed down. Every time before Chiang left to start another Prayer Mountain, he appointed a reliable prayer warrior to lead the mountain prayer. This is an amazing miracle.

One time during the winter Chiang suggested to the Lenasia prayer warriors that they stop until summer. They were adamant that they wouldn't stop, no matter how the weather may be. Then Chiang realised that this prayer movement is from God, an unquenchable fire.

Another lovely prayer ministry came into being in August 1998 when Chiang started the Light House daily morning devotions with a group of Indian people. A group of brothers asked Paul to lead them for morning devotions from 5 to 6 am. They come together to study God's Word and pray before they go to work. They are growing in the Lord and are on fire for Him. They also witness for Christ among their friends.

4.6.2.2.4 Unity among Churches and the Jesus March

- **Working for Unity**

“The unity of the Church is ...a powerful missionary weapon. This unity, which the world must be able to see, must bring it to acknowledge that Christ is the Sent One of the Father” (Boer 1961:189).

It is the Holy Spirit who effects the unity of the Church. The wonderful fellowship of the early Church was a direct outgrowth of Pentecost. Believers were of one heart and soul and had all their things in common. When Ananias and Sapphira sinned against this fellowship they sinned against the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:32-5:4), The holy Spirit is the Spirit of communion (2 Cor 13:14), and the source of gifts that make for unity (Gal 5:22-23), Jew and gentile have access by on Spirit to the Father and are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit (Eph 2:18-22). Believers must give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:3), The fellowship of the Spirit, with exhortation in Christ, consolation of love, tender mercies and compassions, requires that believers be of the same mind, have the same love, be of one accord (Phil 2:1-2). For in one Spirit all have been baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether freemen or slaves, and all were made to drink of one Spirit (1Cor 12:12-13). We are one body in Christ (Rom 12:5), all are one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28) (Boer 1961:200).

The Indian pastors said to Chiang, that Indian people are very divided because they do not accept each other, even between churches. So when Life Challenge mission, YWAM, OM mission and Youth for Christ mission tried to unite all the Indian churches together it did not work out. It was like putting

them together with their enemies (Interview Chairman of the Pastor Fraternal Johnny Challen 1999). The pastors rejected many missionaries that had worked in Lenasia previously, so Chiang decided to seek out how he could win their heart to earn their approval and their co-operation.

In the past most churches did not associate with each other due to misunderstandings, especially 'sheep-stealing'. Since Chiang came out of a pastor's family, he enjoys caring for pastors. He realised that the pastors were the key to more unity. This led to a new strategy: "If the pastor does not come to see me, I will go and see him; if the pastor does not like me, I will love him nevertheless. The pastor is the boss and I am the servant. I will not do what I want, but work in submission to the pastor".

God guided Chiang to the strategy to build friendships with Indian pastors one at a time. An Indian person once told him, "When you date ten girlfriends, you cannot date them all at the same time, you must date them one by one. You must date them at different times and in different areas, otherwise, you will lose them all". So, one by one, he began building relationships with each of them.

Chiang visited all the pastors, one after another, listening to their struggles and trying to understand their needs. He took the role of a friend and servant. He found out that for over half of the pastors, the church ministry was only a part-time job and some of them had no theological training. Realising that many of the pastors had very few books they could use to prepare their sermons, he opened a small pastor's library in his home to help them. He taught them how to use the computer to study the Bible and encouraged them

to take Bible College courses.

They were working alone and they needed a lot of encouragement and help. Chiang prayed and asked for the Lord's wisdom to help meet the needs of these pastors and the churches – that they might be strengthened and united together. So he prayed for and with them in person and on the telephone. All this was on a one on one basis. When they were sick, have a funeral or a wedding, when there were church problems or crises, he was always there for them. It was after he had built up a good relationship with the pastors that he was invited to preach in churches, 42 different churches which included training in 16 of the churches.

The Chairman of the Pastor's Fraternal Johnny Challen later said to SIM director Jim Smith, "I have been working in Lenasia as a pastor for 40 years. Most missionaries that worked in Lenasia were only invited by about two churches to preach and the other churches would never open the door for them. Most of our community does not accept outside people, only their own. Chiang is very different, because we feel he is just like us. He has been a great influence by giving us many new ideas and unifying all the pastors. I have never seen anyone like him in my 40 years of ministry in Lenasia".

But all this took a long time. In 1994 a pastors' fraternal meeting was held in order to bring unity through prayer. Chiang started to create an address book for the pastors' fraternal. He visited every pastor and wrote down their name, address and phone number and birthday and prayed for them every day. In 1995 a pastors' fellowship night was held. Pastors and their wives gathered

together to have fellowship in unity and love. The total number that came was 50. They had heart to heart fellowship, which went on until 11pm. We thank God that through prayer; unity of the pastors was brought about.

In February 1996 two speakers, Dr Silvosio from Argentina and John Dawson from America came to hold a conference of prayer for unity and reconciliation. The first thing the chairman did was to kneel down, confess his sins and ask the Black people to forgive him for his bad attitude towards them in the past. Then all the co-workers knelt down and confessed their sins to the Black people. The Black people also went to the altar, knelt down and confessed their sin of unforgiveness. Everyone cried before the Lord and hugged one another. The meeting was supposed to have closed at 12pm for lunch, but the Holy Spirit moved in such a way that everyone wept for two more hours. This meeting resulted in the tearing down of many barriers between the races and denominations. The Holy Spirit came down like a fire transforming everybody.

The Indian pastors left the conference with a change of heart, determined to work much harder to maintain unity among themselves. They reasoned that if God could work it in the white churches, then why not among the Indian churches? After the conference, a 40-day fast and prayer was held. All the churches participated in this.

In the same year Grace and several ladies from different churches also came together for a unity movement. God answered their prayer by blessing their ministry every month. More than 100 women attended the women's club and

there were many new converts. They also started a feeding scheme run by the Indian church every Wednesday. The women's club enjoys this very much and sees it as another bridge to win new converts.

The Chiangs experienced that after a few years in Lenasia and especially since they have moved into the mission house, the number of visitors to their home is increasing all the time. Apart from pastors and believers from different churches, the visitors also include Muslims, Catholics and Hindus. They come for counseling, prayer or for a massage. The community has accepted Chiang as a part of them; thank God that in a few years He has enabled them to establish good relationships with the people.

- **March for Jesus**

In time Chiang thought about a new symbol to help unite the churches in the community. The strategy he used was that of the March for Jesus. He was the main instigator for the event. His partners in getting it off the ground were the prayer warriors. They organised the first March for Jesus in 1998 and again a big one on the 10th of June 2000. There were about 5 000 Indian Christians and almost every church joined the march around the Muslim city of Lenasia.

Today, because of the individualisation of modern society, but also the existence of different cultures, churches tend to drift apart, especially in Lenasia. It seems as if everyone is working independently of each other. A Kingdom mindset or unity for God's kingdom is not present. That is why some symbol of unity had to be built.

The primary purpose of the March for Jesus is a national and international event that unites churches of all denominations in cities across the world to share their common faith in Jesus Christ. Taking the Church to the streets breaks down barriers between churches and leads to greater unity and cooperation.

In an atmosphere much like a family gathering, believers come together to march down their city streets. During the coordinated March, mobile sound units play lively music, sometimes written specifically for the March. Singing songs, reciting proclamations and waving colourful banners, participants show their love for God. The children especially enjoy these joyful processions. The March for Jesus concludes with a prayer rally for the city, nation and world, led by local pastors.

At the March Prayer Rally, Christians joined hands and hearts as they prayed for their city and their nation. Believers asked for God's wisdom and blessing on their local government officials. Christians set their denominational differences aside to come together for this unifying event. The March for Jesus served as a reunion of the entire Church in the city, celebrated by followers of Jesus from every background and race.

The March for Jesus allows an opportunity for groups to be reconciled as the entire body of Christ in a city gathers. The walls of suspicion, division and indifference, which sometimes exist between different churches and races in a city, are addressed. During the March forgiveness is offered and received in powerful, public ways. Such displays of understanding and reconciliation



demonstrate that we can live in peace with each other, only by the power of the Prince of Peace (USA 2000 Apr14, www.mfj.org/main/htm/).



CHAPTER FIVE

MISSIOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains missiological reflections on the Spiritual Strategy. The previous two Chapters described the practical mission work of a Chinese missionary with a traditional Chinese cultural background. He called his approach a “Spiritual Strategy”, however it is broader than what is usually described as Spiritual Warfare¹¹, but it does contain a deliberate focused and persistent prayer element. It is basically a “spiritual” approach, but then not necessarily incorporating the other aspects of what came to be known as Spiritual Warfare.

This Chapter will be based on the researcher’s analyses of Biblical reasoning, methodology and theory, but will also rest to a large extent on the practical experience gained in the mission work among the Gbandi tribe of Liberia and

¹¹ There is an enemy force that is directly opposed to the Kingdom of God. Satan who is called the god of this world and the prince of the power of the air leads this force. He is the programmer of culture. He influences philosophy, systems of thought, religions, politics and economic systems against the purposes of God. His influence is also directly brought against the body of believers through both corporate attacks as well as on individuals. He is continually scheming and using surprise assaults to frustrate and undermine the purpose of God. We need to be aware of the reality of his influence and stand firm in our resistance to his influences (Wimber 1988:10).

among the Indian people of Lenasia, South Africa. It was found that it is not adequate to use Biblical and missiological theories and strategies because Chiang felt that one must adopt a practical approach with a Spiritual Strategy in mind.

5.1.1 God's Spiritual Strategy

Shenk (1999:105) summarises God's strategy into three stages:

1. The election and sending of Abraham so that "by you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves" (Gen 12:3), along with the covenant binding Israel to be the instrument of salvation for the nations.
2. The sending of Jesus Christ (Jh 1:14), the divinely appointed Messiah, who continues the strategy of *pars pro toto* (the one for the many).
3. The sending of the church as an extension of the mission of Jesus Christ (Jh 17:18; 20:21). Each "sending" is from a position of vulnerability and weakness in obedience to God's call to bring healing and salvation to all peoples (Dt 15:15, 16:12; 24:18; 26:5; Phil 2:5-8; Jn 17:18).

5.1.2 Theological Strategy

Shenk continues (1999:106-107) to spell out God's approach.

A. God's Redemptive Mission: The Source

Mission has its source in the nature and purpose of God. God the Creator is none other than God the Redeemer. God's saving purpose can be traced through the calling of Abraham and his descendants to enter into covenant

relationship for the blessing of the nations. This saving purpose is expressed supremely in the sending of God the Son to be the saviour of the world. God's redemptive strategy stands over all history and points to the goal, the kingdom of God.

B. Jesus Christ: The Embodiment

The Old Testament introduces the notion that God's redemptive strategy is tied to the coming of the Messiah (Is 11: 1-9; 42:14, 53; 61:1-3). The synoptic gospels emphasise the continuity between Old and New Testaments - that which was promised is now being fulfilled (Lk 4:16-21). When the incarnate God enters the human scene, it is as a helpless baby (Jn 1: 14), signifying both identification and vulnerability. Jesus inaugurates his public ministry by proclaiming the reign of God (Mt 4:17; Mk 1:15) and embodies that reign, demonstrating its power and interpreting its meaning for the lives of his listeners. That embodiment projected a new way of being. He came as one who serves and who was self-emptying (Phil 2:5-8), but his was a transforming presence. From his ministry emerged a new people from and in the midst of all nations. "Through that strategy of persuasion through his suffering Servant, God created a like-minded people", wrote David Shank, "who are servant to all peoples for their blessing and salvation. The strategy of Christian mission is nothing more-nor less-than participation in carrying out God's own strategy. Its shape is that of a cross" (Shank 1973: 1). The risen Christ commissions "like-minded people" to continue the mission of redemption in his name (Mt 28:18-20; Jn 20:19-22). They will take their strategic clues from their Messiah leader.



C. Holy Spirit: The Power

Building on the work of Roland Allen, Harry R. Boer (1961) demonstrated how central the Holy Spirit is to mission. The Spirit is the primary agent of the mission of the Messiah. Missionary obedience is first of all an act of submission to the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Strategic thinking ought to begin and end with the prayer "Your will be done". Within this ambit there is ample space for the hard thinking involved in strategy-making, but it will be held in check by the awareness that the Holy Spirit is sovereign. Because mission is the will of God, the Holy Spirit is the driving force in mission. The primary purpose of the Spirit is that the messianic reign be actualised.

D. Church: The Instrument

At each stage the sending is for the purpose of bringing blessing to the nations. In his life and ministry Jesus Christ has modeled all that it means to embody the life of God. It results in a new community that is characterised by shalom and a passion to extend life to the nations across lines of race, class, sex, and nationality. Thus the church continually draws on that model for its own ministry. Whatever does not build the new community must be rejected. Actions that produce alienation or bondage are contrary to the gospel.

E. Cultures: The Context

Strategic thinking that is consistent with the other elements of this framework will respect the varied contexts of mission. All human cultures are equally the means through which people hear the gospel "in their own tongue". The apostle Paul insisted that he was prepared to "become all things to all people" in order that they might hear the gospel. Strategic thinking based on master

plans far removed from a particular context must be treated with great suspicion.

5.1.3 Pentecost and missions

It is of utmost importance for a Spiritual Strategy to be based on the understanding that the Holy Spirit is today's prime mover in mission. As Shenk (1999:13) says:

The Genesis account of creation notes that “the Spirit of God (‘wind,’) was moving over the face of the waters” (Gn 1:2b) as God began creating an ordered universe out of chaos. At the beginning of the mission of the Messiah, John the Baptist declared, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him” (Jn 1:32).

In both creation and the new creation, God the Spirit is the agent. The parting words of Jesus to his disciples were the promise that the Spirit would come to them, and that coming was linked directly to the continuation of the messianic mission (Lk 24:45f.; Acts 1:8). At Pentecost the disciples experienced what they interpreted to be the fulfillment of the prophet Joel's prophecy. The Holy Spirit was made manifest to them as wind, fire, and prophetic speech (Acts 2). Wind, or breath represents life. The Spirit is God's breath of life. A special dignity was conferred on humankind at creation when God breathed into Adam “the breath of life.” The Hebrew scripture described the Messiah as the one in whom God's Spirit would be fully present, infused with God's life, anointed by the Spirit.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit demonstrated the new *koinonia* God was creating. Because of its rebellion at Babel humankind was sentenced to live out the consequences of the “confusion of languages”. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit reversed Babel. A new people, drawn from the nations, whose linguistic particularity is the means for each to hear about “the mighty acts of God” (Acts 2:6, 11), is called forth. Its unity is expressed neither through culture nor ritual but in worship of the God revealed in Jesus the Messiah” (Acts 2:14-36).

As Harry Boer said (1961:62):

Hendrik Kraemer calls attention to the fact that at the very moment in which the Church was born her missionary task also began. Church means missions and missions mean Church. The first activity of the Church was a prophetic missionary witness. The descent of the Spirit made the disciples apostles, missionaries. One might almost say, it branded them as apostles. At Pentecost the whole of God’s redemptive purpose with the world was for a moment set off in bold relief. The Beginning and the End was revealed: the Beginning of the Church’s missionary course throughout the world, and the End when the whole world shall have been gained for the gospel. Pentecost is the fulfillment of the promise: “You shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit and you shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8).

The urge to witness is inborn in the Church, it is given with her nature, with her very being. She cannot not-witness. She has this being because of the Spirit who indwells her. Pentecost made the Church a witnessing Church because at Pentecost the witnessing Spirit identified Himself with the Church and made

the Great Commission the law of her life. At Pentecost the witnessing Spirit became the Soul of Christ's body, and the mandate of Christ the law of its nature (Boer 1961:122).

5.1.4 Form and Meaning of Spiritual Strategy

Strategy involves form, method, the way of doing things. The form should serve the meaning, the purpose. It is therefore important to let the Holy Spirit lead the way, so that when the meaning changes, the form, the method or strategy should also change. The forms of the strategy should never be allowed to become so fixed as to function as a law or bondage to the missionary, but should always be open to change.

Variety in forms is important because people and situations change all the time. However, God (the Ultimate Meaning) never changes. Although Jesus never changes - "He is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8), He changed his approach. God is trying to move us. John the Baptist was a unique person, very unusual in his habits and clothes. Some people may say, "No I want no part of that revival – it is not for me". Jesus however came in a totally different style. He (probably) wore conventional clothes and He associated with all types of people. He attended a wedding in Cana and ate with sinners. Some said that this was what they were looking for, while others rejected Him because of that.

Christ – as well as John – was critical of tradition, of form. They emphasised meaning. John said to the crowds coming out to be baptised by

him:

"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father'. For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire" (Luke 3:7-9).

It is not good to blindly hold on to age-old traditions; we should rather move on, change and adapt to new generation situations. Life is a variable and is continuously in the process of change. Only death stops change, but as long as there is life there is movement, change, growth and variety. Every time God created something there was movement and change. Nothing God created was like a copy of something that had existed before, but everything was fresh, new and original.

God is very creative, so our strategy should also be creative and not remain the same. God created us as unique and the essence of life is our ability to be unique. Man is good at making copies, producing fakes and doing imitations, but God excels and specialises in creating originals. One should be free to be oneself. We need to be released from the mindset of trying to be a carbon copy of someone else. There is variety in the kingdom of God. If we can grasp that our God is awesome, diverse, interesting, abundant and unfathomable, we will no longer conform to rigid patterns when it

comes to singing, praying and especially expounding God's word. We need to allow the Holy Spirit freedom to work in our lives. When we restrict the movement of the Holy Spirit we are attempt to put the Holy Spirit in a box and this will not be effective. God is not obligated to function within any framework, limitations and traditions of man.

For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6). **Tradition and form will kill, but the Spirit gives new meaning.** Some people receive something unique from God, and then try to pass it on to or even force it on to others. Sometimes they train others in certain methods and techniques, but it is not the method and technique that should be emphasised. The focus should be on God – it is His prerogative to choose the circumstances, method and person He wants to use to achieve His divine purposes. Paul did not use his shadow (like Peter in Acts 5) to heal; he used handkerchiefs (Acts 19). In one incident Jesus used his saliva. It is evident by the examples of Paul, Peter and Jesus that God is in no way restricted. He uses a diversity of methods and techniques. The Biblical examples could be continued indefinitely.

Mission strategy or tradition should not become a law, or a bondage to missionaries. Tradition or denomination can become an idol. Sometimes God has to crush our tradition. God is not pleased when we take the anointing of one generation and force it upon another, or box it in with a hermetic seal.

“Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just

as his father David had done. He removed the high places smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it (It was called Nehushtan) (II King 18:3-4).

Moses made the snake in obedience to the command of God and now the king broke everything, but still did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Why? Because the meaning got lost. What does God do when we begin to worship according to our own methods and traditions? He sends someone like Hezekiah to crush the entire effort. God is shaking our traditions – crushing our Nehushtan. Our security is in our traditions and in our background. We trust in the things that we used to do, but the Lord wants us to depend completely on the Holy Spirit. We must not make our own traditions or depend on past revivals. God wants us to change because he wants us to communicate His Word to a dying world.

Paul had a Spiritual Strategy with an understanding heart.

“Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but

am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:19-22).

Despite all criticism, Paul was prepared to do whatever it takes in order to win souls. He was willing to try new ways –even to be a servant to all men.

Jesus' Spiritual Strategy was characterised by variety. Jesus witnessed and ministered to people corporately as well as individually. He called Andrew and Peter individually and He also attended the wedding in Cana. In John 3, when Jesus talks to Nicodemus, he said; "You must be born again". When He spoke to religious people He challenged them, but when he spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well, He did not say; "You must be born again the wind blows wherever it pleases." Jesus in His wisdom asked if He could have a drink.

When an old form (person) failed, **God created or called a new form.** When the old form fails because the meaning might be wrong, God always makes something new. Form does not last forever because meaning is more important than form. In the New Testament Jesus castigated the Pharisees, who kept the forms of circumcision, the Sabbath day and the Old Testament laws and commands, including the Ten Commandments, but they lost the meaning. Jesus describes them as worshipping Him with their lips, while their hearts are far from Him. The axe is at the roots of the tree that does not repent and produce fruit – it will be cut down! This means that the old tradition

will be cut down if it does not take on a new meaning. Form is a strategy, a method, it can never be the ideal, but new meaning is important and necessary.

