

Discovering Hidden Treasures

By: Brad Thurston

USING MISSIONARIES AS GIFTS TO THE LOCAL CHURCH

As I reflect upon my life, I am grateful to many people who have profoundly impacted me through sermons, books, discussions, or simply by observing their lifestyle and attitudes. Malcolm Smith, Dr. Wesley Duewel, Dr. Günter Krallmann, Reinhard Bonnke, Dr. Mark Rutland, Dr. Mark Buntain, Loren Cunningham, Ross Paterson, and Doug Gehman rank among many others whom I greatly respect. These men have different ministries, priorities and methodologies, but they all have this in common: they are missionaries. Working cross culturally has given them a richness of experience, insight and a unique understanding of the Scriptures and people. They have developed skills which are an invaluable asset to churches in any culture. Missionaries who have spent time confronting the human and demonic in ungodly cultures can become more sensitive to such influences that try to invade Godly lives. This is true of most successful long term missionaries I know.

I am repeatedly impressed by the quality of missionaries sent out Globe Missionary Evangelism and Globe Europe. These men and women are a hidden treasure, a resource which local pastors could (and ought to!) take advantage of. It is wonderful and inspiring when churches invite missionaries to participate in their mission conferences to promote missionary service. It would be even better for the churches if they were to incorporate the ministries of those missionaries into the life of their church! This could be done by having missionaries teach seminars in their area of expertise, sharing with church leaders, and or conducting evangelistic campaigns in the community.

Here are 8 ideas of how a missionary could help a local pastor and church to grow and become more effective in their ministry:

1. Building teams cross culturally is quite a feat, and there is much which leaders could learn from missionaries on such topics. Mentoring seminars could help develop leadership skills and character.
2. Creativity in evangelism is how missionaries learn to grow churches on the mission fields. A creative evangelism seminar could be very helpful to a local church.

3. Apostles are gifted at solving difficult problems, especially those regarding church structure and issues involving personality conflicts. Learning to ask the right questions is an effective tool in coaching. Missionaries often have different approaches to asking difficult questions which could be very valuable in a leadership development seminar.
4. Missionaries are subjected to many unique pressures in their marriage and family life which must be overcome if they are to have an effective ministry. A seminar of such topics could be most helpful in many churches I know.
5. Prayer is the lifeblood of any successful missionary. Their experiences in prayer and learning the ways of God could encourage many to grow in this area of their lives.
6. Understanding a call to ministry. This is a struggle many young people face where missionaries could help by sharing their testimony and experience.
7. Youth ministries in churches could be radically vitalized with a special mission's boot camp run by experienced missionaries.
8. Building faith for the supernatural. This is an area where missionaries have learned to live in order to survive. As a result their testimonies are life-giving and faith building.

As you plan your church year, consider involving your missionaries in the life, growth and development of the church, not just being present at a mission's conference. In this way, you build even closer bonds between the church and the ministry in the foreign field, as well as gaining the benefit of other Five-Fold Ministries in your church.

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