

*Unleashing the Brazilian Evangelical Missionary Force:
The 'Business as Mission' Model as an Integrated Approach for Frontier Ministry*

It has become increasingly recognized in the Christian missions movement over the past three decades or so that a monumental shift – what Lamin Sanneh of Yale Divinity School refers to as a “Copernican Shift”¹ – has taken place in the global center of gravity of Christianity. For example, in the 1970’s, Catholic missiologist Walbert Buhmann wrote of the coming of the “third church” – the church of the third world in the third millennium² – with the Mediterranean church of the first centuries after Christ being the “first church,” and the northern and western European (and later the North American church) being the “second church.” Among Protestants, Andrew Walls of the University of Edinburgh has been at the forefront, since the 1970’s, of the study of the emergence of this so-called “third church,” which he refers to as “New Southern Christianity.”³ Only slightly more recently did missiologists begin to ponder the astounding missiological consequences. For example, in 1986, Tracey K. Jones, Jr. wrote that

Fifty years ago no one would have anticipated that much of the intellectual and moral leadership shaping the Christian mission in the world today would come out of the churches of Latin America, Africa, and Asia; it has been a shock to the Christians in North America to discover that the numerical center of Christianity is shifting from the northern hemisphere to the southern hemisphere.⁴

¹ Lamin Sanneh. “Global Christianity and the Re-Education of the West.” *Christian Century Magazine*, 19 July, 1995. Online. Accessed on 4 April, 2005.

<http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1058/is_n22_v112/ai_17099805/print>

² Walbert, Buhmann, *The Coming of the Third Church*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1978).

³ Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 68.

⁴ Tracey K. Jones, Jr., “History’s Lessons for Tomorrow’s Mission.” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 10:2: electronic edition, April 1986, 50-53.

More recently, scholars like Samuel Escobar⁵, Philip Jenkins⁶ and Dana Robert⁷ have documented and commented convincingly on the importance of the shift to the south.⁸

The empirical underpinning that documents this phenomenal shift has been compiled largely by David Barrett and his *World Christian Encyclopedia* colleagues. For our purposes, we will consult Barrett's "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission," which has appeared in each year's January edition of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* since 1985. That year, Barrett projected that by 2000, 62.6% of global Christianity would be comprised of adherents from Latin America, Africa, Asia and Oceania; that is to say, the "third church." Adherents in Europe and North America would comprise a mere 37.4% of global Christianity. In his 2000 table, he reported that the percentages were actually 60.3 and 39.7, respectively. He was only two points off! Imagine how convenient life would be if meteorologists could even begin to approach this level of accuracy!

Of course, many of us in the missions community can validate through personal experience not only the phenomenal quantitative growth of the emerging church, but the qualitative growth as well. Who of us has not been challenged, impressed, encouraged, convicted or humbled by some encounter with the amazing vitality of the believers in the emerging church? Both types of growth give rise to astounding missiological consequences, principle among them the fact that the missionary force that will complete the task of world evangelization is

⁵ Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel From Everywhere to Everyone*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

⁶ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. (NY: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁷ Dana L. Robert, "Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since 1945," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 24:2: electronic edition, April 2000, 50-58.

⁸ It should be noted that while much of the growth of Christianity in the so-called "global south" has, indeed, occurred in the southern hemisphere, much of it has not – for example in Central America, northern South America, much of sub-Saharan Africa and virtually all of Asia where Christianity has grown, lie in the northern hemisphere – and this is cause for some confusion. Thus, for purposes of clarity, I will employ Buhlmann's historically (rather than geographically) rooted moniker of "third church," as well as the ever-useful tag "emerging church."

increasingly to be found in places other than where it was found during the past two millennia.