In the New Testament the followers of Jesus were called Christians, meaning Christ's followers or Disciples of Christ. Christians were totally different from the Pharisees and Sadducees - they were a new concept. Jesus said that new wine should not be put into old wineskins because they will burst. New wine must be put into new wineskins – nobody uses new cloth to repair old clothes because the new cloth will shrink and the tear will be enlarged. Old skin is like tradition: inflexible! New wine must have new skin because it is more flexible.

5.1.5 Spiritual Strategy in the Light of God's Kingdom

5.1.5.1 Introduction

The Spiritual Strategy outlined in this thesis should also be understood in the context of the biblical concept of the Reign of God. The Bible can be read as a Kingdom Story. God is the King and all those who believe in Him are His subjects. However, one rebellious angel¹² and his hordes had become an opposition force and ensnared mankind into sinning and turning away from

¹² 頁: 201

Isaiah 14:12 says, "How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations."

God. A history of treachery had thus begun. In God's mercy, He has been calling mankind through His own people to come back to Him and be His subjects once more.

In the Old Testament era, God anticipated His chosen people, the Israelites, to be His witnesses in the world: "...all people on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3). The Israelites failed to accomplish God's will. During the New Testament times God, through His Church (Christians) continued to invite mankind to return to Him: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations... "(Matthew 28:19).

In its mission the Church should strive to be Kingdom-minded and emphasise Kingdom growth, for the Church is only a process that leads to God's eternal Kingdom. The Almighty God has irrevocably committed His pure and holy love to a group of human beings that He has created on one of the tiniest planets in the universe (Wang 1999:1). This Kingdom Concept is embedded in the Bible from the beginning to the end of time..

5.1.5.2 The Inauguration of the Kingdom

God's kingship is both universal and covenantal. When he created the heavens and the earth by his Word and when he created the first human couple in his own image and likeness, it was inevitable that from that time onward he would exercise a loving and preserving control over his creation. This can be described as his universal kingship. He is the source of all authority and he has decreed his ultimate triumph over all things, particularly

the nations (Glasser 1989:31): “All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord; and families of the nations shall worship before Him. For dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations” (Psalm 22:28, 29).

There are three necessary components that constitute a kingdom, namely, the king, the people and the territory. God is our King and we are His people. As to the territory, in a narrower sense, the Kingdom is in the believers' heart (Luke 17:21); in a broader sense, this is our Father's world - all nations, all peoples and all creatures belong to Him. His Kingdom fills the earth (Wang 1999:3).

5.1.5.3 The Usurpation of the Kingdom

Satan was originally a mighty angel created by God. Instead of being grateful and loyal to God, he was proud and he wanted to be equal with God. He rebelled against God (Is. 14:12-15), fell and became the enemy of God. Satan knew that he could not overcome God in a direct way, so his method was to destroy God's creation. Since Adam and Eve were the climax of God's creation, they became Satan's natural target who fell under his treachery.

God's people should have been His obedient children. Now they were removed from the presence of God and lived under Satan's domain (John 14:30). At this point Satan for the time being usurped God's sovereignty and corrupted mankind (Wang 1999:5).

5.1.5.4 The Spiritual Battle of the Kingdoms

Adam and Eve sinned and fell, plunging them into gloom. But God's will shall not be thwarted by human failures. God gave Adam a third son Seth in place of Abel (Genesis 4:25). But Satan again corrupted the children of Seth to a degree that "the thoughts of his heart was only evil all time" (Genesis 6:5). God's wrath came upon that generation in the form of the flood, but God allowed mankind to continue through the house of Noah. And again Satan corrupted Noah's children that they glorified not God but themselves through the building of the Tower of Babel. God once more responded by confusing their language and scattering them upon the face the earth (Genesis 11:1-9). This seesaw warfare has not ceased till this day (Wang 1999:6).

5.1.5.5 Kingdom Spiritual Strategy Strikes Back – Through Israel

The Lord said to Abram:

'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and whoever curses you I will curse; and all people on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:1-3).

The first eleven chapters of Genesis give us a record of repeated degeneration

of humanity, which resulted in the flood and the dispersion – a depressing and hopeless picture. But in Chapter 12 with the calling of Abram (Abraham) we begin to see a ray of hope, purpose and direction.

In Chapter 12 God made a covenant with Abraham. The first part of the covenant was a threefold blessing to Abraham and Israel – a great nation, a great blessing and a great name (Wang 1999:7). Abraham should be regarded as “the pioneer in mission”, the spiritual forefather of all the people of God scattered throughout all the races of mankind (Glasser 1989:55). The second part of the covenant was a responsibility for Abraham and the people of Israel, “You will be a blessing (to others) all peoples on earth will be blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2-3).

However, Israel proved to be an ungrateful and unfaithful people. They were interested only in the first part of the covenant (receiving blessing for themselves), but were utterly uninterested in the second part (be a blessing to others). Being an arrogant and self-centred people they have never really espoused a national desire to make known to other nations the love of Jehovah God. They have utterly failed in God's calling. In fact, the Old Testament is mainly a history of the failure of Israel.

5.1.5.6 Kingdom Spiritual Strategy Strikes Back – Through the Church of Jesus Christ

- **The Beachhead**

“But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son,

born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full right of sons" (Galatians 4:4,5).

The New Testament teaches the universal kingship of God. Jesus Christ is described as "the Ruler of kings on earth" who in the Last Day will be fully revealed as the Lord, God, the Almighty, the One who "reigns" (Revelation 1:5, 19:6) (Glasser 1989:31). The Son of God, Jesus Christ, came to the world to redeem mankind; that men may be saved by faith and return to the Kingdom of God. But "the whole world is under the control of the evil one" (I John 5:19). Jesus referred to Satan as "Prince of the world" (John 14:30). Undeniably, ever since Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan's temptation, the whole world became Satan's captives and followed him. But through Jesus Christ, the Kingdom struck back into Satan's domain.

Especially Matthew's gospel reminds us that His thinking was centred on the gospel of the Kingdom and His message focussed on the coming of the Kingdom (Matthew 4:17, 23, 5:3, 6:9-10, 10:5-7, 16:19, 24:14).

- **The Mission of the Church**

God established the church through Christ and send the Spirit to work in the church. What was not accomplished through Israel ("All peoples on earth will be blessed through you"), was to happen through the church. Here we see the parallel between the Great Commission Scripture of the Old Testament and the one in the New Testament, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Matthew 16:15) (Wang 1999:10).

Before the first coming of Christ, God's plan of salvation revolved around the nation of Israel. After Christ's resurrection, the salvation plan shifted from Israel to the church. "Therefore I tell you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit" (Matthew 21:43). The church is therefore "A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God" (1 Peter 2:9).

The early church, in a short span of 70 years, spread the gospel throughout the holy city, the holy land, Asia Minor, Greece, Rome and the entire Mediterranean region! Beginning from the 4th century, Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. During the next millennium the church enjoyed state support and outward growth, but often had lost its Biblical faith and true spirituality.

- **Global Missionary and Revival Movements**

Two centuries after the Reformation God used the Pietists, the Brethren, the Puritans, the Methodists and a host of servants like Zinzendorf, Carey, Morrison, Livingstone, Sundar Singh, Taylor and Judson amongst others to spearhead the modern global missionary movement.

The Spirit of God also initiated spiritual awakenings in many places of the world and true revivals broke out in scores of nations, such as the Great Awakening in America (1734-1744), Korean Revival (1903), Welsh Revival (1904), Manchurian Revival (1908), Hsinhwa Revival (1909), Shanghai Revival (1925), Shantung Revival (1931), etc. During these spiritual visitations God used His servants such as Wesley, Tennent, Edwards, Whitefield, Moody,

Finney, Roberts, Goforth, John Sung, etc. to purify and invigorate churches both in the east and the west (Wang 1999:12).

The Student Volunteer Movement in the late 19th century once more stirred up interest in worldwide missions. The two World Wars have paradoxically both hindered and strengthened the missions movement. While slowing down the mission sending efforts, they inadvertently opened the eyes of the evangelicals as well as the liberals to see the "real world", the reality of sin, the cruelty of man and the dire need of a Saviour! These and other factors greatly contributed to the tremendous growth of evangelical fervour from the 1950's.

- **World Evangelisation Movements**

Especially in evangelical circles the last third of the century was marked by great activity. A series of world evangelisation congresses took place under the leadership of Billy Graham, Carl Henry and others: Berlin (1966), Lausanne (1974), Pattaya (1981) and Lausanne II (1989). These gatherings have given enormous impetus to churches of the world towards the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission. It has also given birth to various national and regional evangelisation movements, among them the Chinese CCCOWE Movement (Wang 1999:12).

The second Lausanne Congress in 1989 gave birth to the AD 2000 and Beyond Movement. This Movement has conducted two global Consultations: Seoul (1995) and South Africa (1997). The third one, scheduled to take place at the end of the year 2000 in Jerusalem, could not take place because of the tensions in that region.

- **Return of the Kingdom Forces**

The world has never witnessed such a burst of the spreading of the gospel as in the previous decades. Knowledge and tools for global missions are unprecedented. More importantly, God has raised up prayer movements in many parts of the world and through these intercessions the burden and task of world evangelisation have gained tremendous new momentum (Wang 1999:13).

From the beachhead of Bethlehem, throughout the past 2 millennia, the good news has advanced to every corner of the earth, rescuing people from Satan's domain into Christ's Kingdom.

The church is God's royal legion. Its duty is to obey God's command, do battle for Him and accomplish His mission. If the church expects to have an abundant and victorious life, Christians and church leaders must espouse a new understanding and attitude toward the church.

- **Spiritual Strategy and the proclamation of the Kingdom**

“The seventh angel sounded his trumpet and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: 'The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he will reign forever and ever' (Revelations 11:15).

Revelation 11:15 is a message which God's people have been waiting for thousands of years – the proclamation of the Kingdom's return. The theme is

the Kingdom. It includes Christ's Kingdom (the Millennium) and God's Kingdom (the Kingdom Eternal). This proclamation signals that the nations of the world will be restored from the hands of the usurper, Satan, into the hands of, Christ, the rightful owner. This is an all-important declaration. But the time when Satan will lose all control of the world will have to wait until the Second Coming of Christ and after the last war on earth (Revelation 20:10).

The proclamation fulfilled the vision of Daniel (Daniel 2:31-45). The rock, which represents the Kingdom of God, will smash all human kingdoms and will fill the whole world. God will reign forever. The proclamation also responded to the desire and longing of Prophet Zechariah, "The Lord will be King over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord and His name the only name" (Zechariah 14:9).

"Christ rejected Satan's offer of the kingdom of the world (Matthew 4:8,9). Now the time has come and His salvation plan is fulfilled. He will receive back His Kingdom legally, rightfully and ethically. Angels in heaven made this proclamation ahead of time as a *fait accompli*. They know that every word of God will be fulfilled. These proclamations are as good as accomplished facts, unalterable and nonnegotiable (Wang 1999:16).

- **Spiritual Strategy and the realisation of the Kingdom**

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and first earth had passed away and there is no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City; the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride

beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men and He will live with them. They will be His people... He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:14).

Though banished and forlorn on the island of Patmos, God granted John magnificent visions of things to come as well as to see the New Jerusalem. Revelation 20 also foretold the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered" (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22). After the awful scenes of the bottomless pit, the final war, the final judgement and the lake of fire, the 21st chapter brought us a holy, beautiful and serene world.

His Kingdom is hereby fully recovered and restored. He will reign forever and ever. This is our Father's world. We are His people and his soldiers. And we are commissioned to be the light and salt in this present dark world, to fulfil His Great Commission and to hasten the Lord's return (Wang 1999:20).

5.2 THE INCARNATIONAL APPROACH

5.2.1 Incarnational Missiology as Spiritual Strategy

5.2.1.1 Introduction

When asked why Chiang was willing to live with Black people in their community and what kind of theology moved his heart to do so, he honestly had to say that he naturally moved in without any theology to convince him. After deeper reflection, however, he thinks that two things were foundational: the one underlying reason might have been an incarnational theology, but the other has something to do with the Chinese mentality.

In this paragraph he will deal at length with the incarnational approach, but it is necessary first to make a few observations about the Chinese character in general. Chinese people are in a number of ways closer to the people of the third world countries.

- Firstly they are not too different with regards to a general quality of life.
- Chinese people generally do not want to impose changes onto other people and they do not want to be changed themselves either. They prefer to keep a low profile in other cultural societies and mind their own business. Chinese people prefer to blend in peacefully and harmoniously into a new culture and have no interest in ruling people or introducing drastic changes. Because of these characteristics, it appears that Chinese people would not encounter much difficulty in working in the third world context or becoming missionaries.
- Thirdly, they also have experienced humiliation by the hands of some Western colonials. They understand what people of the Third World have been subjected to. Therefore, hopefully, Chinese missionaries are inclined not to

repeat the same mistakes when they reach out to other cultures.

Furthermore, Western missionaries came to China since 1840 specifically the Mainland and Taiwan. After the Second World War, Taiwan faced severe poverty. Out of goodwill many American Christians shipped relief goods such as clothing, rice, flour, butter and milk to Taiwan. To ensure that these goods reach the people in need, the donors preferred the church leaders to distribute them rather than the Taiwanese government. The church leaders themselves were very poor and many didn't receive salaries. So, the drums of relief material not only benefited the people, but also posed a great temptation to the leaders. Some pastors opened the drums preferentially and removed the best clothes for themselves. Others became so greedy that they sold the goods in private and pocketed the money themselves. Some were imprisoned for these actions. On the other hand because of the attraction of these free gifts, almost all churches expanded rapidly as if a revival was experienced by them.

Not unexpectedly there developed various views of Western missionaries. Whilst missionaries were generally admired because of the help given, other Chinese rejected all Westerners out of patriotism. Some indeed saw the missionaries as gods of wealth. They tried to benefit by contact with them. Some even acted as if the white missionaries were kings and almost acted as obedient puppies before them. The Western missionaries would easily be deceived because they were unable to tell which brothers were true or false.

When the American aid ceased after a few years, the bubble burst. The

number of members in many churches decreased and soon everything went back to normal. Many pagans took the opportunity to mock the Christians, saying, "the Christian religion is a rice religion". They disliked and criticised Christianity because they regarded it as a religion using bait (goods) to attract people.

5.2.1.2 Incarnation

When Chiang first worked amongst the Gbandi tribe as a missionary, he did not understand what was meant with the word "incarnation" until the day that he went to a village after 10pm to teach the Bible. As it was dangerous to drive a car on a bumpy road, he slept over that night. He was planning to go back home the next day. He was prepared with a mosquito net and blanket. He new there was lot of mosquitoes in Liberia. After hanging the mosquito net and preparing the blankets, he stuck his legs under the blankets. After only 5 minutes, his legs were itching unbelievably. Using the torch to check what was wrong with his legs and why they were itching while inside the mosquito net, he realised that the beds of the Gbandi people were riddled with fleas. It was the fleas that caused the itching! He then started to understand what was meant with "incarnation".

If a father has five children he would want his eldest son to become a doctor, his second son to become an artist, his third son to become a computer technician, his fourth son to become a musician and his last son to become a pastor. But God has only one son. He didn't send his son to this world to become a businessman or a computer technician or to choose any other

occupation. God has only one son and his first choice was for his Son to become a "Missionary". That means to become a "Missionary" in God's eyes is the most important and greatest, most honourable task. I've been a Missionary since 1982 and I've always felt it to be a real honour. I've never regretted it or ever had to feel ashamed.

Jesus was born in a multicultural context. He had to pass through at least six different cultures: Heavenly culture, Jewish culture, Samaritan culture, Roman culture, Greek culture and Egyptian culture.

His name is called "Emmanuel" which means, "God with us". "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with us. We will be his people." Our God is a mission-minded God. "The word became flesh who made his dwelling among us... full of grace and truth."

You do not have to go to a Holy Land to seek him. For He comes to you. The invisible God becomes visible. The Untouchable God becomes touchable. As John said: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched ... this we proclaim concerning the world of life (1 Jn 1: 1). He is not just a Book, but a living being, not just knowledge, or a theory, but He is a true-life example.

He moved among the people, suffered their afflictions, had much to say, but said it in a humble way, all the while blessing people with his presence, touching lepers, lifting up the lame healing the sick, and giving

back children to their parents, washing his disciple's feet, His kingdom was not of this world, He was not interested in the measures of worldly success, but to live out and erect signs of his Kingdom in the world" (Kritzinger, Meiring, Saayman 1994:123).

"Faith without deeds is dead" (James 2.26). Faith without action is meaningless, Pagans continue searching for their gods, but our God is the spirit who inhabits human form, he came searching for us, "for the son of man came to seek and to save what was lost". This is the Incarnation of God". Each of us also needs to become across cultural missionary who lives among the people and not apart from them.

Incarnation is a theological term for the coming of God's Son into the world as a human being. The term itself is not used in the Bible, but it is based on clear references in the New Testament to Jesus as a person "in the flesh" (Romans 8:3; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 1:22). The Incarnation is the centre of our Christian faith. The choice of the Son of God in assuming a human body and nature is a graciously voluntary act. The Lord Jesus Christ is one person with two natures indissolubly united, the one nature being that of the eternal Son of God, the other that of man, in all respects human, "yet without sin". The incarnation is absolutely without parallel in history. The marvelous thing is that in Jesus, God Himself began to live a fully human life. As the apostle Paul declared, "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). The capacity of Jesus to reveal God to us and to bring salvation depends upon Him being fully God and fully man at the same time.

God accepted human nature in order to show humanity what love is. This is probably one of the reasons why God created human beings with bodies – so that they could practice loving one another.

Christianity advocates that "the Word became flesh", which means that Christians would also reach out into the world. Buddhism, in contrast, advocates that "the flesh became the World" and renounces the mundane world. Buddhists think the physical body is evil and full of sinful desires. They therefore attempt to become ascetics and deny the desires of their bodies. The Christian faith suggests that we should descend into the sinful world and accompany the suffering people. We should live amongst them like the incarnational God who dwells among us. "Now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with them" (Revelation 21:3). This is utmost love.

Also in Islam there is no concept of the incarnation – Muslims do not believe that God would become flesh and live among suffering people, shed blood and die for our sins. It is unthinkable that God could do that. In their way of thinking, if God dies, He is not God after all.

5.2.1.3 Jesus' Incarnational life

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). Jesus is different from the prophets because the prophets only brought words, but Jesus brought His life and words. The supreme typification of Jesus' ministry is, not that "he spoke to us", but that he

“lived among us”. Therefore, the Christian message is a life message and not simply a word message (Kraft 1991:41). God brings the message of love by personalising that love. He brings us the message of truth by becoming truth (John 14:6). He demonstrates his relationship and commitment to human beings by becoming a human being and uniting with us. Jesus participated fully in all that it means to live a human life. But if Jesus were merely a man, no matter how great, there would be no significance in drawing attention to His bodily existence. The marvellous thing is that in Jesus, God Himself began to live a fully human life. As the apostle Paul declared, “In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). The capacity of Jesus to reveal God to us and to bring salvation depends upon Him being fully God and fully man at the same time.

Furthermore, His goal was a personal relationship with His respondents. He wanted to build a relationship with himself, not merely knowledge of him (Kraft 1991:40). Jesus modeled the closest kind of person-to-person relationship. Jesus crossed the bridge and stayed, even becoming touchable, audible, observable, rejectable in horizontal relationships with his creatures. Jesus then modeled with his disciples when he invested the short time of his ministry in twenty-four-hour-a-day interaction with the Twelve (Kraft 1991:12).

Almost all mankind is in search of heroes, a wealthy hero, a thinking hero, or a spiritual hero. However, Jesus did not come into this world as an angel, superman or king. He came to us as an ordinary man. It was possible for him to be hungry, thirsty, tired and even die. If Jesus had never died, he would then be like an angel and stayed distant from mankind.

“Jesus chose to communicate by life, in utter identification with men and women. He, like them, knew weariness, hunger, sorrow, grief, keen disappointment and rejection, even by those who were closest to Him. He participated fully in their lives, whether in the joys of a wedding feast or in the foreboding atmosphere of a simple meal, eaten in the shadow of His coming death” (Nida 1990:33).

