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Go Ye Into All the World

There are better places for high school grads to start adult life than college

Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. --Psalm 96:2, 3

We continue to be inundated with disturbing reports (from both left and right), suggesting that more than 70% of church-attending youth who enroll in college, will fall away from their faith practices by graduation. The same surveys claim that fewer than eight percent will return to their religious roots sometime down the road. This should tell us one of two things: Something is amiss in their church experience, or college is a very toxic environment.

Yesterday, at the invitation of one of our board members, we were treated to lunch and introduced to *InterCP*,¹ a non-denominational missions organization that focuses largely on the unreached people groups living in the 10/40 Window and wherever else the gospel has not been preached.

We heard from Pastor John Kang, who spent 10 years in Uzbekistan and started a number of dental clinics that are functioning today. He currently operates from InterCP headquarters in Sangju, Korea, and travels frequently to invigorate churches and pastors, as was the case yesterday. Kang shared an exciting report of the gospel ground game that is going on in some of the darkest places on earth—including church plantings in Muslim countries by, of all things, *college-age* missionaries.

InterCP, in fact, was started in 1983 by a few South Korean college students taking the Gospel to Turkey. It now has 50 branches in North America alone, and has expanded its global mission outreach with 1200 full-time gospel-preaching missionaries in a number of Muslim nations. Their goal, is to equip and send forth, 100,000 missionaries to the uttermost parts of the world.

So what and where is the 10/40 Window?

The 10/40 Window is the rectangular area of North Africa, the Middle East and Asia approximately between 10 degrees and 40 degrees latitude north of the equator. It is often called "The Resistant Belt" and includes the majority of the world's Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists. Home to some 4.89 billion individuals residing in approximately 8,202 distinct people groups, an estimated 62% of the population is unreached. Among the larger unreached groups are the Shaikh, Yadava, Turks, Moroccan Arabs, Pashtun, Jat and Burmese.

According to InterCP literature, "...until the beginning of the 20th century...there was no significant disagreement over what "mission" and "evangelism" meant. Mission was understood to be the ministry of witnessing the gospel cross-culturally, while evangelism was the ministry of witnessing the gospel within a culture.

In 1928, a white paper called "Secular Civilization and Christian Task" was introduced at the International Missionary Council in Jerusalem. It suggested that the term "mission" should be

expanded to include all ministries and functions of the Church. The author thought that mission should not solely be about cross-cultural evangelism as the power of the gospel alone was feared to be insufficient.

“As the scope of mission was expanded to include the response of the church to the complex demands of industrialized modern societies,” writes Dr. Paul Choi, “the emphasis on mercy ministry and social action grew while the importance of witnessing the gospel decreased. As a result, [fewer] people committed to foreign mission work that directly involved evangelism. Furthermore, the ministry of taking the gospel across high-risk or dangerous cultural boundaries—the more narrow and traditional definition of mission—was significantly demoted in priority.”²

As we listened to some of the miracles occurring in some very dark foreign lands, we couldn’t help but think of the last thing Jesus said to his disciples: “*Go and make disciples of all nations...*” Indeed, the importance of cross-cultural, cross-language mission work was certainly emphasized when the Holy Spirit fell upon the 120 disciples on the day of Pentecost and the gospel was preached in all languages.

One of the half-dozen pamphlets we were given, speaks forcefully and convincingly of the need and urgency for the Church to go into all the world. The argument put forth is that:

“Mission is emphasized throughout the Bible because mission is closely linked with the completion of history and the return of Jesus. Jesus will return when the gospel is preached to all nations (Mt 24:14). Jesus’ Great Commission is the completion of the kingdom of God and the fulfillment of God’s purpose in history. God’s kingdom is not completed when one people group becomes 100% Christian. It is completed when the gospel is preached to all nations.

Jesus never promised that a particular people group would become 100% Christian. In actuality, history shows that when a high percentage of a population becomes Christian, the church becomes secularized and corrupt. It becomes full of nominal, cultural, and superficial Christians... The church can appear alive on the outside but [be] dead on the inside.”³

Pastor and Bible commentator David Guzik, says that “Jesus shows that the world will remain divided right up until the end, and the Church will not reform the world, ushering in the kingdom. Instead, there will be both the wicked and the just until the end of the age.”

The start point for ministry with InterCP, begins with nine weekly training sessions at a local *Vision School* to prepare for a short-term missions trip of approximately two weeks. Apart from airfare, costs for the two weeks of ministry are minimal. Eastern cultures are much as they were in ancient times. Whereas in the West, we post “NO SOLICITORS” signs on our doors, Eastern residents are more welcoming. A meal and a place to rest are frequently offered, especially when the host is curious about the “Good News.” Seriously.

A 22-year old student seated next to this writer yesterday, is just back from a year in Egypt where he and a companion launched a thriving church. He said when he finishes his studies at Bates College in Tacoma, he will be headed back to his flock in Egypt as quickly as possible. He loves and misses his children in the Lord.

While Koreans are endeavoring to send 100,000 missionaries to foreign lands, they tell us our Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ feel challenged to send forth **one million** missionaries into all the world.

So, our question is this: Where is your high school grad most likely to hear and respond to the Lord’s call, and become equipped for kingdom work? At XYZ University, or in God’s vast harvest field?

Rick Forcier

¹ InterCP, 10/40 Window Mission, www.intercp.org. Email: btjkorea@btjkorea.org

² Choi, Paul, Ph.D., president and professor of comparative culture at Korea University of International Studies.

³ “Cornerstone Magazine,” Articles from the Global Times