As Larry Pate and Lawrence Keyes observed, back in 1986,

It is becoming clear to most missiologists who look across the mountain ranges of the future that the "feet of those who bring good news" are rapidly changing color. New streams of brown, black, yellow, and red feet are joining with the white to proclaim the salvation message. The gospel no longer masquerades as a white person's good news about a white, Western imperialistic God. It is Koreans-to-Nepal, Singaporeans-to-Nigeria, Brazilians-to-North Africa good news! More and more, the news is spreading from every people to every people.⁹

While Christianity in much of North America and Europe stagnates, vibrant new churches are taking root around the globe, churches that are increasingly providing the next generation of cross-cultural "good news" bearers. The Brazilian Evangelical church is an excellent case in point, in part because it is, to a large degree, representative of other emerging churches. According to Larry Kraft, a specialist in Brazilian church growth, Brazil was only about 1% Evangelical in 1900.¹⁰ By 1970 that figure had grown to just over 5%, and by 1990, just over 12%.¹¹ By 2000, according to the Brazilian Census Bureau,¹² Evangelicals comprised over 15% of Brazil's population, for a total of over 27 million people, making it the third, fourth or fifth largest Evangelical church in the world.¹³ While the absolute numbers differ considerably

⁹ Larry D. Pate and Lawrence E. Keyes, "Emerging Missions in a Global Church," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 10:4: electronic edition, October 1986, 156-161.

¹⁰ Larry W. Kraft and Stephanie K. Kraft, "Evangelical Revival vs. Social Reformation: An Analysis of the Growth of the Evangelical Church in Brazil from 1905 to the Present." (Unpublished master's degree paper. Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1995), 24.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² <www.ibge.gov.br>

¹³ This ranking is frustratingly difficult to ascertain with any level of certainty for two reasons. First, of the five largest Evangelical churches in the world, a fairly accurate accounting seemingly can only be made for the USA and Brazil. It is much more difficult in the cases of China, India and Nigeria. Second, definitions and research methodology vary widely. Three of the best sources are Patrick Johnstone's *Operation World* Database, David Barrett's *World Christian Encyclopedia* and the accompanying *World Christian Trends*, and the CIA World

from other emerging churches, the percentages do not. And the percentages reveal phenomenal church growth.

In addition to this emerging pool of potential cross-cultural missionaries, there are many qualitative reasons to consider Christians from emerging churches as possibly *better* missionaries than North Americans and Europeans. Again, we will use Brazil as a broadly representative example. Just consider the following reasons to mobilize Brazilians to join in God's global mission:

- **Ecclesiastically:** As we've already mentioned, with over 27 million adherents, the Brazilian Evangelical church is huge, a force to be mobilized
- **Spiritually:** Brazilian believers are vivacious and spiritually attuned, both to God and to other realities of the spiritual world
- **Culturally:** Brazilians are relational, gregarious people who generally have much more in common culturally with the unreached peoples of the world than do the traditional sending nations from North America and Europe
- **Ethnically:** Brazil is an ethnically diverse country. From the early miscegenation of the "big three" – the indigenous peoples, the Iberian peoples and the African peoples – to the more recent arrival of millions of immigrants from the Middle East (Arabs and Jews), Japan, China, Italy, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, etc., Brazilians are accustomed to living in close proximity with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds
- **Historically:** Brazil was never a "colonizer" in any sense of the word, but rather was colonized, holding this in common with many of the unreached nations of the world

Factbook. However, there are no standardized definitions, and the researcher ends up with a shopping cart full of domains such as "Christian," "Protestant," "Evangelical," "Pentecostal," "Independent," "Great Commission Christians," etc., often with varying definitions, with huge areas of overlap and with no objective mechanism by which to compare them accurately. My understanding of the data indicates that, while it is difficult to ascertain the exact ranking of the five countries with the largest populations of biblically defined believers in, and followers of, the Lord Jesus Christ, we can determine that 1) China and the USA occupy the first two positions (not necessarily in that order) and, 2) Brazil, India and Nigeria occupy positions three through five (not necessarily in that order).