In Philippians 2:6-7 Jesus is spoken of as one “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness”.

5.2.1.4 Paul's Incarnational Life

The apostle Paul endorses the same principle in I Corinthians 9:19-22. He, like Jesus, became a part of the group he sought to win in order to be correctly understood by them. He became a Jew to the Jews, a Gentile to the Gentiles, weak to the weak, rich to the rich, “so that by all possible means I might save some” (Kraft 1991:16). Paul lived with the local church leaders for them to follow him as he followed Jesus.

5.2.1.5 Incarnation in Practice

Today, all over the world, a large number of missionaries appear to have ignored this principle. They assumed incorrectly that the locals should learn their language, their customs, appreciate their kind of music, go to their places

of worship at their appointed times, adopt their life-styles and associate with their kind of people (Kraft 1991:17). There seems to be two types of missionaries in the mission field. One type stays in the missionary compound far away from the local people - this can be likened to God coming in the form of an angel. The other type is the incarnate missionary who does not live in a mission compound but among the local people.

There are merits in the "Angel Style" missionary approach and it is understandable that this method may be often used.

- Loneliness can be avoided. Missionary co-workers and their families live together, therefore they are able to communicate with and care for each other.
- Culture shock is avoided. They speak the same language and have the same culture. They can experience more security and privacy. They can also enjoy and benefit from quiet times. They have clothing, water and food. They have good education, security and large, comfortable homes with gardens, playgrounds, soccer fields and swimming pools. They may be in the mission field, but they are allowed to retain their previous lifestyles.

I know of such an example in Monrovia in Liberia. At ELWA (Eternal Love Winning Africa) there a broadcasting station, a hospital and a missions school and in a large camp where approximately 200 missionaries live together. They do not venture out into the Liberian villages where there is no water or electricity. Outside the water is dirty and malaria abounds. By staying in the ELWA camp, the missionaries can function effectively, remain healthy and the

children can continue with their schooling. However, they are still staying in America, figuratively speaking, and created a second America. They are not incarnated.

The net effect is detrimental because

- These types of missionaries are over protected, just like a prince who does not go beyond his palace walls. By not visiting the people, they cannot see their suffering and get to know their real needs and cannot be moved by compassion in order to be effective missionaries.
- This type of missionary will never understand the culture of the mission field. He only visits the people twice a week, totaling 4 hours; whereas the incarnate missionary is in the heart of the mission field on a 24 hours standby. One year of the work of an incarnate missionary is equivalent to 7 years of the work of a compound missionary. A compound missionary is not of much help to the problems of the local people because water from afar cannot quench a nearby fire. Jesus has a better influence on mankind than angels have because He lived among people.
- Compound missionaries cannot develop a good relationship with the local people because they cannot and do not identify with them. Incarnate missionaries live among the local people, therefore they see the people, visit them regularly and have a good relationship with them. Consequently it is easy for the people to accept the missionaries, identify with them, visit them and share their problems with them. Proverbs 27: 10 says it is "better a

neighbour nearby than a brother far away". The Chinese say: "Distant relatives are not as helpful as close neighbours".

I also quoted the Life Challenge strategy in Lenasia in South Africa. The missionaries preferred to live 50 km away in White areas, which are cleaner, safer and have better houses. This meant that all of the prayer meetings and co-workers meetings were held in White areas. The LC missionaries did not incarnate with Indians, but they expected the Indians to follow their style because it was seen as the best way. As the Indian people could not – or would not – reach their standard, the Indians gave up. Eventually the Johannesburg LC missionaries, feeling ineffective, also decided to leave the ministry. They worked independently with their own door-to-door personal evangelism. They neither co-operated nor communicated with local Indian churches or pastors.

In the Third World countries poor people make up at least half of the population. One third of them are starving. We need a kind of theology that is specially suited for the poor. This theology needs to be so simple that even a street sweeper can understand it.

Liberian people told me, "Do not teach us Western theology because the more we listen to it, the more we fail to understand. Just teach us the Word of God, the Bible". If the Liberian people must first learn and understand English, Western culture, Western theology and only after that be expected to understand the Bible, they will have lived up their whole lives without understanding the gospel. Missionaries need to study widely in missiology

and theology; they need a profound knowledge of the Bible and of hermeneutics. On the other hand, though, what is necessary is a very simple theology and an easy Bible study method for uneducated people.

“All divine communication is essentially incarnational, for it comes not only in words but in life. Even if a truth is proclaimed only in words, it would have no validity until it is transformed into real life. Only then would the Word of life become life to the receptor. The words are, in a sense, nothing in and of themselves. Even as wisdom is emptiness unless lived out in behavior, so the word is void unless related to experience. In the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, the Word (the expression and revelation of the wisdom of God) became flesh. This same fundamental principle has been followed throughout the history of the church, for God has constantly chosen to use not only words but human beings as well to witness to His grace; not only the message, but the messenger; not only the Bible, but the church”

(Nida 1990:32).

In the third world people need a lot of miracles, because they are very poor. There are hardly any doctors and town people die every day. If our Gospel is only for high-class people and not for the poor, then our Christian faith is not incarnated yet. One third of the miracles in the Bible were recorded especially for the poor to read and believe. In rich countries, when people are

sick they do not seek help from God but would seek out a doctor first. The Bible is not written only for the rich or high classes, but also for the poor. "The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18-19). Our God is an incarnational God and our Bible is an incarnational Bible.

His name is called "Emmanuel" which means, "God with us". "Now the dwelling of God is with men and he will live with us. We will be his people". Our God is a mission-minded God. He is the word becoming flesh, who made his dwelling among us. "Faith without deeds is dead" (James 2:26). Faith without action is meaningless. Pagans continue searching for their gods, but our God is the spirit who inhabits human form and came searching for us, "For the son of man came to seek and to save what was lost". This is the Incarnation of God. Therefore, to follow God's footpath, each one of us should also become cross-cultural missionary living among the people and not apart from them.

"If anything is needed in modern mission, it is a willingness to be flexible, to have the gift of time to take opportunities to cultivate friendships. It takes time to know the people and to learn the culture well. It takes time to do the extra things that build bonds of love and respect between the missionary and the people"

(Gilliland 1983:286).

Incarnational ministry also includes the fact that the local church needs to be self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. Often the compound missionaries exercise too much control over the local church. The church and the Christians are required to lose their own culture and language and to totally copy the lifestyle and rituals of the overseas missionaries.

When I arrived in Liberia in 1983, we ended up buying unnecessary things. This was due to a lack of information. Today the support money of the Chinese missionaries is more than sufficient, but there still is a lack of information. More information means less problems, less information means more problems. The secret of the Apostle Paul's successful mission was his understanding heart. He was involved in two cultures - Jewish and Roman. He experienced them personally and understood them deeply. Even the ministry of Jesus on earth was for only three and half years, but He spent 30 years with the people. He understood their culture, language, custom and way of thinking. All this helped His ministry, during the three years. All that He said was able to meet people's needs and touch people's hearts, none of His words fell to the ground.

If Chinese churches want to minister to all nations, then it is necessary to set up a mission training centre, an information centre on world mission, a world mission library, magazines of all mission organisations, slides, videos, missionaries prayer letters and testimonies. We also need to provide all this information to all the churches, in order to promote the mission vision. Why

was the growth of the Korean church so fast and strong? When the missionaries went to Korea in the early days they made disciples and simultaneously imparted a mission vision to them.

5.2.2 A Spiritual Strategy in a Spiritual World

Part of the incarnational ministry in Africa involves the understanding of the spiritual realities that form part of the people's belief system and their existence. That is why we will have to give attention to these worldviews. In response to that, a Spiritual Strategy will have to be developed that will take these realities seriously.

5.2.2.1 Introduction

Theologically and experientially, we were typical Evangelicals when we embarked on our mission in Liberia. As missionaries we were well prepared in theological, cultural and linguistic studies. However, we were totally unprepared to deal with the one area Liberians considered most important – their relationships with the spirit world. Time after time Liberians would turn our discussions to the disruption in their lives they claimed were caused by evil spirits. Such things as disease, accidents, death, the infertility of humans, animals and fields, drought and the disruption of relationships were all seen as the work of these evil entities.

Although the Gbandi church leaders decided that a primary strategy would be to focus on God's conquest of the spirits through Christ, I was in no position to

assist them. I tried to believe in the reality of evil spirits, but I was ignorant in this area. I was, the Gbandi people told me, more open than my missionary colleagues to accept the reality of the spirit world and appreciate its importance in their lives. Nevertheless, neither my missiology nor my biblical and theological training had provided me with any constructive approaches to meet their needs.

The power of God to heal and deliver from demons was a frequent theme of the Gbandi leaders in their preaching. But we never demonstrated what we claimed in this area. So those we sought to reach were not very impressed with that part of our message. There seemed to be more visible power in their old ways than in Christianity. As missionaries we had brought an essentially powerless message to a very power-conscious people.

In spite of this deficiency, many Gbandi people still found good reasons for becoming Christians and the churches grew. Many found their new relationship to Jesus fulfilling and rejoiced in His acceptance, forgiveness and love. But they learned not to expect power – except in the material realm where we had brought Western or Chinese medicine, schools and even a Chinese approach to Christianity.

The Gbandi people realised intuitively that this Christianity was not able to deal with such things as tragedy, infertility, relational breakdowns and troublesome weather. It did not meet many of their deepest spiritual needs. Even though this was puzzling to them given the fact that Christian leaders talked about the power of Christ, they developing a kind of dual allegiance - a loyalty to

Christianity to handle certain needs, but at the same time continuing their loyalty to traditional religious practitioners to handle their power needs. As missionaries we despised this practice, but we had no effective antidote.

Though we talked a great deal about spiritual things, the Gbandi people understood most aspects of spirituality much better than we did. I am afraid we were doing what Paul accused the Galatians of doing: starting in the Spirit, but then turning to human power (Galatians 3:3). In the name of Christ we had simply reproduced Western secularised approaches to illness, accident, education, fertility, agriculture etc. We acted as though Western scientific methods were more effective than prayer.

We did pray, of course, calmly for ordinary things and fervently when things got really bad. But Western secular techniques were our first choice, God was our last resort. Without meaning to, we taught our African converts that the Christian God works only through Western cultural ways though they soon learned that our methods could not handle many of their needs. We claimed that we were working in the name and power of God, that it was because of his blessing that these techniques were successful. But by observing Western doctors, agriculturists and teachers, who were not Christians, they discovered that there seemed to be little difference in the results of what was done by Christians and what was done by non-Christians. This was an important difference in approach, but the power seemed to be in the techniques and not in the God whom we talked about. The God of power portrayed in the scriptures seemed to be invisible.

This is not to belittle the transforming power of God's love. In fact, once the village medicine man became so impressed with the love of the Christians that he began to attend church. His wife had died and a group of the local Christians joined him and his family in mourning her loss. They had so identified with him in his sorrow that he decided to investigate Christianity. After a few weeks of church attendance however he no longer came. Though I cannot be sure of his reasons for dropping out, my suspicion is that though he heard in the sermons about an amazing miracle worker who once lived and manifested great power, the local Christians had none of that power

themselves. As a matter of fact, these Christians – along with everyone else – came to him (not to the pastor) when they needed healing (often after they had tried the medicine recommended by the Christian leaders and found little or no relief from it). Though the love of Christians was impressive, his primary interest was in spiritual power. And if there was no greater power among the Christians than what he already possessed, then why join them?

5.2.2.2 Spiritual View of Western and Gbandi People

“We have seen that Western peoples pay great attention to the natural world and little if any attention to the spirit world. In many non-western societies the proportions seem to be reversed. Biblical societies were much more like contemporary non-western peoples than like Western societies in this regard” (Kraft 1989:198).

In the following chart Kraft indicates "that biblical societies and approximately two-thirds of today's societies give about the same amount of attention to each of the three areas of causality, while Western peoples give much less attention to the spirit sphere and much more attention to the nature sphere than either of the other sets of societies" (1989:198).

Biblical Societies	2/3 World Societies	Western Societies
Spirit Sphere (God the primary focus. Spirits a lesser focus)	Spirit Sphere (Spirits the primary focus. God a lesser focus)	Spirit/God Sphere Human Sphere
Human Sphere	Human Sphere	
Nature Sphere	Nature Sphere	Nature Sphere

(Kraft 1989:199)

He draws two interesting conclusions:

- The absence of a sense of spirit beings and powers, including God, impoverishes the Western worldview. It is difficult for them to understand either the Bible or the concerns of non-Western peoples in this area.
- It is usually easier for non-western peoples both to understand and to receive God's message directly from the biblical accounts than from Westerners. The Bible is more on their wavelength than we are for

Westerners.

However, there is one major difference between the understanding of biblical peoples and that of contemporary non-Westerners with respect to the spirit realm. In the Bible the focus is on God, while non-western cultures focus much more on spirits than on God. This fact points to an important area needing change for many non-westerners that turn to Christ. This is however often less of a problem than that caused by a secularised presentation of the gospel by Westerners to people who are much more aware of spiritual reality than their Western missionaries (Kraft 1989:199).

What is general in the experience of non-Westerners is that spiritual power is often conveyed through material objects. It was also the case in the biblical worldview. The use of oil that has been blessed (Jas 5:14), healing through the use of personal objects like Paul's handkerchiefs (Acts 19:12) and Jesus' garment (Mt 9:20) are cases in point. Contemporary experience among Christians even opens up the possibility that demons can inhabit objects and buildings. It even seems possible that certain demons have dominion over geographical areas. To minister effectively in those areas therefore the power of the evil spirit will have to be broken.

5.2.2.3 Western and Hebrew Paradigms

I again copy a chart from Kraft that contrasts certain Western and Hebrew worldview paradigms. He accepts "that all of the scriptural authors, except for possibly Luke, were thinking in terms of Hebrew assumptions as they wrote

what God revealed to them. Jesus also was taught Hebrew assumptions as he grew up” (Kraft 1989:202). It is important to “distinguish between Jesus’ kingdom paradigms, which are normative for us, and those of the Hebrews, which are not. If we are to effectively disentangle those paradigms from their Hebrew cultural context, we need to understand the differences between the two” (Kraft 1989:203).

This is quite a problem for Westerners, says Kraft, but less so for millions whose native paradigms are closer to the Hebrew worldview. “Interestingly enough, this fact makes it easier for missionaries to lead such people directly from their native paradigms into those of Scripture than to lead them first into Western understandings” (Kraft 1989:203).

I will look at some of these paradigms or perspectives and compare them with Western ones.

Western Paradigms	Hebrew Paradigms
1. Categorisation, Classification, Logic	
a) Life is analysed in neat categories.	a) Everything blurs into everything else.
b) Natural and supernatural dichotomy.	b) The supernatural affects everything.
c) Clear difference between human, animal and plant life.	c) The supernatural affects everything.
d) Linear logic.	d) Contextual logic.
2. Person/Group	
a) Individualism. Group interests usually	a) The group is the reality. Individual



subservient to individual concerns. Individuals of almost any age or status make important decisions.	interests are usually subservient to group concerns. Important decisions are made as a group.
b) Equality of persons.	b) Different persons are of different value, according to their status in the hierarchy.
c) Oriented toward freedom. Society is to provide as much freedom as possible for individuals.	c) Oriented toward security. Society is to provide as much security as possible for individuals.
d) Competition is good (need to "get ahead").	d) Competition is evil (need to "work together").
e) The majority rules in a democracy.	e) Certain people are "born to rule".
f) Human-centred universe.	f) God and tribe/family-centred universe.
g) Money and material possession are the measure of human value.	g) Family relationships are the measure of human value.
h) Biological life is sacred.	h) Social life is supremely important.
3. Cause, Power	
a) Faith in "chance". Cause and effect relationships are key and limit what can happen.	a) God causes everything.
b) Humans are in charge of nature through science.	b) God is in charge of everything.
c) Scientific strategy and technique will give humans total power over all things.	c) Strategy and technique in the spiritual realm is the source of whatever control we may achieve. Learning control via spiritual techniques is crucial.



d) Power over others achieved via business, politics and other organisations.	d) Power over others structured by social patterns ordained by God.
4. Time/Event	
a) Linear time is divided into neat segments. Each event in life is a new one.	a) Cyclical / spiralling time. Very similar events constantly recurring.
b) Oriented toward the near future.	b) Oriented toward the past
c) "Time orientation." Events are scheduled according to the clock and calendar. We arrive at appointments at pre-arranged time.	c) "Event orientation." Quality (not time) of event is crucial. The event starts when the proper people are present (not according to time).
d) History is an attempt to record "facts" from past objectively.	d) History attempts to preserve significant truths in a way meaningful today, whether or not all details are objective facts.
c) Change is good. It is called "progress."	Change is bad. It means destruction of traditions.
5. Space, the Material Sphere	
a) The universe evolved by chance.	a) God created the universe.
b) The universe can be dominated and controlled via science and technology.	b) The universe is to be responsibly managed by us as stewards of God.
c) The universe is like a machine.	c) The universe is more personal.
d) Material goods are a measure of personal achievement.	d) Material goods are a measure of God's blessing.

(Kraft 1989:205)

5.2.2.4 A Spiritual Strategy of Healing

The Gbandi church has grown and developed through the healing ministry. Faith begins when a human being encounters God. In this dimension we may interpret the factors that have made possible the growth of the Gbandi church. I will endeavour to illustrate those influences. All of them are related to divine healing.

Disease is an unwelcome visitor to humankind and a most serious problem in our lives. So without exception, wherever religion is known, healing is on the agenda. In order to solve the problem of disease, humans try to clarify the causes of disease. We may say that disease is the result of sin (Deuteronomy 28:20-22). The diseases of mankind is basically the disharmony caused by sin. That is to say that in the state of sinlessness there was a beautiful harmony between God and man, between man and man, man and nature, but with the intrusion of sin, this harmony was destroyed and mankind lost its balance. The destructive factors, which cause imbalance and disharmony, include within themselves the seed of death. Seen from this perspective, the forgiveness of sins is the divine healing by that diseases are cured. This is also called a prelude to the real resurrection that will be achieved in the time of Jesus' Second Coming.

Missionaries cannot turn their backs upon those who have to live with various diseases. People afflicted by diseases easily lose the meaning of life. Mission means caring for human beings as a whole. Missionaries have the task of curing and healing the weak and troubled through the care for their spirits, minds and bodies.

5.2.2.5 Divine Healing as Part of Spiritual Strategy

It is necessary to develop a **theology of divine healing**. Divine healing cannot remain in the abstract dimension of dogmas. It is an event and an experience, which can be observed in the dimension of the phenomenology of religion. But beyond that, divine healing reveals supernatural factors, which cannot be explained rationally.

Divine healing, as an aspect of practical theology, should be developed theologically and in action: it is God's love, authority and care concretely manifested. God is a healing God. He heals those who are suffering from illness and raises the dead. Human beings can participate in God's power of life and creation through true divine healing. The core of the work of divine healing is that it is a work of salvation. If death, curse and diseases entered into the human world because of the sin of Adam, then divine healing is clearly an assurance of the forgiveness of sins (Kim, 1987:14).

Divine healing becomes a sign of that salvation which will find its realisation with the final coming of the Kingdom of God when believers receive their resurrection bodies. Divine healing is a sign of the resurrection. Divine healing holds a religious meaning for those who have lost their hope because of incurable disease. So the healing of diseases is not a minor detail. Renewed hope, consolation and salvation is theirs through divine healing.

To summarise the positive aspects of divine healing, (Cho 1993:59) mentions the following.

- Firstly, the negation of the biblical miracles is a logical contradiction because it tries to negate the witness of the disciples and to maintain only their lessons.
- Second, the forgiveness of sins should include the healing of diseases because disease entered life through the corruption of mankind.
- The third is that, if God is believed to be omnipotent, then healing is to be accepted as a part of God's power.
- The fourth is that the existential experiences of the believers bear witness to the miracles of divine healing. Therefore, these miracles should be understood in the perspective of religion and faith, not in the perspective of science. Moreover, they must be recognised as a part of faith (Cho 1993: 59). The miracles of Jesus bore witness to His divinity. Jesus started his divine healing not motivated by the desire for the praise and honour of others, but by His love, which participates in the suffering of the diseased. The miracles of Jesus also gave meaning to the revelation of God's authority and God's aim of salvation. The miracles of Jesus demonstrated his wonderful love.

