

A Giving Check-Up

By Bill Moberly

Ideas From Churches, September 2025

Jesus' Command



Jesus' command to His church to *"go and make disciples of all nations"* (*ethne*) in Matthew 28:19 is not a suggestion or just a great idea! It's marching orders from the Risen Christ to His Church to take the Good News to *"every nation, tribe, people and language."*

How is that going for you? Have you lost focus on the heart of Jesus' command? Dr. Carl Braaten (right) put it this way back in 1990, and the words still ring true:

"We used to speak of missions as 'foreign' missions. There was no doubt in the mind of the missionaries what they were supposed to do. They were to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to start new churches. And they did it with an eschatological perspective. There was something gloriously right about that. The gospel was the essential core of the Christian mission. Anyone familiar with the scene knows that missionaries were not worrying over much about the souls of the natives to the neglect of their bodies. They became sacrificially involved in health care, in founding hospitals and schools of all kinds, in agricultural and industrial arts, in literary and publication projects. All these activities were seen as auxiliaries of the gospel. They practiced 'holistic' mission."



Holistic Mission

It is sometimes said that the contemporary concept of mission is "holistic". There is a big hole in holistic mission, however when it cuts out the core of the gospel. (Emphasis mine.)

Yes, the mission of the gospel is uniquely the church's."



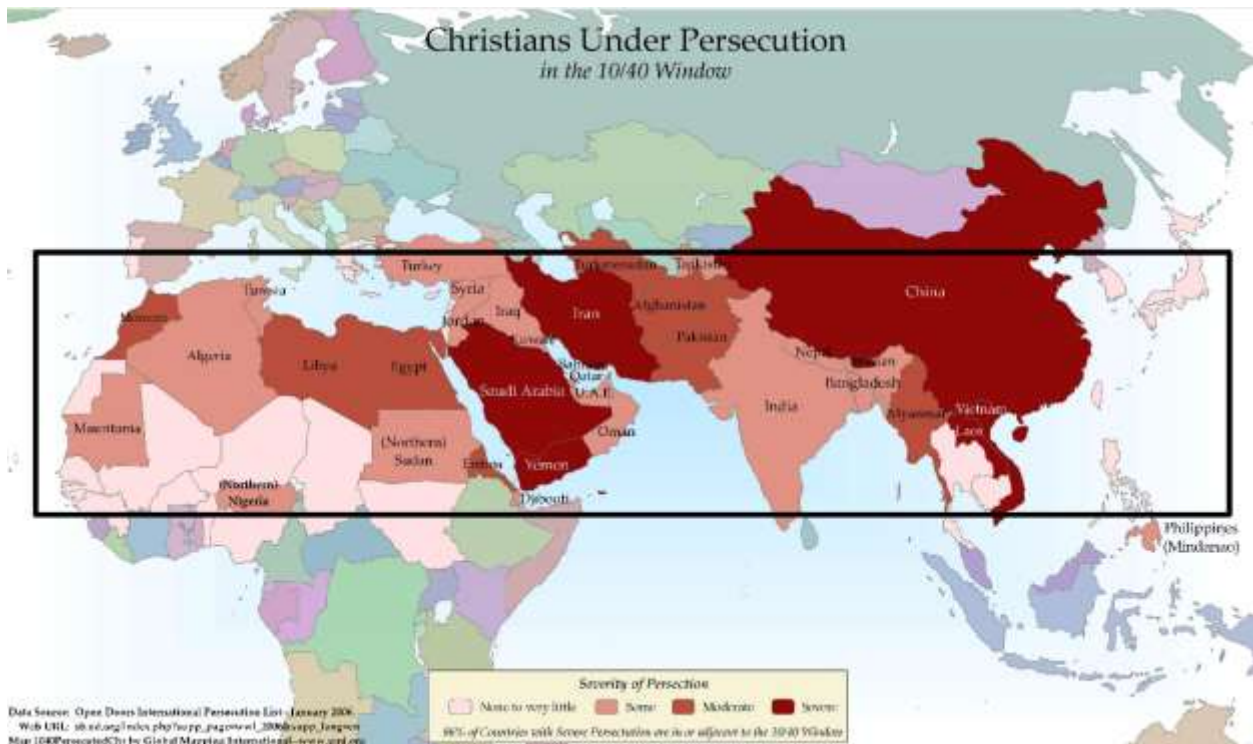
Does this conviction inform all of your benevolence as it goes out from the church locally, regionally and globally? Is there a clear and tangible connection with organizations that are preaching the Gospel and making disciples?