The Spiritual Strategy has an evangelical aim. There is an inseparable relationship between the mission ministry and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Among the gifts of the Holy Spirit there is also that of divine healing. It has the potential to assure people of their salvation. It helps them to remain standing in faith and to accept the Word of God (Osborn 1977:310). The gift of divine healing is very important and is an essential way of manifesting divine power.

There are many Gbandi people who come to church in order to be cured of their diseases. There are also missionaries giving testimony of healing from incurable diseases, something which led them to dedicate their lives to evangelisation.

Divine healing seems to be a necessary gift for missionaries in situations like that experienced in Liberia. If missionaries adapt and strengthen this gift and place more emphasis upon it, then divine healing will play an important role in bringing salvation and growth to their churches. Divine healing is a gift that can be performed through faith and the grace of God by the laying on of hands. Andrew Murray said: "Oh, may the Lord raise up in His Church many of these righteous men, animated with living faith, whom He can use to glorify Jesus as the divine Healer of the sick" (Witty 1989:191-192).

The gospel of divine healing should be intensely emphasised and preached. Divine healing makes people experience the power of God and renews the meaning of their lives. They become better family people and develop more eagerness for church life. Through this research I have learned that divine healing has contributed to church growth and the development of the Gbandi church. It seems as if the influence of divine healing is a desperately needed factor in the modern mission ministry in the non-western world.

5.3 CELL GROUPS AND THEIR LEADERS

5.3.1 Introduction

It may be helpful to shortly relate the story of the well-known church pastored by Dr Paul Yonggi Cho in Seoul, Korea. It is the story of the struggle from a One-leader-church into a Multi-leaders church through the Home Cell Strategy of how this Pastor of the biggest church in the world repented and changed to a Home Cell Strategy.

In 1961 Dr Cho decided to build the largest church in Korea. At that time he thought he was doing it for God, but he realised later that he was actually doing it out of his own personal ambition.

The first year he asked God for 150 members, and he got 150 members. The second year he asked God to double the membership and he got 300 members. The third year he again asked Him to double the membership and by the end of that year they had 600 members. If he could get 600 members in only three years he reasoned, why could he not build the largest church in the city?

In those days the Yong Nak Presbyterian Church was the largest church in Seoul. It had about 6 000 members and that proved to be a great challenge to him. In his ambition he said, "I will build a church larger than this and the Lord will fill it". Early in his ministry God showed him the importance of setting goals and having faith in God to provide the growth for which he dreamed. God taught him to pray specifically for his needs. This time he decided to ask the Lord for five times as many members as they had and to grant this within three years. That would give their church 3 000 members by 1964.

As he prayed, he received confirmation that through him, indeed, God would build a church larger than the Yong Nak Presbyterian Church, he was excited! He did not wait for any further revelation on how the Lord wanted him to accomplish this. He simply began to work all the harder to bring in new members. He thought God approved of what he was doing. After all, God was blessing their work with miracles and healing and that was what brought the people to the church. But he was convinced that God had made Reverend Cho somebody special. God was doing all this work through him! Without him, nothing happened in the church. He was the pastor, the administrator, he was in charge of the Sunday school programme and oftentimes he was even the janitor. Full Gospel Central Church simply could not function without the Reverend Cho, he thought. He was the pivot around which the whole church revolved.

By 1964 their congregation had grown to 2 400, but he was already in trouble. He still thought he was really accomplishing great things for the Lord, rushing around from early morning until late in the evening, but his nerves were beginning to wear out. He suffered from constant fatigue, yet he continued to force himself to keep the church moving. He preached, he counselled, he visited the sick, he knocked on doors – he was always on the move. However, the day came when he broke down. He thought he was dying. That was the day when the Lord convinced him that he was not meant to do everything himself.

5.3.2 The Spiritual Strategy of the Missionary is to Train Local Church Leaders in Team Work

5.3.2.1 Teamwork

“With the appointment of elders the churches were complete. They were fully equipped. They very soon became familiar with all the orders of ministry both permanent and charismatic” (Allen 1986: 111). Serving the Lord can be likened to a spiritual warfare. And in any battle it is clear that it cannot be won without a great measure of teamwork.

“St Paul was not content with ordaining one elder for each church. In every place he ordained several. This ensured that all authority should not be concentrated in the hands of one man. It ensured the possibility of frequent administrations of the Sacraments. Responsibility was divided and many were enlisted in the service of the church. Thus the whole body grew together. As the general knowledge increased, the older men died and younger men, who had grown up with the new generation and shared their education and experience, gradually took their place and became the natural and the ordained successors of their fathers” (Allen 1986:104).

5.3.2.2 Cell Groups

- **The need for cell groups**

We live in a world that is characterised by individualism and isolation. The

breakdown of natural networks of supportive relationships in communities such as neighbourhoods, families and even the workplace, is producing individuals that are independent but lonely and isolated. Because of this, people look like they have it "all together" on the outside, when in reality they are hurting and in need of healthy, supportive relationships, but which not the norm in this world. As the earth's population increases, it also implodes. By the end of the century, one half of all humanity will live in urban areas. Our rural concept of church life must be abandoned (Neighbour 1990:15).

Cell groups provide a vehicle for life-giving relationships to be developed. In a cell group people develop committed and trusting relationships with each other and the Lord as they share their lives and minister to one another's needs. There is no better environment into which new believers can be disciplined than an accepting, living circle of believers in a cell group.

- **What is a cell group?**

A cell group is a regular gathering of 5 to 12 believers in a home or some neutral location for the purpose of mutual spiritual edification and evangelism. It follows the Biblical pattern of the New Testament Church where, according to Acts 2:46, they met "in the temple...and from house to house". This means the early church was successful in building close relationships and winning souls to Jesus Christ.

- **What is the purpose of a cell group?**

The church's primary goal is to unite people together with God. Being in relationship with fellow believers is not optional for the Christian. The New

Testament provides us with theological reasons for the place of cell groups in the church.

Firstly, cell groups are essential because of the quality of life we are called to live. Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another". To truly love one another, it is necessary to get to know each other on a deeper level than the congregational gathering will allow. To develop this quality of life together, heart-to-heart relationships are needed.

Secondly, the essential nature of spiritual growth is to become transformed into His image. Spiritual growth (or character development) is best learned through association with other Christians, who – in a loving supportive atmosphere – study the Word of God and help each other to live it out.

Thirdly, cells are important because we are not saved in an isolated and individualistic fashion but are saved and called to live our Christian life in community. We are called into a special relationship with each other with privileges and responsibilities (Galatians 6:10, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Colossians 3:12-17).

Further, cells are necessary to equip Christians for their various kinds of witness and service. Each Christian has a gift(s), from God and is called to exercise it for the common good (Hebrew 10:24, 1 Corinthians 12-14). Cell groups provide situations in which this mutuality of ministry can be shared and developed.

Finally, the role of all ministries in the Church must be evaluated by measuring their goals in light of the church's overall objective that constitutes disciplined believers, equipping the saints and winning the world for Christ. God is raising up the church to be an army of disciples of Jesus who will affect this generation for Him through worship of God, witness to the world and a caring ministry. The implementation of our purpose in the life of the believer is extremely difficult to accomplish where our lifestyles and schedules keep us largely separated from each other. The principle aim of cell groups is to provide the vehicle where these biblical purposes can be lived out.

The cell group is the vehicle that will enable us to be the church God intends for us to be. In no other way can the functions of the church be so fully carried out. In no other context can the Word of God be communicated with so much impact on lives. The church today, as the church of the New Testament, needs the "church in the house", which can be realised in cell groups.

5.3.2.3 Cell Group Leadership

"In the early days of the church there were 3 000 or 5 000 people became Christians every day in Jerusalem. Who could have taken care of all those people, since there were only twelve apostles? How could they take care of the "house-to-house" ministry? There had to be leaders of smaller groups of house fellowships" (Cho 1981:17).

The primary task of the cell group leader is to model Christian discipleship. Paul lists the required characteristics for leadership in his writings. All these characteristics, except for the gift of being a good teacher, are also expected of every Christian. They are essentially the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).

- Being a mature Christian with a serious commitment to Christ. The fruit of the Spirit should be evident in one's life.
- Having a good reputation and be faithful and reliable so that others can follow with confidence.
- Being a good teacher. For group life this will be an ability to enable people to discover God's Word.
- Should teach a sound doctrine and must know and continue to study theology.
- Being a servant, willing to care for, be available to and serve the group members.
- Is not only using one's spiritual gifts but also train the group members how to receive the spiritual gifts (Neighbour 1995:95).

Cell groups thus provide a real opportunity for people such as these to find meaningful involvement in the life of their church (Cho 1981:50). It is however very important that those who would wish to be cell group leaders will

be willing to submit themselves to the leadership of the church on matters of qualification for leadership and overall direction of their group.

Leadership implies that one person is influencing other members of the group. As a group matures, the whole group will share the leadership. However, as the designated leader of a group, there are certain functions that the leader should be doing to enable the group to be healthy.

5.3.2.4 Training Cell Group Leaders

“The theme of discipleship is central to Matthew’s gospel and to Matthew’s understanding of the church and mission. “The disciples’ is the specifically ecclesiological concept of the evangelist” (Bornkamm in Bosch 1991:73).

It is clear that this leadership needs training but that the training should be in-service. The key to this is the ministry of the pastors. In practice very few of the pastors are themselves trained. The chairman of the pastor’s fraternal said: “In the Indian area of Lenasia about 70% of the church pastors have never been to a Bible College” (Interview Johnny Challen 2000 Sep). How can they train others while their own quiver is empty?

Today in the Indian churches, most of the Christians do not want to study the Bible. The main reason being that their pastor does not want to study either. If you spend all your time on visitations every day, then after ten years one will still be doing visitations. If you spend all your time counseling every day, then

after ten years you will still be counseling. But if you study, then you will be changed. You will cause change in your church, your committee and even change in the world. So, it is necessary to go to a Bible College and spend more time studying the Bible because a good leader is a good reader and a better reader is a better leader. It is a priority therefore to work towards motivating these pastors to undergo theological education and training. This is not always easy because they often lack the time, money and background for formal training. However, attention should be given to this (Research from Pastor Fraternal and Chairman 1999).

Hinduism does not encourage studying, people merely follow the priest and religious books are not used. They are based on fixed rituals, which exclude book references. Consequently, when Hindus convert to Christianity, they continue this approach. Pastors do not only dislike studying, but they are intimidated by the idea. And if they do not study, how are they going to feed the lambs and sheep and care for them? If God does not nourish them, how can they nourish others? (Based on research by SIM Grace Chiang, 2000)

“You lay too much stress on the sacraments and you ignore the ministry of teaching; you say that communicants untrained in theological colleges could be ordained pastors, and celebrate the Holy Communion, and lead the local church; but you ignore the necessity of teaching. Untrained pastors could not teach” (Allen 1962:174,176).

He suggest that the Bible itself is a book of teaching for the church, and might be read as such, not in snippets, but in large complete passages.

5.3.2.5 Indigenous Church and Theology

Roland Allen became the 'apostle of the Holy Spirit', speaking a great deal about the 'spontaneous expansion of the church'. He took every seriously the affirmation that the Spirit 'will lead you into all truth' (John 16:13). The Holy spirit, residing in the body of believers, should and could be trusted to lead the church to maturity. Allen's views may be regarded as the origin of the charismatic ideal in the church. Whereas Allen's ideal could be coined 'the charismatic church'. Those who came later, especially Hodges, described this as the 'indigenous church' (Kritzinger, Meiring, Saayman 1994:150).

Another aspect of the formation of local leaders is the development of an indigenous theology. Christianity has been unfairly stereotyped as a "White man's religion". But this makes it difficult for Chinese and African people to accept Christianity into their culture. Why does this not happen with other religions e.g. Hinduism? Why is it difficult for Western Christianity to become a part of non-Western culture?

The Jews expected the gentiles to be circumcised and to follow the Jews, become like Jews, before they could be saved. Europeans asked of other people to follow their worship rituals and become like Whites, in order to be saved. The one is as mistaken as the other.

The (black) African Independent Churches are an exciting, dynamic part of the growth of the church in Africa because they are so radically different from

Western churches. This means that African churches need to have their own theology and to explain the Bible in their own way. God uses the same Bible but speaks to different people in different ways, depending on cultures, situations, times and levels of comprehension. The Western way of thinking often does not make sense to the Africans. They need the Bible to speak for itself. Lack of faith leads to distrust.

Roland Allen wrote some very challenging things:

"We have educated our converts to put us in the place of Christ. We believe that it is the Holy Spirit of Christ that inspires and guides us: we cannot believe that the same Spirit will guide and inspire them. We believe that the Holy Spirit has taught us and is teaching us true conceptions of morality, doctrine, ritual: we cannot believe that the same Spirit will teach them" (Allen 1986:144).

and

"Paul never sought to enforce their obedience by decree; he always strove to win their heartfelt approval and their intelligent co-operation. He never did things for them, he always left them to do things for themselves. He set them an example according to the mind of Christ" (Allen 1986:149).

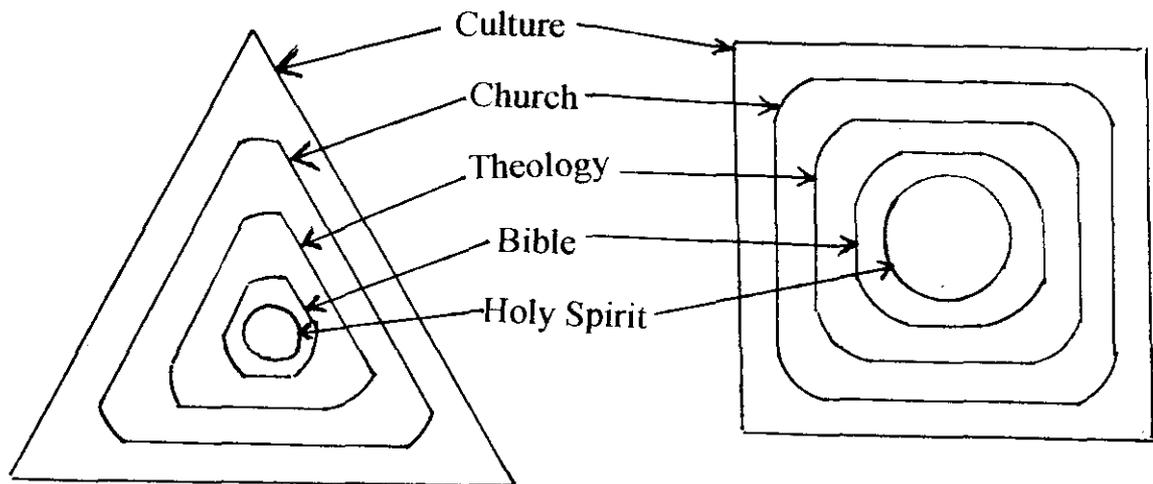
Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat" (Matthew 14:16). Why allow them do it? Because only their own

people understand their own need. They can do much better than outsiders themselves. The best outsiders can do is to give them encouragement.

“What is basic is the missionary’s attitude. Will he hold tightly to the authority and the status that his position as an outsider often carries, or will he consciously and sincerely seek out those gifted people who can learn the art of leadership? It was extremely important to Paul that the churches be fully equipped to carry on their own lives” (Gilliland 1983:216).

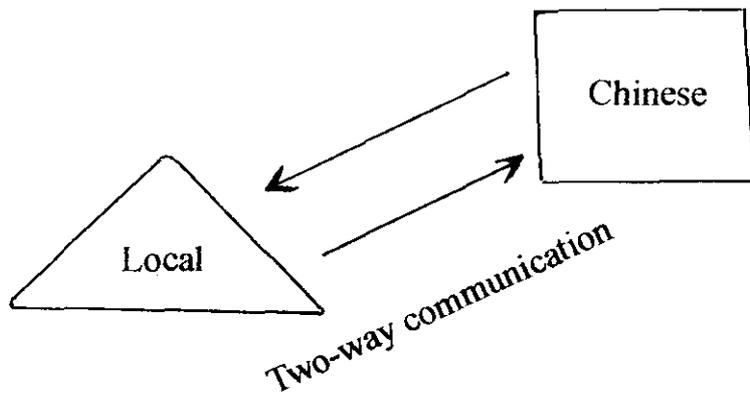
The following diagrammes illustrate this:

[a] The best way is E-1¹³, which is better than E-3

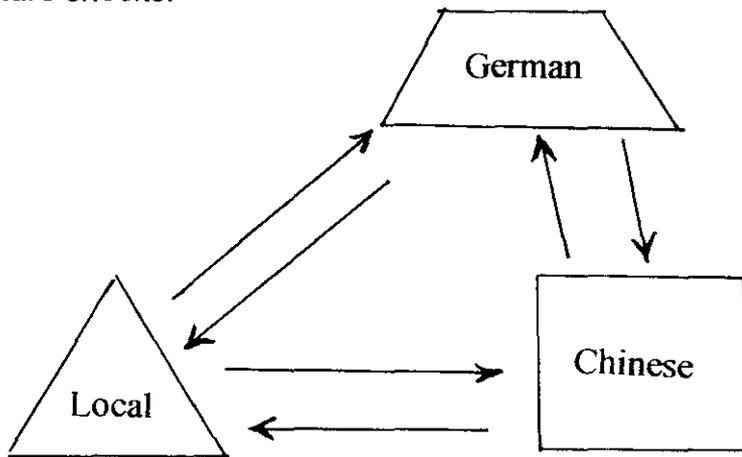


* Adapted from Stephen C. Knapp, "Contextualisation and Its Implications for U. S. Evangelical Churches and Missions" (paper delivered at the Institute of Mennonite Studies, Elkhart, IN), diagramme 2, p. 23.

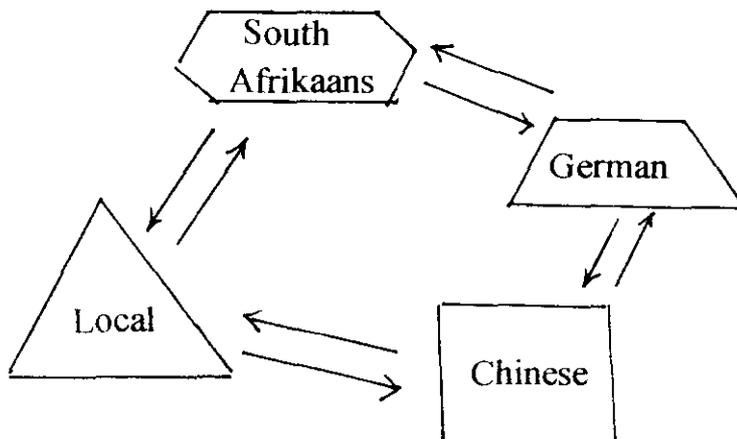
¹³ E-1 means evangelism from same culture and language to the same culture and language.



[b] E-3 to E-I. One missionary was training local church leaders. Two way culture shocks.



[c] E-3 +E-4 to E-1. One missionary with Afrikaans Christian door-to-door to the Muslim. Six times culture shock.



[d] E-3+E-4¹⁴ E-5 to E-1 One missionary with Afrikaans and Chinese Christian door-to-door to the Muslim- 12 times culture shock.

¹⁴ E-4, or E-5 means from different nationality, different culture, language background work together.

Hindus and Muslims see Christians as divided because we have many cultural differences between us. How can we win their heart for Christ? The best way is to train the local church Indian leaders to reach their own people. That will be E-1 communicate with E-1, without any culture, custom or lifestyle shock.

Jesus usually used the local people to do his ministry. He used a Samaritan woman to call her townspeople to come, not His disciples, because the Samaritans are already a different culture from the Jews. He used evangelists within the sub-culture. The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you". So the man went away and told the whole town how much Jesus had done for him (Luke 8:38-39).

Jesus used 12 disciples to witness for Him and He also used the local leaders. Jesus' co-workers were local people, not angels. If Jesus used angels this would probably have attracted many people. They would have been very interested in angels, even bowing down before them. This would have been good for the short term, but not good for the long term. They did not incarnate into human culture. Jesus did not use supermen or superwomen to do His work, but He used ordinary people, local leaders.

The apostles chose local leaders to look after the church. "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them" (Act 6:3).

Paul also used the local people to work in their own area.

"Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband



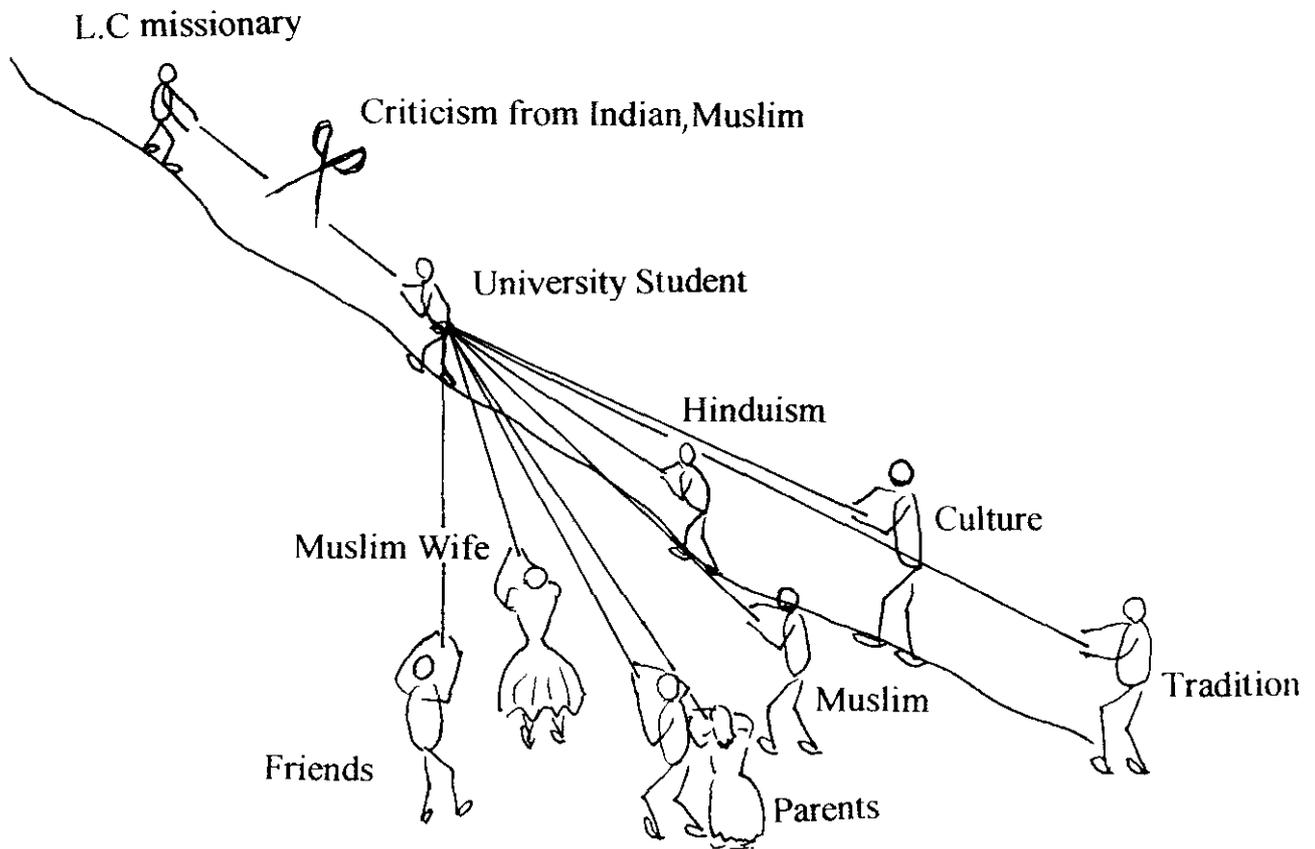
of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgement as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap" (1 Timothy 3:2-7).

From the above scripture verses we know that the church leader had to be well known by the sheep and the sheep had to know the shepherd. The newcomer from outside cannot be a good shepherd because he does not know the situation of the sheep. An outside evangelist who comes to preach for a short time will fare well, but on a long-term basis the people need a shepherd who knows the sheep well; this is the local church leader.

Apostle Paul always built up local church elders and deacons to look after their own church (the home-made leader). He never called people from afar to do ministry among an unknown congregation. Paul never brought Corinthian church leaders to work in an Ephesian church, or Galatian church leaders to work in the Philippian church. The reason for this was that the Corinthian church leaders were not missionaries. Their work in their own local church was more effective than putting them into another area. Developing leaders at an early stage emphasises contextual Christianity.

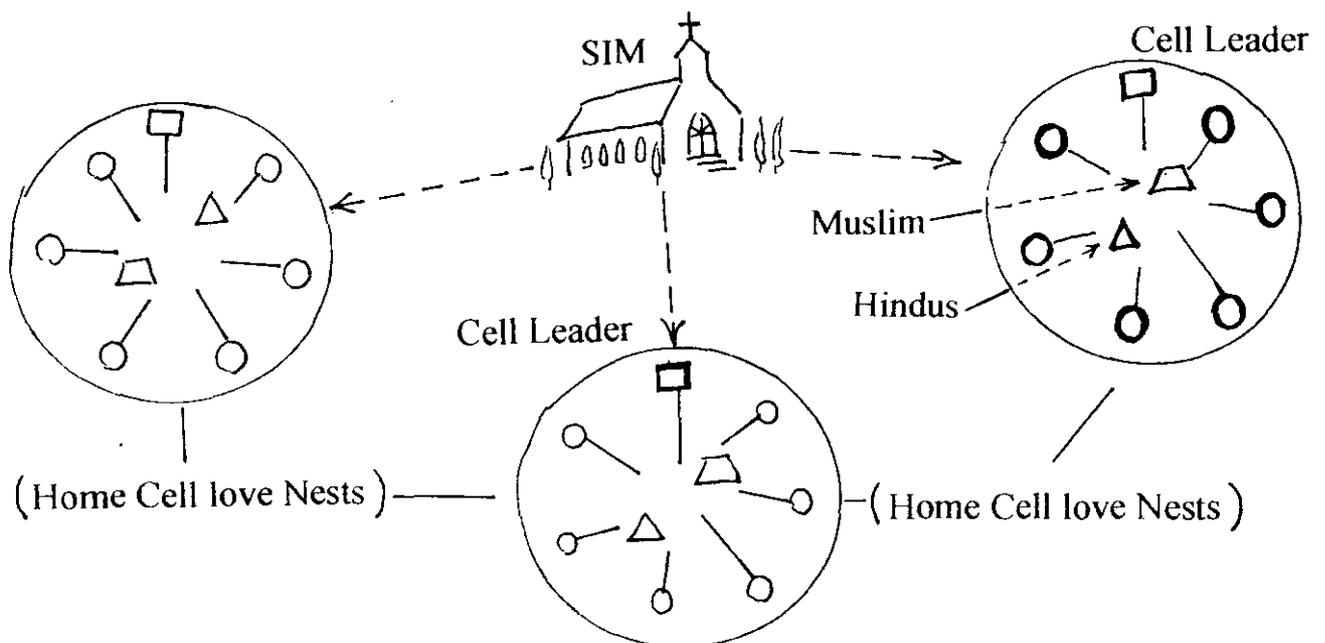
Tippet raises the issue of self-image as the first mark of a truly indigenous church, says Gilliland. This is a church that sees itself as "mediating the work, the mind, the word and the ministry of Christ in its own environment" (Gilliland 1983:250).

Life Challenge started by evangelising the Indian Muslims (E-3). The church leaders, however, were not happy with their strategy. They didn't co-operate. So the project failed.

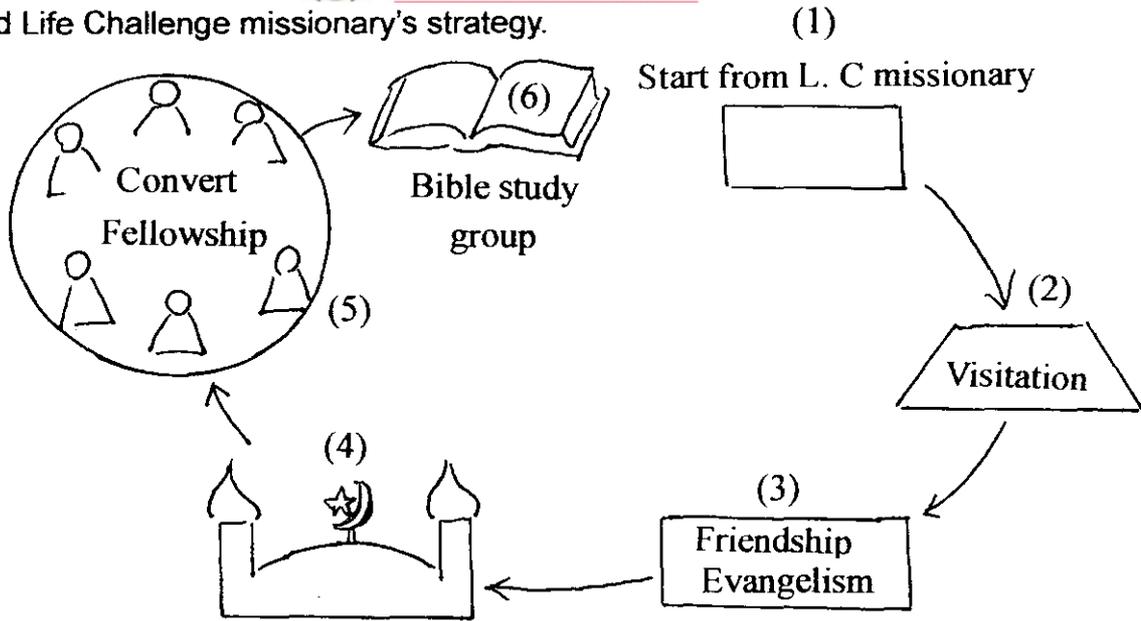


This is where the Life Challenge mission failed. They trained some university students in Muslim outreach and then sent them out two by two to do door-to-door evangelism because they did not want to work with the church pastors. There were no shepherds and the new believers had no shepherds to look after them, just like the delivery of an illegitimate child thrown away on

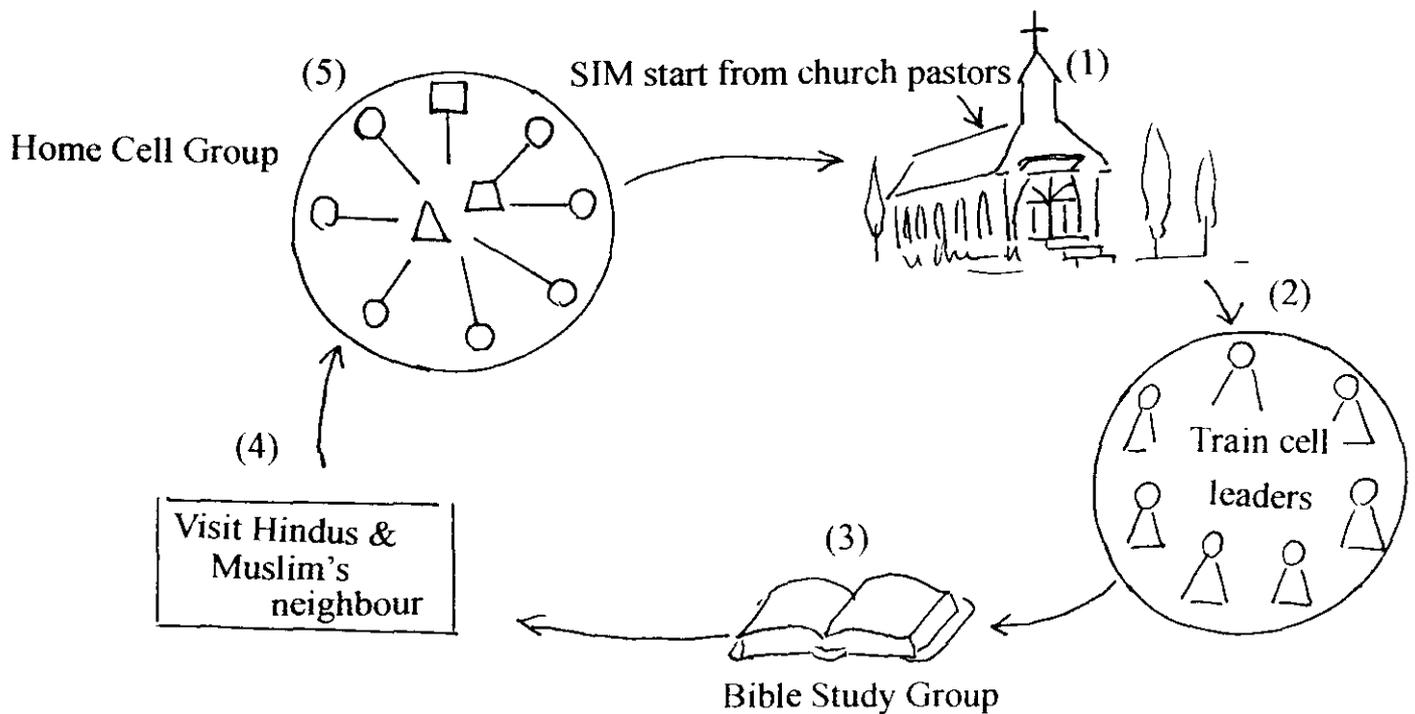
the street, without any family to look after them. "As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path and the birds came and ate it up" (Matthew 13:4). "The house that was cleaned of the demons, but not occupied. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first" (Matthew 12:45). A bird will first make a nest before it lays eggs. The LC door-to-door work delivered the spiritual eggs so to say on the road (parable of the sower) and only then started to make a nest for the eggs. Some times the birds are cleverer than human being. What does this "net" mean? A home cell group can also be called a "Love Net". It is necessary to help the Indian church start home cell training courses and create the "Love Nets" for newly converted Muslims.



Old Life Challenge missionary's strategy.



5.3.2.6 SIM Chiang's Spiritual Strategy



Ownership

The key to a Spiritual Strategy with indigenous leadership is the concept of "Ownership". The Prayer Mountain Ministry in Daxina is a good example. In

1996 Brian Marion and Chiang attended services (06:00-09:00) together every Saturday for the first two years. Some pastors did accompany them, but only a few people were regular at that time. They changed the mountain to one that was nearer to the people of Daxina – the mountain was also easy to climb. Their first meeting happened to be the Easter morning sunrise service and the turnout was 175 people. This sparked the interest of a group of prayer warriors, resulting in a marked growth in the attendance: from 10 to 20 to 30 to 40 to 45, and sometimes 50 people. This Prayer Mountain began in 1998 and grew in popularity because Pastor Russell Abraham announced it to the church and encouraged the congregation to attend. The mountain was referred to as Chiang's Prayer Mountain, but he discouraged this saying "My name should not be used because my departure is imminent and people might no longer be interested in the Prayer Mountain once I left". Instead, the mountain should be called by its name. One faithful prayer warrior, Monty, was then given the leadership of the Prayer Mountain ministry, so Chiang was able to hand over to him. After one year Chiang started another Prayer Mountain in Zak Park, together with Pastor Johnny Moodley. He took leadership of this for the first month in order to set the example for future leadership. In the first Prayer Mountain, he led for three years before handing over to Monty. In the case of the second mountain, he handed over to Pastor Moodley within a period of one month. The Prayer Mountains are still in operation to this day.

Next, he went to Roodepoort to start a mountain. He shared the Prayer Mountain vision with Pastor fraternal prayer meeting, Pastor Dion, who immediately became interested to such an extent that he prayed every single

day on the mountain. He prayed in full view of the people and they developed a high respect for him. Once after descending from the mountain, he knelt on the street to pray. The prayer warriors followed suit and it was a wonderful time that included confession of the sins of the city, with tears, prayers of repentance and also for revival.

It is very important for the local church to take leadership and perceive the mountain in that particular area as belonging to them. This is known as Indigenous Theology because it results in the inhabitants themselves becoming dedicated and taking responsibility for various aspects of the ministry. Indigenous theology is very important in order for the people to have a sense of ownership and this is Chiang's strategy. Previously, Life Challenge Ministries worked 15 years in Lenasia but they were unable to establish any roots. The main reason for this is that the strategy is always that of western missionaries, who retained their leadership, instead of handing it over to the local people. Consequently, when their time there was over, so was their ministry. At their departure, the ministry they ran shut down immediately. The better strategy is to make the people experience a sense of ownership and responsibility for the Lord's work, so it will not die down when a pastor leaves – this is Indigenous Theology, making the ministry personally relevant to the people. When Chiang left the various prayer mountains, he was careful to completely relinquish control to the new leaders. He allowed the local people the option of doing things their way. Indian people know their needs better than he does, for example, they might prefer to pray more, or they might want to spend more time sharing God's Word, or place the focus on sharing testimonies. Even though he tried to model by example for the first three

years, at the first prayer mountain, he allowed the people the liberty of exercising their own control, while encouraging them to maintain a healthy balance between time spent in prayer and time spent expounding God's Word. He also ensured that leadership was always handed to a person of integrity who would be faithful in biblical teaching in the Prayer Mountain ministry - either a pastor or Bible College student.

The second example is the promotion of the March for Jesus. Chiang consulted all the pastors in making a decision to allow the youth to handle the March for Jesus because it is “the old men who dream dreams, the young people who see visions and the children who prophesy” (Acts 2:17). Old men are the thinkers (like the philosophers); young men are the doers (the activists). The young people have more energy to co-ordinate the March For Jesus and since the pastors are too busy to get largely involved, the ideal would be to leave the march to the young people. They have many capabilities and did extremely well in planning the strategies for and co-ordination of, the March for Jesus. Most of the youth of all the surrounding churches were involved in this march.

5.4 THE PRAYER STRATEGY

5.4.1 Personal Prayer Life

5.4.1.1 Introduction

The Bible is a Book full of powerful prayers.

- Moses was a powerful person. He could speak with authority not only to the enemies of God, but also to God's people. Where did his power come from? Moses developed a life of prayer. When he prayed, plagues came upon Egypt and the Red Sea opened before Israel.
- Joshua saw the mighty hand of God work through his life and ministry. He knew the will and strategy of God in battle. Mighty cities fell before the untrained army that he led. Joshua developed so much power because he had learned to pray. While Moses was praying in the mountain, Joshua spent the night at the foot of the mountain in prayer. When Moses departed, God had a trained leader who was familiar with prayer.
- David was a man given to prayer. When he was anointed the king of Israel, Saul was still on the throne. David could have been discouraged by this fact, yet prayer brought him to a place of trust. He waited for the Lord to place him on Israel's physical throne. David was strong enough in his relationship with the Lord that he did not kill Saul when he had the opportunity. After Saul's death, David's first action as the recognised king of Israel was to bring back the Ark of the Covenant to its rightful place at the centre of Israel's worship. The source of his power was a life of prayer.

- Elijah was the prophet of God during one of the worst times in the history of Israel. At that time, Israel had turned to the worship of Baal. Elijah prayed powerfully, challenging the prophets of Baal. Elijah was a man of prayer. He would spend hours and even days in prayer. This is why when Elijah was taken up in the whirlwind by the chariot of fire, the sons of the prophets looked for him on the mountaintops of Israel.
- However, no one has ever manifested the power of God like the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Before He entered His public ministry, He spent time with the Father in prayer. Jesus was known to have spent seasons of prayer with the Father alone. This was the source of His power. He could do nothing unless the Father revealed it to Him.

5.4.1.2 The Importance of Prayer

- **Prayer life is more important than strategy and method**

“We are constantly on a stretch, if not on a strain, to devise new methods, new plans and new organisations to advance the Church and secure enlargement and efficiency for the gospel. This trend of the day has a tendency to lose sight of the man or sink the man in the plan or organisation. God's plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than of anything else. Men are God's method. The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men” (Bounds

1996:9).

Many of the Indian churches in Lenasia think that if they have loudspeakers and a big amplifier, then their church will grow. Some think if they have “Praise and worship” or regular cell groups they will grow.

“What the Church needs today is not more machinery or better methods, but men whom the Holy Ghost can use – men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods but through men. He does not come on machinery, but on men. He does not anoint plans, but men - men of prayer” (Bounds 1996:10).