Does any of your congregational benevolence go to non-Christian organizations, or to organizations that explicitly state they do not preach the Gospel?

If it's been a while since you have looked over in detail how and where your congregation gives, no time like the present?!

Tools to See the Big Picture

Here are some questions we use at ALWM to help congregational leaders dig a little deeper to see the big picture. Whether you use the tools here, or approach it another way, it is worth taking time to seriously consider *how* and *what* you and your congregation are actually doing in response to Jesus' global mission call!



1

STEP ONE:

For each ministry, project, mission agency, or missionary your congregation supports, answer the following questions:

1. Amount of Support Monthly or Annually _____

2. Geographical Area of Ministry Activity

- ☐ Local
- ☐ Regional
- ☐ National
- ☐ Global

* For Global Missions, answer questions 3-5

* For local / domestic mission, proceed to question 6

3. For Global Work

a. Country _____

b. Reached _____ or Unreached _____

(Missiologists define unreached as less than 2% evangelical Christian. Visit Joshua Project and look up the country for information: % Christian, other Religions, and # of unreached people groups, etc.)

c. Mission Agency

No ____ Yes ____

(if Yes) Please list here: _____

For example: World Mission Prayer League (WMPL), Lutheran Bible Translators (LBT), ALWM, etc.)

d. Do you support: The agency mission

or

e. Western Missionary (name) _____

or

f. Indigenous Pastors / Global Workers (name) _____

4. Ministry Type

- ☐ Gospel Focus: Bible Translation, Proclamation & Disciple making, Church planting, Leadership training, etc.
- ☐ Human Need: Medical, Human Trafficking, orphans, education, etc.
- ☐ Disaster Relief
- ☐ Combination of the above.

(Note: unless a ministry specifically says they purposefully share the Gospel as they work to meet human need, they probably do not. For example, Lutheran World Relief explicitly

states at their website that they “do not evangelize”. One of my supporting churches discovered that the quilts they used to make and send via LWR *could not include* a note saying, “*this is given in the love of Jesus Christ by friends at St. John Lutheran Church.*”)

5. Missionaries & Indigenous Global Workers.

- a. Denomination _____
- b. Sent by whom (agency, denomination, etc.) _____
- c. Are visits by your Pastor and/or Short-term mission teams encouraged / welcome? _____
- d. Do they communicate regularly with the congregation? How often? Visits? _____
- e. Do they provide financial information when requested? _____

6. For Local & Domestic Ministry

- a) Non-Profit organization / ministry name (Habitat for Humanity, crisis pregnancy center, food pantry, etc.) _____
- b) Is it a Christian Ministry? Yes _____ No _____
- c) Do they purposefully share the Gospel through their involvement with people? _____
- d) Are volunteers welcomed? Needed? _____
- e) Do they communicate regularly with the congregation? How often? Visits? _____
- f) Do they provide financial information when requested? _____

2

STEP TWO:

Gather together information collected from Step One for all of your current mission support / benevolence.

- 1. What percentage of your current financial support is Global?
- 2. How much, if any, is invested in the Unreached & Unevangelized?
- 3. What percentage of current financial support is local / domestic?
- 4. What percentage of current financial support is goes to Gospel-Focused, Kingdom Building ministry?
- 5. Do the above results reflect your core values as a congregation? Why or why not?
- 6. Are your criteria for distributing benevolence rooted in Biblical principles and commands? Consider this alternative or expanded definition of Benevolence:

“Our congregation’s Investment in carrying out the Great Commission (Go & Make Disciples) & the Great Commandment (Love your neighbor as yourself).”

The above questions come from ALWM’s Benevolence Assessment and Review Tool (BART).



Need more help determining your church’s benevolence plan?

Check out our Harvest Focus Workshop!

<https://www.alwm.org/workshops>



Rev. Bill Moberly, director of Awakening Lives to World Missions (ALWM), helps churches with global mission outreach. He authored *Igniting a Passion for Missions: A Guide for Church Leaders*. He and wife Sally have 7 children, 23 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. They have traveled to 23 countries to share the Gospel and equip leaders.

Contact Bill at: pastorbill@alwm.org

Links:

Braaten: <https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/braaten-carl-e-1929>

ALWM: <https://www.alwm.org/>

Joshua Project: <https://joshuaproject.net/>

WMPL: <https://wmpl.org/>

LBT: <https://lbt.org/>

LWR: <https://lwr.org/>

Habitat: <https://www.habitat.org/>

BART: <https://www.alwm.org/bart>

Workshop: <https://www.alwm.org/workshops>