- **Prayer life is more important than talent**

Two more quotes from EM Bounds:

“The sermon grows because the man grows. The sermon is forceful because the man is forceful. The sermon is holy because the man is holy. The sermon is full of the divine unction because the man is full of the divine unction” (Bounds 1996:11).

and

“It is not great talents nor great learning nor great preachers that God needs, but men great in holiness, great in faith, great in love, great in fidelity, great for God-men always preaching by holy sermons in the pulpit,

by holy lives out of it. These can mould a generation for God" (Bounds 1996:14).

- **Ministry without prayer is in vain**

A man without prayer is not working for God but working for man only. He is no longer God's man, but a man of affairs, of the people. He prays not because his mission is to the people. If he can move the people, create an interest, a sensation in favour of religion, an interest in Church work, then he is satisfied. His personal relationship to God is no factor in his work, and prayer has little or no place in his plans.

"It is impossible for the preacher to keep his spirit in harmony with the divine nature of his high calling without much prayer. That the preacher by dint of duty and laborious fidelity to the work and routine of the ministry can keep himself in trim and fitness is a serious mistake. Even sermon making incessant and taxing as an art, as a duty, as a work, or as a pleasure, will engross and harden, will estrange the heart, by neglect of prayer, from God. The scientist loses God in nature. The preacher may lose God in his sermon" (Bounds 1996:34).

- **Spiritual Warfare is not easy but the price must be paid**

“Praying is spiritual work: and human nature does not like taxing spiritual work.

Human nature wants to sail to heaven under a favouring breeze, a full smooth sea” (Bounds 1996:44).

- **Better praying causes better serving**

The preacher must be pre-eminently a man of prayer. His heart must graduate in the school of prayer. In the school of prayer only can the heart learn to preach. No learning can make up for the failure to pray. No earnestness, no diligence, no study, no gifts will supply its lack. As Bounds say:

“Talking to men for God is a great thing, but talking to God for men is greater still. He will never talk well and with real success to men for God who has not learned well how to talk to God for men” (Bounds 1996:37).

5.4.1.3 When and How?

History abounds with examples of great men who devoted the early hours of each day to prayer. Wesley spent two hours daily in prayer. He began at four in the morning. He thought prayer to be more his business than anything else. Luther said: “If I fail to spend two hours in prayer each morning, the devil gets the victory through the day. I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer” (Luther in Bounds 1996:65).

“We might go through the list of men who have mightily impressed the world for God and we would find them early after God. The more of true saints, the more of praying; the more of praying, the more of true saints. No man gets God who does not follow hard after him and no soul follows hard after God who is not after him in early morn” (Bounds 1996:70).

5.4.2 Communal Prayer Life

5.4.2.1 Morning Devotions

One of the major secrets for the Korean church growth is the early morning devotions. Some churches start at 5 am while others start at 4 am. Almost all the Christians go to their churches for morning devotion every day before they go to work. The pastors lead by example and wake up at 3:30 am.

Chiang advises the Bible College students to keep practicing their morning devotions without giving up. Disciples and home cell leaders are made through morning devotions. You do not need to elect elders or deacons, the obvious ones are those who partake of the morning devotion group. The Pastor will not need to do all the counseling because counseling will happen between those present during the morning devotion. Their problems will already be solved. You will not need to do door-to-door visitation either because God will give them a passion for unsaved friends during the morning devotion.

Church members do not want to work for God because they themselves are hungry. They only eat once a week when they get to church. If they however were to eat the “manna” every morning during devotional time, they will be strong and automatically work for God. Instead of discussing church business till 1 or 3 am in the morning the pastor and co-workers would do better to rather join the morning devotion group every day. God will give them a desire to serve.

In 1996 Grace started morning bible studies with a group of ladies. Currently there are about 10 ladies at this bible study group every day. Two of them have become full time workers serving the Lord with Grace. Since 1998 Chiang has a morning devotion group with some of the brothers. Now there are 10 brothers following him every day at 05:00. In the beginning he thought it was impossible to do it this way with South African Indians. He thought that only the diligent Koreans were able to do this. But the unexpected happened in Lenasia:

“Study universal holiness of life. Your whole usefulness depends on this, for your sermons last but an hour or two; your life preaches all the week. If Satan can only make a minister a lover of praise, of pleasure, of good eating, he has ruined your ministry. Give yourself to prayer and get your texts, your thoughts, your words from God. Luther spent his best three hours in prayer” (McCheyne in Bounds 1996:7).



5.4.2.2 Teamwork Prayer

Churches in South Africa, especially the Indian churches, split frequently because every one wants to be a king and no one is willing to serve under somebody else. So this results in sheep stealing and animosity between pastors. The first thing Chiang did was to start a pastors' prayer meeting. Some of the pastors confessed their sin, some of them were enemies before, but now they have forgiven each other. In February 1995 his wife also started the pastor's wives prayer meeting. A revival is expected because the pastors now pray together as a team. When the prayer team grows they will turn the city of Muslims upside down.

Some practical aspects of the power of corporate prayer are the following.

- Spiritual power is multiplied when more people are praying (Matthew. 18:19).
- Greater insights usually come by working with others, especially when an impasse is met.
- Teams provide a good healing and learning environment.
- With team ministry, the person being prayed for is more likely to become dependent on Jesus than of the person who is praying for him or her.
- In teams there is always a witness to what takes place, which is a protection for the person praying (Matthew 18:16).

- In cases involving the casting out of demons, it is always best to have several people present (Leviticus 26:8, Deuteronomy 32:30).

5.4.3 The Prayer Mountain Strategy

5.4.3.1 The Concept of a Prayer Mountain

One should not build a theology on the practice of Jesus of going to the mountain to pray. Jesus went to a mountain to pray not because the mountain has power, but because there is power through prayer. Actually, he went to the mountain to be away from the crowd of people and have quiet times with His Father in heaven without interruption. The fact is however that He is often pictured as doing just that: "After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone" (Matthew 14:23). "One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray and spent the night praying to God" (Luke 6:12). "Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives" (Luke 21:37).

What is called a Prayer Mountain in Korea is really not much more than a retreat area dedicated to prayer. It started there as land that was purchased for a church cemetery. Since Korea has been a traditionally Buddhist country, having a church burial place was very important. In time it became traditional for many churches to have such facilities.

In the Korean Full Gospel Prayer Mountain, many people went to the mountain

to pray and many sick people were healed (Chio 1981:26, my translation). Pastor Fei Hai Lee said: "My church membership had only 40 in attendance at the Sunday service. When I went to Prayer Mountain for fasting and prayer for 15 days, my church started to grow and now we have 140 members" (Chio 1981:41, my translation). A Korean pastor Dong went to Prayer Mountain fasting and prayed for 20 days. Afterward he preached in his church and 50 people repented with tears (Chio 1981:33).

In Korea, pastors usually spend two days on the Prayer Mountain (from Friday to Sunday morning). When they come back from the Prayer Mountain their messages are full of power. Many Christian got healed through mountain's prayer (Chio 1981:134). The Prayer Mountain is the key for the Korean Churches' revival.

Pastor Cho says that many of the problems that he has faced in his church have been solved at the Prayer Mountain (Cho 1993:16). He relates that in 1973, when their present church was being, the dollar was devalued. This caused the Korean currency (which is tied in value to the American dollar) to suffer and they entered into a deep recession. Then the oil crisis hit, worsening their already fragile economy. Their people lost their jobs and their income went down (Cho 1993:107). Seeing that only a miraculous intervention of God would deliver them from a catastrophe, Dr Cho joined the intercessors at Prayer Mountain. One evening, while they were meeting to pray on the ground floor of the unfinished church, several hundred joined him in prayer. An old woman walked slowly in his direction. As she approached the platform, he noticed that tears were filling her eyes. She bowed and said,

“Pastor, I want to give these items to you so that you may sell them for a few pennies to help with our building fund”. He looked down and in her hands was an old rice bowl and a pair of chopsticks. Then, he said to her: “Sister, I can’t take these necessities from you”. “But Pastor, I am an old woman. I have nothing of value to give to my Lord; yet, Jesus has graciously saved me. These items are the only things in the world I possess”, she exclaimed, tears now flowing freely down her wrinkled cheeks. “You must let me give these to Jesus. I can place my rice on old newspapers and I can use my hands to feed myself. I know that I will die soon, so I do not want to meet Jesus without giving Him something on this earth”. As she finished speaking, everyone there began to weep openly. The Holy Spirit’s presence filled the place and they all began to pray in the Spirit. A businessman in the back of the group was deeply moved and said, “Pastor Cho, I want to buy that rice bowl and chopsticks for one thousand dollars”! With that, everyone started to pledge their possessions. Cho’s wife and Cho sold their house and gave the money to the church. This spirit of giving saved them from financial ruin.

As the years have gone by the Prayer Mountain has grown to be a place where thousands of people go daily to have their needs met while fasting and praying. They have added a modern ten-thousand-seat auditorium that is now too small to hold the crowds that come. Attendance varies, but normally at least three thousand people are daily praying, fasting, worshipping and praising the Lord. In this atmosphere of concentrated prayer, healing and miracles are a common occurrence (Cho 1993:108).

In a year more than 300 000 people register at the Prayer Mountain. This makes this “haven of prayer” the front line of their attack on the devil’s forces

on this earth. Nowhere in this world are there more people praying and fasting. God hears their prayers and the answers are too numerous to mention.

Not only do they have group prayer at Prayer Mountain, but they also have individual prayer in their “prayer grottoes”. These small cubicles are actually cut into the side of a hill. At these prayer grottoes, people are quiet before God. In the private “prayer closet” a believer can shut the door and commune with the Heavenly Father in concentrated and prolonged prayer.

The Prayer Mountain is a “haven of prayer”. The place now houses thousands of people not only from Korea, but also from every corner of the earth. Christians long for a place where they can meet God in a dynamic way. Not that God can't be found any place where men seek Him in spirit and in truth, but there is no place on earth that has more concentrated prayer than the Prayer Mountain. Christians are not satisfied with just hearing about the moving of God that but desire to see what God is doing.

Some days they have had as many as twenty thousand people fasting and praying at Prayer Mountain. Yet, normally, they have three thousand people during the week and ten thousand on weekends. Why do so many more people come to Prayer Mountain to fast and pray? Cho's answers to these questions are simple and direct.

“If you or members of your family were dying of cancer and you knew that there was a cure, wouldn't you do

whatever was necessary to procure healing? Many people are suffering from both physical and spiritual cancer. Material prosperity has not brought the happiness and fulfilment that we once thought it would bring. The answer to physical and spiritual problems is healing. We have discovered that people's needs are met in a place totally dedicated to prayer and fasting. This is why they come" (Cho 1993:16).

5.4.3.2 Prayer Mountain in South Africa

It was already related how Chiang started the Daxina Prayer Mountain in 1995. On the Easter morning of 1997 this prayer ministry reached a climax when many churches, originating from different denominations, came together to pray as a unity. On this noteworthy occasion, the Prayer Mountain warriors jointly agreed to launch a number of important initiatives. With the enthusiastic participation of over one thousand youth coming from different churches, this mountain prayer group gave birth to a "Youth Leader's Committee" as well as a "March for Jesus Committee". For all those who attended this Prayer Mountain prayer, God imparted into their hearts a strong desire to pray for pastors and for unity (interview with Monty Patel 2001).

Some of the outcomes of the Daxina Prayer Mountain are the following:

- Amongst those who came to pray at the Prayer Mountain, some had been jobless for as long as five years. Subsequent to their prayers however a

number of them, including Rodney, David, Ray, Leena and Ranica, got a job within the next few days. Brian also got a job in two days time after he prayed for this at the Prayer Mountain. Furthermore, he prayed for buying a house and the following Saturday he was already in his new home.

- Similarly, Brother Monty had been out of work for a long time. When first he came to the Prayer Mountain, he asked God for a job and his request was granted in 2 days. Appreciating God's provision, he became a powerful prayer warrior. In a few months time, he even became the chairman for the Prayer Mountain warriors. One Saturday morning in November 1998, he surprised the assembly of the prayer warriors by saying, "I intend to give up my present job". Everyone then asked, "Why?" He replied, "I wish to give my life to the Lord and become a full time servant for Him. I therefore wish to go to the Rosebank Bible College for studies". All the Prayer Mountain warriors joyously responded, "Surely, we will support you!"

- As for Edien, when he first came to Prayer Mountain, he was a non-Christian and he had been out of job for five years. After they prayed for him, he got a job the following week. God continued to work in him and now he is a member of the marriage counseling team. Sometimes we commented jokingly that the mountain prayer is the greatest employment agency we have ever encountered.

- God healed a number of sick persons when they came to pray at the Prayer Mountain. For example, Rodney's niece was once very ill and dying with cancer. As a result of their prayers God healed the child.

- God provided His healing on broken marriages. Again, as a result of earnest prayers, God brought warring couples back together again. God also provided His healing on unhappy family lives.
- Before they launched their “March for Jesus”, they prayed for a week and fasted for 24 hours. They then witnessed how God’s hand had moved and gathered a tremendously large crowd.
- Many people who went to pray at the Prayer Mountain have now enrolled into Bible Colleges. In addition, Brother Clarian, a member of the Presbyterian Church, used to go to the Prayer Mountain regularly for a year. At present, he has gone to England for training to become a missionary.
- One of the most beautiful aspects of the Prayer Mountain Programme is unity. The entire assembly of the Prayer Warriors constitutes church members coming from many different denominations (interview with Brian Marian 2001).
- The praying movement continued to spread and prayer warriors were now having overnight prayer meetings at the churches as well (interview with Monty Patel 2001).

There are also some interesting future plans in place:

- They plan to organise a prayer walk at both the locations of Daxina and Zak Park. In addition to the Prayer Mountain warriors, they hope to mobilise the

churches to participate actively in praying as well.

- They plan to organise many overnight-praying meetings at different churches.
- They plan to start a 24 hours prayer center.
- They also plan to start a marriage-counseling center. Dalit Condent currently provides marriage counseling service and 11 couples have already participated.
- They plan to start a youth centre such that we may win more youth for Christ.
- They plan to start a Bible College link with ICBM.
- They plan to conduct a prayer retreat at Immanuel Prayer Mountain on two occasions (interview with Monty Patel 2001).

After one year Chiang started another Prayer Mountain in Zak Park, together with a Pastor Moodley. He took leadership of this for the first month and then handed over to him. This prayer is conducted every Saturday morning at Zak Park Prayer Mountain. About 30 people participate and it is a tremendous blessing for all those who attend. Pastor Sailas also joined them with his church members. He believes that the prayers made at the Prayer Mountain are very effective. In their prayers for the surrounding areas, they acquire a

better mission vision and visualise how great their Creator truly is. The faithful intercession prayers they make enable all things to become possible (interview with Moodley 2001).

According to Pastor Moodley (interview in 2001) some of the outcomes of this Prayer Mountain are:

- Many sick people who came to pray at this Prayer Mountain were healed and recovered. As they prayed, they experienced God's wonderful healing power. Amongst the sick was a 12-year-old girl who used to have Asthma and couldn't walk for more than 15 meters without help. As she came every Saturday to the Prayer Mountain for prayers, she has now been touched by God and healed.
- There was a case of a housewife with two children who had a broken relationship with her husband. The relationship was so bad that it appears to the woman that divorce was the only way out. After their encounter at the Prayer Mountain, the pastor went to her home and found how chaotic her marriage had been. He took the opportunity to share Jesus Christ with her family. The lady lamented that it was already too late for anything and she was just about to submit the divorce papers to the lawyer. He asked her to give him the paper and, there and then, he prayed on their behalf for God to drive away the spirit of divorce. Today both husband and wife come to the church regularly. God brought reconciliation through prayer.
- A lady from a Hindu home had a back problem. When invited to come and

pray at the Prayer Mountain she declined and said she could not walk up to the hill. They encouraged her and suggested that they could pick her up by car to the mountain. At the mountaintop, they laid hands upon her and pleaded for God to help her. Amazingly, her back problem was healed. She is now a saved soul and attends church regularly.

- Another case was a young man called Ruany who was entangled with drinking and smoking problems. He came to the Prayer Mountain and through prayer was now delivered from alcoholism and smoking. He has become very involved in church activities and is now leading the youth group.
- Pastor Moodley prayed for unity to encompass Zak Park. They desired to see unity amongst leaders and congregations. Ever since they started praying at Zak Park pastors from nearby areas were willing to come every Wednesday and pray together. In addition to having combined service on Easter and on Christmas day, once a month on Sunday evening, they meet together with pastors and congregations to fellowship. Undoubtedly, through prayers our dream became true.
- Zak Park used to be a strong Muslim city. Originally the residents would not agree for them to use the community hall for Christian activities. However, after they prayed very hard for it, they now allow us to use it for Sunday services.

The Zak Park Prayer Mountain is so blessed that they plan to build a prayer house up on the mountaintop.

At the invitation of a SIM missionary Chiang went to the Roodepoort Pastor's Fraternity for a gathering in April 1999. In the meeting, one of the major issues that he shared with the pastors was about "Prayer Mountain for Church growth". A local lay leader Brother Deon, after hearing Chiang's message, became very interested in the concept of a Prayer Mountain. In view of his keen interest, Chiang invited Brother Deon and drove around the neighbourhood to look for a mountain that is suitable for all the churches. Finally, they selected a mountain behind Deon's house that is centrally located and oversees 30 churches in the vicinity. Chiang gave this mountain a name called Calvary Prayer Mountain because below the mountain is a cemetery.

From February 2000 Brother Deon goes up this Prayer Mountain at 6 am every day to offer his prayers to God. Besides studying at Bible College and regardless of the weather, he continues to go up to the Prayer Mountain faithfully for daily prayers. Every Saturday two SIM missionaries and some other pastors join him for praying at the Prayer Mountain. From time to time, Chiang would bring some prayer warriors from Lenasia to Roodepoort to show his support also.

During a trip to the Braamfisher area in February 2001, Deon found that, for the many coloured people living there they have not had a church yet. God moved his heart and he decided to start a tent church there. Behind the newly established church there is a mountain which is within 5 minutes reach. Deon therefore asked Chiang's help and together they started up another new Prayer Mountain Programme (interview with Deon 2001).

In short, one can see how, in the case of Deon, a person who prays regularly at Prayer Mountain would become a prayer warrior. He then moves on to give his life to the Lord and prepare for full time service. By now, he has started a new tent church in just one year's time. How wonderful it is for God to change people's lives through prayer.

Brian Marian's testimony is that whilst he would normally feel much more inhibited when he was at home, the open space of the Prayer Mountain really enables him to cry loudly and pour his heart out unto the Lord. Over here, all work in the mind is solely the work of prayer. The spiritual rule seems to be that if victory were gained in prayers, it would similarly happen in the physical work. Furthermore, earnest praying at the Prayer Mountain enabled him to behold a wider vision as well. They therefore have daringly prayed for greater things to happen, such as the future conversion of the mosques into 24 hours Prayer Centres.

One of the most wonderful aspects of the Prayer Mountain strategy is the extent to which it is bringing different churches together and forges a unity amongst them. Important issues that constitute a significant part of their earnest prayers includes war against drug abuse, alcoholism and the breaking down of the strongholds of Islam and Hinduism. In prayer meetings, apart from sharing God's word spontaneously, participants also decided to prepare for a "March for Jesus" and to start a new Bible College under ICBM. They also believed that, through prayers, they could launch the biggest "March for Jesus" in Lenasia's history. The weapon that they choose to use is neither a persuasion through preaching, nor the performing of miracles, but reliance

solely on prayer. In this regard, Jesus has demonstrated to us a good example on how seriously we should pray when we desire to see the glory of God. As we can see throughout the New Testament, Jesus normally did all sorts of work with relative ease, such as the giving of sermons, healing of the sick and even the raising of the dead. However, he would exert all His strength and had sweated profusely when He prayed. As recorded in Luke, “He prayed more earnestly and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground” (Luke 22:44). “Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death and was heard because of His godly fear” (Hebrews 5:7).

5.5 THE STRIVING FOR UNITED ACTION

5.5.1 Unity

The last element of the Spiritual Strategy is the emphasis on unity in the body of Christ. This is not the place to expound either the necessity or the nature of this unity, but the goal will be to show the importance of unity for an ongoing missionary work.

“Directly through His own operation and indirectly through the mystical incorporation of believers in the one body of Christ the Spirit is the unity-effecting Agent in the Church. ...It is necessary always to remember

that the true unity of the Church rests upon and arises out of the glory of Christ, and that this glory is the power of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself in the witness and life of the Church (Boer 1961:202).

“If the kind of unity that liberal and uncritical evangelical Christianity so often espouses is here rejected by Christ, there is another kind of unity that is hardly more acceptable to Him. This is the unity that is so dear to the churchmen of strict orthodoxy. It is the idea that the unity of the Church is only a spiritual unity, and that the brokenness of the Church, while regrettable, is not wholly incompatible with this spiritual unity (Boer 1961:203).

Jesus prayed in John 17:11 “Holy Father protect them by the power of your name, so that they may be one as we are one”. Jesus knew that individualism or self-centredness is probably the greatest threat to the church and therefore he prayed against it. Paul takes up the same idea when he encourages the church in Ephesus to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace, being completely humble and gentle, patient and bearing with one another is love simply because we have one body and one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father to us all.

“The mutual coordination of mission and unity is non-negotiable. Holding onto both mission and unity and to both truth and unity presupposes tension. A united church in mission is essential in light of the fact that the church’s

mission will never come to an end. Mission in unity means an end to the distinction between “sending” and “receiving” churches. Ultimately unity in mission and mission in unity do not merely serve the church but, through the church, stand in the service of humankind and seek to manifest the cosmic rule of Christ. We have to confess that the loss of *ecclesial* unity is not just a vexation but a sin. Our goal is not a fellowship exempt from conflict, but one which is characterized by unity in reconciled diversity” (Bosch 1991:465).

The men of the world must see one fellowship in which there is no brokenness, no division, no hopelessness, but rather the unity and power of one body, one fellowship, one hope, one society. This must draw men to inquire after the source of this unity, this power, this hope, this holy fellowship. And their inquiry must lead them to discover this source in Christ the Head of the Church, the Sent One of the Father. To this interest and to this acknowledgment the world must be brought by the visibly united witness and the visibly united life of the people of God. For if the spiritually undiscerning world does not see with its eyes that which is so manifestly wanting in its own life, how shall a hidden spiritual unity bring it to this insight? The unity of the Church is according to Jesus’ own words, a great missionary instrument given to the Church. Nowhere is this instrument more needed than on the mission field.

“The Church must therefore unceasingly confront herself with the demand of Christ for complete unity, that is: a unity in the Spirit expressed

in the ministry and life of one visible body of Christ. Where this unity does not exist we fall short of the glory of God. For the Son was glorified in order that through the bestowal of His glory on the Church He might make the Church one” (Boer 1961:204).

It is on the basis of this that we are going to emphasise teamwork. Teamwork is not a suggestion, but a command from God. The “Lone Ranger” mentality is sinful and must be extracted like a rotten tooth from a jaw.

Paul has the last word in I Corinthians 12:1-28 with his analogy of the physical body to the body of Christ, the church. We need each other. No man is an island and cannot abide alone.

5.5.2 Teamwork for Unity

5.5.2.1 Introduction

The author proposes to show that teamwork is essential for unity and church revival. A maverick spirit only fragments God’s church, but a “pooling” of gifts, talents and human resources is of paramount importance in enabling the church of God to function at her maximum potential in order to fulfill the “Great Commission” and in so doing accomplish our mission to the unreached.

5.5.2.2 Gleanings from the Asian Culture

Underpinning Chinese culture is a principle that can be called “Personal

Heroism". This conveys the idea of one hero, one kingdom and one nation. Hence, all Chinese find it necessary to submit to one leader. In this way a subtle form of teamwork is unwittingly introduced into Chinese culture by this principle.

Teamwork is even more basically portrayed in Chinese society, that of the family. In a fundamentally patriarchal culture the grandfather or father rules his family with an "iron fist". A strictly top to bottom hierarchy is formed, with the grandfather or father as the apex of the triangle of self-proclaimed power. Although it is authoritarian, it can be viewed as the initial stages of teamwork in China.

Poverty in China also plays a role in promoting teamwork. It is common practice for an entire family of five to sleep on one bed using one blanket. As uncomfortable as this may appear to a Westerner, the principle of teamwork is evident here.

The Japanese also succeed in teamwork. At a macro level the Japanese pledge allegiance to their superiors, even to the point of death. Very strong teamwork begins even in childhood when an entire family may take a bath together. Hence at a micro level the seeds of teamwork are sown. A sort of "kamikaze" attitude prevails in the work situation - the Japanese will not go on strike. The church will do well to adopt this attitude!

5.5.2.3 Teamwork for the New South Africa

Now that South Africans of all colours worship together, more attention than in the past must be given to teamwork. Prejudice must first be identified as a sin and dealt with from the pulpit. It must be dealt with in the same manner as with any other sin in their lives. Only after prejudice is dealt with by the power of the cross and the blood of Jesus Christ can true teamwork come into being.

The talents and gifts of the various peoples of South Africa must be harnessed. In this way inferiority complexes will soon evaporate and the once disadvantaged groups will want to work together in order to extend the influence of the church. The ominous threat of Islam, Hinduism and secular humanism can only be effectively counter-acted if the Christians will combine their talents and present a united front. Teamwork will be the natural overflow. Cross-cultural interaction must consider the various temperaments of our different cultures. This sociological consideration must involve the understanding and respect of the “unique” way that different people do things.

5.5.2.4 Teamwork in Large Churches

Because of the greater demands of a large church, specialisation is increasing. There are “music pastors”, “youth pastors”, “counselors” and so on. For teamwork among these gifted men to succeed, each pastor must recognise, respect and release these “specialists” into their fields of service. Pastors must understand that they are shepherding God’s flock and not theirs.

5.5.2.5 Teamwork from the Bible

There are several examples of teamwork in the Old Testament. The New Testament too is replete with examples of teamwork. We see a clear case of this when the Jesus sent out His disciples in couples, “two by two”. He had a desire for teamwork that consumed Him. In John 15:4 we read “No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine”. Christ is intolerant of an independent spirit. It is clear according to the greatest promoter of teamwork that if you do it alone, you will be unsuccessful and unless the Lord builds the house, those who labour do so in vain. In addition, Paul stresses teamwork in terms of submission to one another in the Lord. Teamwork is born out of submission. It is the recognition of the God-given authority, gifts and talents of others. It is a willingness to become nothing and to become obedient as Jesus who left His glorious splendour in order to become submissive to the point of death on a cross! Hence, one has to deny one’s individuality in order to be subsumed into God’s master plan for evangelism.

5.5.2.6 Teamwork for Unity

Christian women have suffered much at the hands of narrow male chauvinism. Women should not be precluded from exercising their gifts. For example, Miriam led the praise and worship team, Deborah commanded the armies of Israel, Phoebe carried the book of Romans and Priscilla explained the gospel more fully to Apollos. Women must be encouraged to use their gifts. Dr Cho reports from Korea that 70% of his home cell leaders are ladies. They are more inclined to talk in the cell groups than men. Secondly, they are more willing to submit to the pastor than the men and thirdly they have more zeal for the Lord.

Our Lord Jesus made it abundantly clear that “ a kingdom that is divided against itself will be ruined and every city or household divided against itself will not stand” (Matthew 12:25). This is true in every sphere of life. The maxim of the world is: “Unity is strength.” Divided opinions, goals and visions will ruin any organisation. The devil loves to use division to fragment the church.

5.5.2.7 Unity Brings Revival

In a climate of unity and oneness God revives His church. He is able to do for the church what was done to the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision. In Psalm 133 we read: “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity”. Acts 2:8 shows a revival breaking in when people were united in prayer. All over the world it is found that unity at ministerial level is blessed by God with a revival. When the church is united she will become a conduit through whom the Holy Spirit will blow in the church and into the world. Our service in unity will let God work through us to reach the unsaved. Our lives will actually become an incarnation of Jesus. We will become “little” Christs, where the life of Jesus will flow out of us to touch the lives of others. Finally, teamwork helps to utilise all the church’s gifts in order to evangelise the world. In a climate of oneness, God will smile upon the church of revival. Teamwork is undoubtedly the bloodstream of the church.

5.5.2.8 Problems and Practicalities of Teamwork

Samson had no teamwork. Because he was a mighty warrior, he did not



need any one to help him. He alone could kill a thousand of the enemy. Consequently, when he fell into temptation he had no one there to advise him. Jonah was a powerful speaker, just one day his message could touch the whole city and repent. But he had no teamwork. No one there to advise him or correct him.

There was a young Indian man who was working so hard he did not have time to buy his own wedding suit. His mother and his sister and his grandmother helped him to find a suit and they all rushed off to every shop looking to purchase a suit. But because it was late in the afternoon, most of the shops were closing and there was little to choose. The only suit they could find had pants that were too long. The salesman advised them to cut off 14 cm after which it would fit properly. That night at 9 pm, before retiring to bed, the sister remembered and cut off 14 cm. off his pants. About 11 pm when his mother retired, she also remembered to cut the pants 14 cm shorter. At 3 am the grandmother got up to go to the toilet and passed by the table and found the pants there. She also cut off another 14 cm. The result was that the groom wore mini pants at his wedding (Chinese GECCOWE conference in the Philippines, 1991, recorded by writer). This was the result of individualism. Everyone was doing their own thing without communicating with one another. Poor in teamwork.

When Chiang was in Polowu Village in Liberia, no one had a car. He was the only one who had a four-wheel motorcycle. Whenever he was driving on the roads every one was afraid of his motor cycle's noise and would jump out of the way into the rice fields. There weren't any car accidents and no traffic

lights at all. But in South Africa, where there are many motor vehicles, all need to be involved and care for one another. Individuals are free, but very isolated, lonely and selfish.

When we join a team and work together, we need to share our ideas with one another, communicate, understand, organise, take the leadership, take the responsibility, concern, care, discipline, forgive and humbly learn to accept each other. Just like from single life to family life, seems difficult, but sweet. God created the family for us to practice "team work". If we are successful there then we will move onto the community and even change the whole world.

5.5.3 Mountain Prayer for Unity and Revival

"How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore" (Psalms 133:1-3).

Without unity there is no revival. The precious oil that our poet referred to could be thought of as the Holy Spirit. As Aaron was the high priest and this oil was poured on his head and ran down on his beard, we may take it to symbolise that all pastors must first be empowered by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In other words, church revival starts from the revival of the shepherd

pastors. As the Psalms has illustrated, the oil ran "down upon the collar of his robes". We may take this robe to symbolize the robe of righteousness. Once it has become sanctified, the Holy Spirit may then start to take full control. Subsequent to the revival of the shepherds, the church revival would come along.

Let us meditate upon Psalm 133:3 also: "It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion". The mountain of Zion is the mountain of prayer. We may note that in Korea it has become a common practice for many pastors to go for fasting and praying on Prayer Mountains. They often pray from Friday to Sunday morning. On Sunday morning they come down from the mountain and immediately go up to the pulpit. Their message is full of power, since the Holy Spirit in accordance with the enlightenment from the mountain, anointed it. Having heard about the Korean experience, some pastors from Taiwan had decided to go there and learn about the Prayer Mountain themselves. When they returned to Taiwan they also started a prayer mountain. At one time 500 people went there for prayer. Some went there and fasted and prayed for 7 days. Consequently, it brought a great revival to many Taiwanese churches. So, it is clear that church revival starts with a pastor's revival.

On the other hand, a pastor's revival starts from unity amongst pastors. Jesus said, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another". Furthermore, repentance comes first before unity whereas repentance is preceded by the humbling of our old self before the Lord. As was pointed out: "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then

will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Today the land of Lenasia desperately needs God's healing, as it is plagued with two kinds of cancer. Apart from the bodily cancer we all know of, there is also a kind of spiritual cancer in this world. We may be aware that, by population, the Muslim amount to 70%, the Hindu 25% whereas Christian amount to only 5%. We are clearly dwelling in Satan's territories. It is saddening to see our churches divided and the body of Christ is hence separated and cut into pieces. Since we are the minority and occupy 5% only, we need to pray together, to help one another, to learn from one another and to encourage each other not to care solely for our own small vineyard but should, more importantly, care for the Kingdom of God. In addition, we should first humble ourselves before the Lord and to one another. We should re-build one another up again through prayer and then God will heal our land. The Lord had said, “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity” When we are united, then the Holy Spirit will come and the revival will in turn take place. We can then turn the city upside down and can conquer cities for God's kingdom. We can take the suburbs of Eldorado Park, Enerdale, Zak Park, Orange farm, Lenz for God's kingdom.

5.5.4 March for Jesus as a Spiritual Strategy for Unity in World Mission

5.5.4.1 Reconciliations

Here are what some leaders in the world Christian movement are saying about

the “March for Jesus” idea.

- “The praise and prayer marches for Jesus offer the body of Christ world-wide a unique opportunity to acknowledge visibly the lordship of Jesus Christ over every city and country on the face of the earth. It is a declaration to the principalities and powers that Jesus is King. This may do more to advance the gospel in the world than any single event in history since the resurrection and Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. God will be honoured as his son is uplifted” (Luis Bush).
- Reinhardt Bonnke concurs: “The March for Jesus is from God. The sole of your foot has something to do with spiritual possession when we move according to the Word of the Lord. And that word from the mouth of God is, ‘Go ye... preach the Gospel to every creature’”.
- “Jesus said that we are a light set on a hill that cannot be hidden. There is a time and place for secret ministries, but there is also a time and place for public and high profile ministries. Let us rally behind this vision and lift Jesus high among the nations”, said Loren Cunningham of Youth With A Mission.
- “It is high time that massive numbers of Christians banded together to declare the lordship of Jesus over our cities and nations! God has raised up the March for Jesus as His principal catalytic instrument for bringing this into reality in our times. Public praise and prayer through marches for Jesus in every city have the potential to change the world. The hand of God is moving powerfully and I do not just want to be a spectator - I want to be a participant”,

said Tom Houston, previous leader of the Lausanne Movement.

- “Marches for Jesus are seen as a very significant element in modern church life. The church has a message to proclaim and we should not be embarrassed or frightened about taking it into the market place on the streets of our communities. Such events are also signs of our unity together because every denomination is involved in this form of witness” (Archbishop William Carey).

- “From a very small beginning of intercession and spiritual warfare for the city of London the March for Jesus has spread not only to many other cities, but now to the capitals of Europe and beyond. The March for Jesus is more than a group of Christians demonstrating their faith, it is a spiritual act of unity and solidarity of people of faith and goodwill, united for the causes of righteousness and against the forces of darkness” (Floyd McClung of Youth With A Mission).

- “The world has a need to know that Christians are a praying presence among them and that we believe that unified prayer is an awesome power for social change. This march will make that message clear” (Tony Campolo).

(www.igateway.com/clients/mfjpa/events.htm, 10 June 2000)

5.5.4.2 Motivation for the Movement

Various arguments can be brought forward as motivation for the Christian people to come out on the street. Without this movement, all churches would

still be hiding within their buildings, unseen by the world. However, once they come forth from their hiding places, they can proclaim the victory of the Lord in the open air throughout the whole city. Jesus once said, “You are the salt of the world”. Clearly, if the salt stayed in the container, nobody would know its value. Only when we shake the container and let the salt come out and fall upon meat and soup, can it bring the good taste out of food.

It is impressive when young and old Christians alike, including the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the black and the white, the coloured people and the Indians, all march for Jesus together. We can then be seen as one united body in Christ and no longer divided into different denominations, generations and races. Therefore, we believe the “March for Jesus” is one of the most important outreach strategies for churches in the 21st century. By these actions the divided churches become the one and only universal church.

When a multitude of Christians march together for Jesus, they actually launch two holy missions. One is to lift Jesus high for adoration, so that all would be drawn to follow Him. Secondly, the Christians come out into the open and become a blessing to all nations.

Another significant aspect of the “March for Jesus” movement is that most of the marches are organised by lay leaders. This activity therefore serves to mobilise many lay Christians in addition to the participation of just a small number of clergymen (interview with Brian Marian, 2001).

One of the saddest things in the today is the division in God's Church. The

power of God came upon the early church when they were all of one accord. The blessing of Pentecost probably would never have been given but for that spirit of unity. It is noticeable even today that when churches work together the blessing is greater.

Dr Guthrie illustrates this fact where he says:

“Separate the atoms which make the hammer and each would fall on the stone as a snowflake; but welded into one and wielded by the firm arm of the quarry man, it will break the massive rocks asunder. Divide the waters of Niagara into distinct and individual drops and they would be no more than the falling rain, but in their united body they would quench the fires of Vesuvius and have some to spare for the volcanoes of other mountains” (Guthrie in Moody 1980:72).

and

“I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I

follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptised into the name of Paul?" (1 Corinthians 1:10-16).

It is a mystery why God has allowed the existence of so many denominations on earth. There are diversities of gifts – that is clearly taught – but there is one Spirit. If we have all been redeemed with the same blood, we ought to see eye to eye in spiritual things. Paul writes: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord" (Moody 1980:73).

Sometimes we focus too much on theology and neglect the Bible; sometimes we focus too much on ritual and neglect the Holy Spirit and sometimes we focus on all the wrong things and neglect all the right things.

Suppose Paul should turn up in the midst of us today, the traditional churches might ask him, "Do you belong to the mainstream denominations? We believe in theology and tradition". He would probably answer, "Yes, I am a Jew, under Gamaliel" (Acts 22:3), "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee" (Acts 23:6). Then, the Evangelical leaders would ask him, "Do you believe in evangelism and the Bible?" He would say, "Yes, I am an evangelist too. I am a Bible writer, I wrote 13 books of the New Testament". Finally, the Pentecostal leaders would ask him, "Are you a member of the Pentecostal church? Do you believe in miracles and wonders?" It is likely that he would reply, "Yes. Even my handkerchief can work wonders as well". For the ensuing question, "Do you speak in tongues?" He would probably say, "Of course, 'I thank God that I

“speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue” (1 Corinthians 14:18-19).

As we can readily see, each and every denomination has its own merits. Some are very good at Bible teaching but fail to see the importance of miracles. Some denominations emphasise too much on miracles while caring too little about theology. Clearly, we should all strive to be like the Apostle Paul with a balanced view, paying due respect to theology, studying the Bible and also seeing the importance of miracles. We need to maintain balance in every aspect and we need to preserve unity amongst us.

“Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly - mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? For when one says ‘I follow Paul’ and another, ‘I follow Apollos’, are you not mere men? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe - as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow” (1 Corinthians 3:1-7).

Why would God allow different denominations to appear on earth? One of the reasons is because God is not a dictator. He has a large heart and can accept us to be different to one another. He allows us to have creative thinking and to choose different ways to worship him. Since the Tower of Babel, the multitude of human races on earth all speak different languages, have different cultures, customs and different ways of thinking. God in His wisdom appreciates that we could be different in many ways. It is not such a bad thing after all because this teaches us to be more creative and flexible.

In short, God has created on earth different races and different people. He hence allows different denominations to exist in order to meet the different needs of different people. Although there is only one Bible, God has made it sufficient to meet the need of different cultures, ages, races and generations. God has made it beautiful that we are different. Despite our differences, for the sake of Jesus, we can appreciate and learn from one another. If we love and accept only people like us, then we are no different from the Pagans. However, if we are able to love others who are different, then the power of the Gospel may be revealed to the world through our witness.

“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out

not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:1-5).

Verse 4 of the message above enlightens us about the true meaning of “interests”. Some of us may be interested in praying aloud, whereas others may prefer to pray quietly instead. It is important that we allow and respect one another to act in accordance with their need in front of God. For the phrase “the Mind of Jesus”, the Chinese version of the Bible has translated it to read “the same heart of Jesus”. If Jesus’ heart and mind were set firmly for unity, we surely must follow His footstep.

John recorded that the last prayer Jesus Christ made on earth, before they led Him away to Calvary; that His disciples might all be one. “Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name - the name you gave me - so that they may be one as we are one, I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17:11, 23). He could look down the stream of time and see that divisions would come – how Satan would try to divide the flock of God. Nothing will silence unbelief so quickly as when Christians everywhere become united. Then our testimony will have weight with the ungodly. But when they see how Christians are divided, they will not believe their testimony. The Holy Spirit is grieved and there is little power where there is no unity.

It was recorded that John Wesley once had a strange dream. He found himself standing by the gate of Hell. He then asked the gatekeeper, “Are

there any Catholic congregations in Hell?" The reply was, "Yes". He then asked, "How about Anglican congregations?" The answer was, "Yes". He continued to ask, "How about Lutheran members?" The answer was no different, "Yes". Finally, Wesley hesitated and asked, "Well, are there any Wesleyan church members in Hell also?" The answer remained, "Yes". The gatekeeper then brought Wesley to the gate of Heaven. Wesley also asked the other gatekeeper, "Are there any Catholic members in Heaven?" The answer was, "No". "How about Anglican congregations?" "No" "How about Lutherans?" "No" "Then, how about my own denomination, the Wesley Church members? Are they not in Heaven? Surely they must be in Heaven as we emphasise so much on holiness you know." The gatekeeper replied, "Sorry, no". Wesley then cried out loudly, "If all denominations go to Hell while no one goes to Heaven, then who would be saved?" The gatekeeper explained, "Only those whose hearts were cleansed by the 'Blood of Jesus' may enter the Kingdom of God." Therefore, the crux of the matter is, we were not saved by denominations but by the "Blood of Jesus" only (message tapes of Rev Miller, 1994).

"The church is not the foundation of Christ, but Christ is the founder of the church" (Niebuhr 1951:95). As Christ is the founder of the church, we clearly should not exalt denominations more than Christ Himself. On the other hand, as all denominations are founded upon Christ, we therefore should unify as one body within Him.

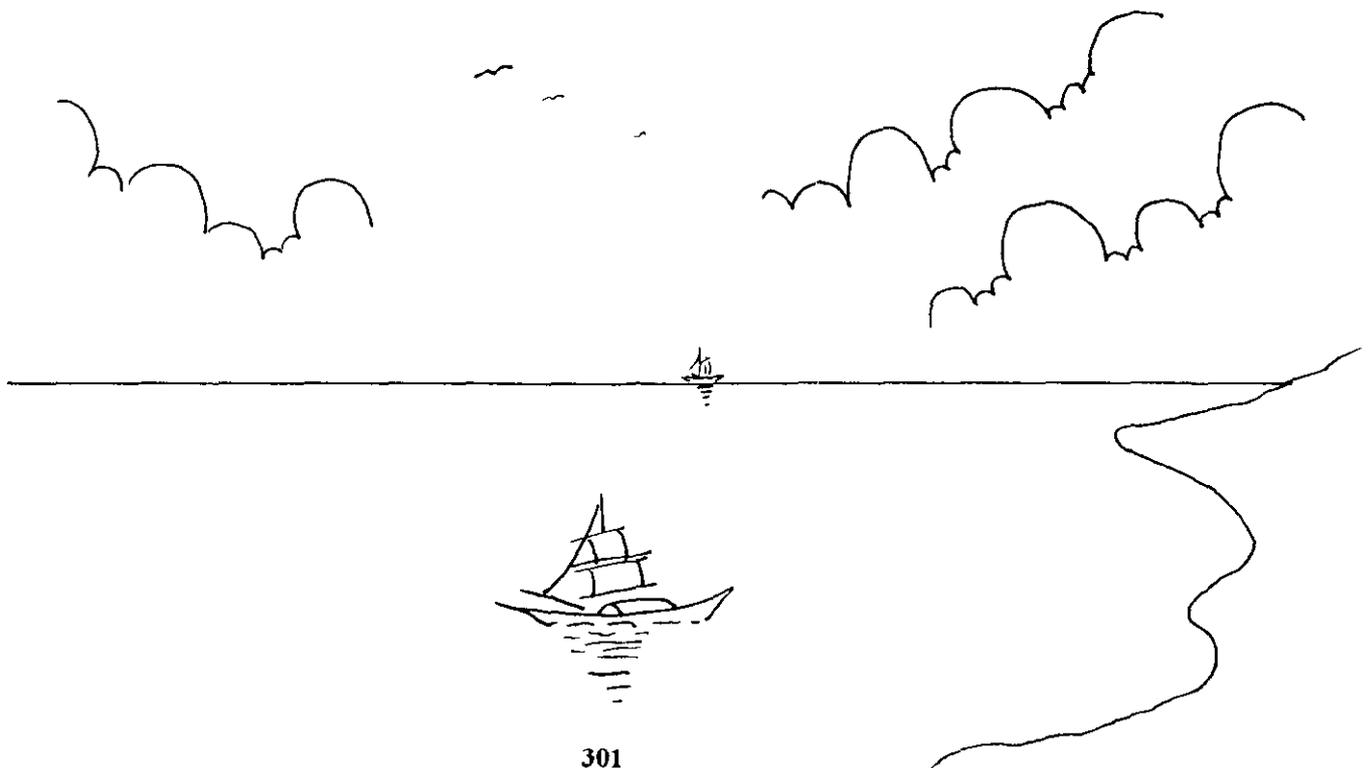
5.6 CONCLUSION

“At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, “Ask! What shall I give you?” And Solomon said: “I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in... Give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?” The speech pleased the Lord” (I King 3:5-10).

as well as

“And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore” (I King 4:29).

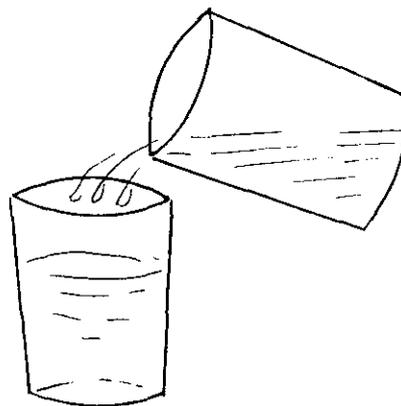
“Largeness of Heart”



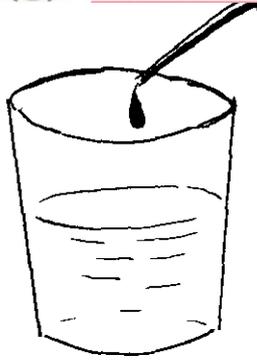
If some one gives you a lot of gifts but your house is too small and you leave the gifts outside under the sun and rain, they will get spoiled. So when God gave Solomon a gift “Wisdom” He also gave him another gift that was “the Largeness of heart”.

Wisdom without a largeness of heart can be very dangerous. The wisdom can be like a knife to cook or become a cruel knife to kill many people. For example: in the case of Hitler, Stalin, and Mao Ze-Dong. They were endowed with wisdom but without a largeness of heart. They killed millions of people. That is why God gave Solomon this extra gift “the largeness of heart”.

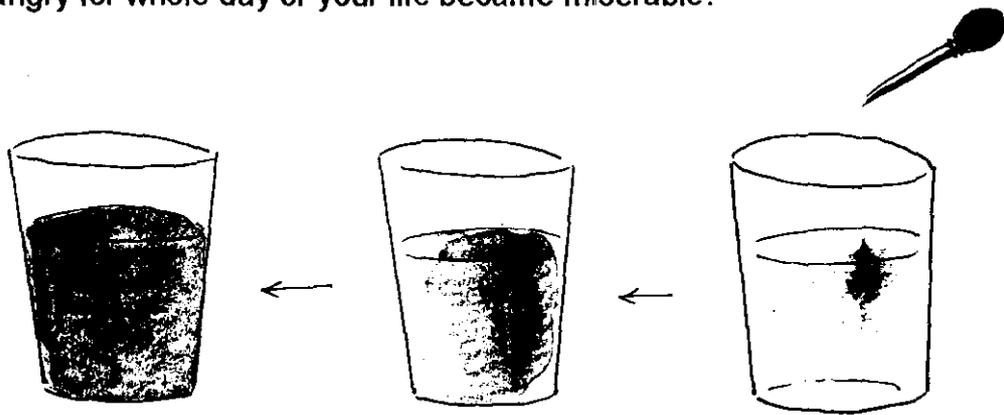
It is easy for us to accept one who is the same culture as our own, or language, but it is very difficult to accept one from a different culture, background, denominations and races from that of our own. Man is self-centred. The same like us is right but what is different is wrong. We love the one who loves us. When someone criticise us or condemn us, we hate that person.



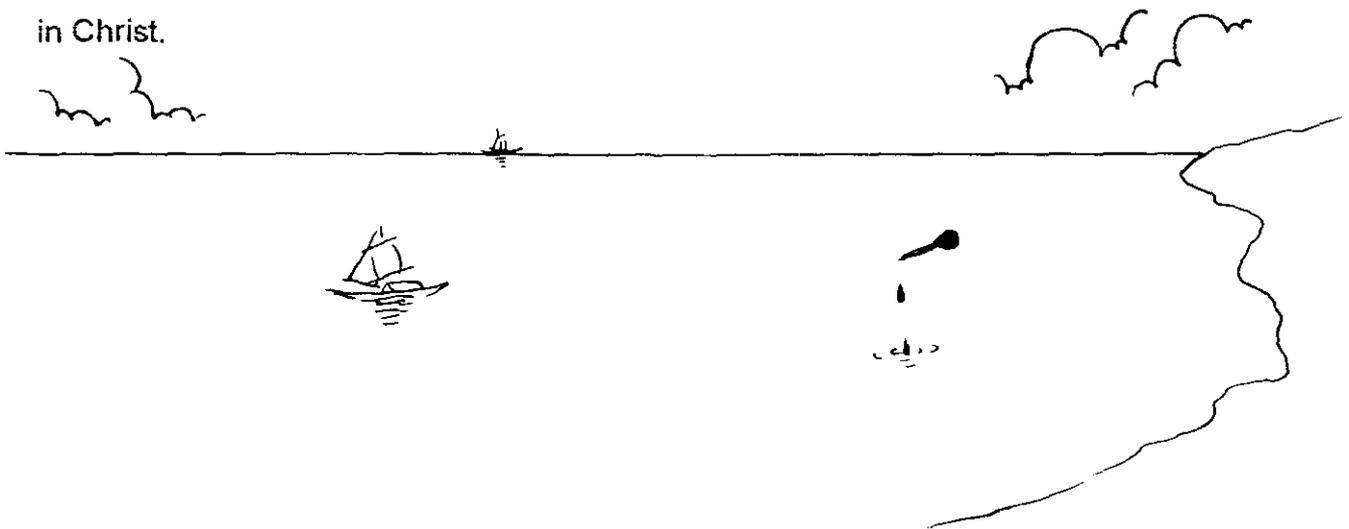
Pouring water into water doesn't change the colour -- like from same culture to same culture. When people praise you, one can easily accept them, but when your boss, or friend or wife disapproves, one gets hurt. One becomes angry, revengeful or even commit suicide.



If your heart is very narrow like a small glass, a drop of ink in it will blacken the water. This means that when someone says something hurtful then one becomes angry for whole day or your life became miserable.



If you throw a lot of ink into the ocean, do you think the ocean will become black? No. Why? Because the ocean is big. May the Lord give us largeness of heart so that we are able to accept those who are different, because without His help we are devoid of the ability to open up to each other. For Jesus' sake we are willing to forgive, understand, accept and become one in Christ.



CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

In this concluding Chapter the writer makes a few summary remarks about what was learnt through his missionary experience in Liberia and South Africa. An account is given of the goals developed as well as the changes brought about through his 20 years of ministry and study.

6.1 The Liberian Experience

6.1.1 The Power of the Gospel

Chiang and his wife planted a church in Polowu among the Gbandi. Chiang trained a group of disciples. One of these, a previous school principal became the pastor of the Polowu Church when the missionaries left Liberia in 1990. Throughout the 10 years of civil war the church continued with the daily morning devotions and nightly Bible Studies. Now, with peace restored, it seems as if the churches experience a revival. The people are hungry for the truth of the Word.

Research done in Gbandi indicated that about 70% of the Gbandi Christians were converted after they were healed from a specific disease. The love, faith and abundant life of Christians were also attractive to the people. In a few

years time the church has grown from 1 to 20 churches. Strong spiritual power evidenced in the vision was of utmost necessity.

6.1.2 Third World Missionaries

In the SIM Liberia headquarters Mr. John Shea once said to Chiang, “I am so glad to have Asian missionaries joining SIM. I found your culture closer to the black culture than the white culture. Chinese culture is also easier for local black people to accept. We hope more Chinese would come to Liberia and join our mission so that the Chinese can be a bridge between the White and the Black”.

In the more than one hundred years of service SIM has had in general only whites working amongst the blacks, just like there were only black and white TVs in the old days. In recent years, as the yellow race “Chinese” has joined, so SIM no longer features black and white TVs only, but have colour TVs also. As we are approaching the last days, we need to put more emphasis on intercultural and interdenominational missions, in order to beautify our work. For the sake of God's kingdom, we need to break through racial differences. What a beautiful unity it would be!

In the Gbandi tribe ministry Chiang learnt that “If we work among high class people we need to be clever, but when we work among simple people we should be humble”. There the locals don't look at your degree, no matter how high it might have been, but focus on your attitude towards them.

The second thing he learnt was that “when we stay in our own country, only our talent, or our expertise, is useful, the other parts of us seem to be of no use. However, working amongst the Gbandi tribe everything we have learnt before were very useful”.

The third thing he learned is that, this Gbandi people had helped to change his own self-image. He realised that his work is meaningful, useful and he has become a blessing to all the local people. To be a missionary brings out the best out of a person.

6.2 THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

6.2.1 Strategy for the Indian Mission in Lenasia

6.2.1.1 The God-given Strategy

Muslim evangelisation takes on a strong spiritual warfare. There are many difficulties and obstacles as well as strong resistance and opposition from the Muslim community itself. This leads to many Christians being persecuted – some even lose their lives. This ministry appears to be fruitless and hopeless, causing many missionaries and believers to become discouraged even to the point of giving up.

The Chiang family was new and alone in this mission field. But thank God He gave them a vision. The strategy unfolded step by step and in the process the

prophecies were fulfilled.

- Started a pastor's fraternal prayer meeting in 1994.
- In 1995 united the body of Christ through prayer for unity and revival.
- Trained home cell leaders since 1995.
- In 1996 started Daxina Prayer Mountain (and later others) for intercessory prayer for all the churches.
- In 1997 started a pastor's library for pastors.
- In 1998 started an Indian Church Newspaper.
- Taught in Faith Bible College since 1998.
- In 1998 started daily morning devotion with a group of brothers from different churches.
- In 1999 taught Bible in black high school.
- Organised a March for Jesus with Prayer Mountain partners from 1999.
- In 2001 established a new ICBM Bible College in Lenasia on tertiary level.
- Through the Prayer Mountain ministry started a counseling ministry.

In Chapters 4 and 5 the main emphases of these strategies were discussed. These were basically four: (a) Living among the people, (b) the emphasis on the church and the unity of Christians, (c) an emphasis on prayer and (d) teaching.

6.2.1.2 The Pastor's Pastor

The Indian people – even the Christian Indians – were divided. They did not accept each other. Different organisations tried to persuade the Indian churches to work together, but their efforts were in vain. God guided Chiang towards a new strategy that was to build friendship with the Indian pastors one at a time. This was possible because he lived among them.

One by one Chiang began building relationships with each of the churches. He played the role of a friend and a servant. He found that, for over half of the pastors, the church ministry was only a part-time job and many of them had no theological training. They were working alone and they needed a lot of encouragement and help. He hoped that eventually these churches might be strengthened and united together

He focused on the unity of the churches in Lenasia and in the nearby areas. Chiang started off by preaching in various Sunday services and by training Home Cell leaders, especially for the small churches. Realising that many of the pastors had few books to use in preparing their sermons, he set up a small library in his home to help the pastors.

Chiang also taught them how to use the computer to study the Bible and encouraged them to take Bible College courses. He prayed for and with them in person and on the telephone. When they were sick, when there was a funeral or a wedding, when the church had problems or crises, he was always there at their sides. After he had established an excellent relationship with the pastors, he was then invited to preach in 40 different churches and to train disciples in 15 of them. In each church, he spent 4 months in conducting a cell leader-training course.

Another new ministry for unity is the "March for Jesus". A large number of people from a variety of churches attended the Marches that were organised by a group of young mountain prayer warriors. This did much to foster unity among Christians.

Through this Indian ministry the writer learned how important is a servant attitude. The Indian people are quite opposite to the Chinese. The Chinese people respected the westerners, submitted to them and leant on them. The result was that the Chinese church took 180 years to be independent. But Indian churches seem to have learnt from Mr. Gandhi. They are inclined to reject outside leadership. When a missionary has taught them about 30% then they believe that they knew everything. They want to be independent. They are not humble, they think they can do better than white people. They are very proud and not willing to serve under anybody. To work among them one has to be humble with a servant attitude, otherwise one will not be able to cope with them.

Chiang thought that Indian men would not be able to go to the Prayer Mountain like the Koreans had done before. But the Indian people made it. They are the same as Korean Christians with their zeal for the Lord. This was wonderful and surprised the writer.

6.2.1.3 Prayer

The spiritual strategy followed naturally leading to prayer. This had the ingredients of:

- Personal prayer in a sustained way.
- Morning devotions with a group of friends. Every morning from 5 – 6 am they come together to study God's word and pray before going off to work. They are growing in the Lord and are on fire for Him. They also witness for Christ among their friends.
- The establishment of Prayer Mountains for common prayer on Saturday mornings at 6 am. Four Prayer Mountain groups have been established so far with a group of prayer warriors each who continue to pray faithfully. Another Prayer Mountain group is about to be started.

6.2.1.4 Teaching

In 1998 God opened a door for Chiang to start teaching at Faith Bible College. In 2000 God opened another door for him to teach at the International College

of Bible and Mission and the Moses Marian High School. In the latter the high school students are taught the word of God and the teachers are trained to teach the Bible to the students. There are 2 000 African students in this school. There is a lack of teachers to teach the word of God.

Theological training is needed for the growth and planting of churches. After the March for Jesus in 2000, Chiang encouraged the prayer warrior and several pastors to realise the need for establishing a higher standard and united the Bible College for all denominations on a tertiary level. In February 2001 a new ICBM Bible College was started in Lenasia.

Mention has already been made of the training given to cell group leaders in a number of Lenasia churches. This became the basis for renewal in many churches. But also Grace Chiang did much training among the women, especially by the in-service training of a number of ladies. In the past months, they have been working together with Grace on a regular basis. A few other sisters also joined in to do outreach work. They teach the Bible as well as doing follow-up work at the squatter camps, the drug areas. They are able to lead disciple-training courses and do visitation by themselves. One of the women from the Anglican Church has even started a women Bible study group in her own church.

6.3 THE FUTURE OF THE CHINESE CHURCHES

The principals of the Baptist Theological Seminary and the Dau Sen

Theological Seminary came to see Chiang and asked him to be their full time teacher. The future chairman of the Chinese CCCOWE (Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism) also asked him to work for the CCCOWE mission department. This organisation aims to move the Chinese Churches around the world for world mission. This vision is bigger than both Chiang's original plan and his geographic area.

Chinese churches have been silent for 50 years since the Communists took over because they had to go underground. Millions of intercessors had travelled in prayer for the long-delayed breakthrough. Now is the time of harvest. May the whole land be evangelised.

The Dragon is not only alive and awakened now but also has abandoned the isolationism that cut the Chinese people off from the rest of the world for centuries. This giant, with more than 1,2 billion people, is joining the world family of nations. China's new openness and turn outward to the West may well be the most significant single events of the 20th century (Dehoney 1988:13).

“We on the whole are using one common language, Mandarin, for the first time in our history. The roads are open for travel and commerce. It is the time for the dragon to receive the coming of the Lamb” (Dehoney 1969:7).

Dr. Peter Wagner said, “In 2025 AD the largest missionary sending country will

be China". God's might acts today in many remote places and is more exciting than the book of Acts itself. The Church of Jesus Christ in Mainland China has grown more than tenfold since the missionaries left at the end of the 1940s. In comparison, the Church in the free world of the West has had no real growth during the same period. (Adeney 1985:12).

We know that about 1 out of 5 of the world population is Chinese. If all the Chinese in the world were converted to Christianity, and if each converted Chinese can successfully evangelise four other people, then the entire world's population will become Christianised. The Holy Spirit may well choose this very fast route to spread His salvation to all the nations of the earth.

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