- **Politically:** Brazil is traditionally a neutral country and has caused very little offense around the globe (no one burns the Brazilian flag in the streets . . . except maybe Germany after the world cup!!!)
- **Economically:** Despite recent small economic setbacks, Brazil is an increasingly strong player on the global scene
- **Biblically:** We must remember that God has called *all* His people, His *global* family, not just the Western church, to take His glory to the nations
- **And don't forget:** Brazilians are the best soccer players in the world, and the world loves soccer, "the beautiful game," as Pelé called it. Soccer, and many other things distinctly or uniquely Brazilian, open doors of opportunity in places where "Westerners" cannot freely go, or will not be effective if they do go.

This dynamic combination of the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the Brazilian church begs the question, "How is the Brazilian Evangelical church doing on the cross-cultural missions scene?" First let me preface my observations by saying that, for the past ten years, I have invested much sweat and tears in the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement - as the co-founder and executive director of a cross-cultural missions organization, as an adjunct missions professor at two seminaries and at other training centers and courses, and as a speaker and writer. If I seem at all critical of the movement that I've dedicated myself to for the past decade, my motivation derives from love and concern and a genuine desire to see the Brazilian church become all that God intends her to be in His global mission and for the sake of His global glory. I recognize that all movements have their "issues"; it is not my intention to compare movements (for I could just as well be asking how it is that American Evangelical churches – probably still the world's largest Evangelical church, in the world's richest nation, and with 200 years of experience to boot – are fielding under 50,000 fulltime cross-cultural workers today), nor is it to

be unnecessarily critical of the Brazilian missions movement; my intention is to offer, the Lord willing, discernment and insight, based on firsthand experience, as well as research, into how Brazilian Evangelical Christians can best do what God has called them to do.

So what about the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement? Well, there is some good news to be found. The Evangelical church in Brazil increasingly recognizes the special role in world missions to which God has called her, along with other Latin American churches. This realization was perhaps best expressed by Luis Bush, then president of COMIBAM, the Ibero-American Missionary Cooperation,¹⁴ at the March 1987 COMIBAM congress, which took place in São Paulo and united more than 3000 delegates, about a thousand of them from Brazil. In his opening comments, Bush declared that “From a mission field Latin America has become a mission force.”¹⁵ This missions awareness can further be seen in the advent of the Brazilian Congress on Missions. There have been four congresses to date. The first one, in Caxambu, Brazil, in 1993, was influenced by the Third Latin American Congress on Evangelization (CLADE), which took place the year before in Quito and whose final document declared that “the Holy Spirit has developed a new missionary awareness in Latin America,” and that “the church in Latin America must assume its responsibility in world evangelization fully and without delay.”¹⁶

Perhaps the best indicator of the growing awareness of, and involvement in, cross-cultural missionary activity, is numerical, and can be seen in the growth of the number of Brazilian evangelical mission agencies and missionaries. Although a handful of Brazilian

¹⁴ COMIBAM stands for Cooperación Misionera Iberoamericana. It is a partnership of Latin American mission agencies. See <www.comibam.org>

¹⁵ Quoted in Oswaldo Prado, “A New Way of Sending Missionaries: Lessons from Brazil.” *Missiology: An International Review*. (Vol. 33, No. 1, January 2005), 52.

¹⁶ From William D. Taylor, ed., *Global Missiology for the 21st Century: The Iguassu Dialogue*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), 364.

“foreign missionaries” were sent during the first seven decades of the 20th century, the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement is generally considered to have been born in the 1970’s.¹⁷ In that decade, when the first evangelical cross-cultural missionaries began to trickle out of the country, they often found themselves in the position of a William Carey or an Adoniram Judson, having to establish the very mission agencies that would send them.¹⁸ Also in that decade, the first two genuinely Brazilian interdenominational mission agencies were founded, Betel Brasileiro in 1972, and Missão Antioquia in 1976.¹⁹ By 1984, there were enough agencies that the Association of Brazilian Transcultural Missions (AMTB) was founded²⁰ to foster vision and a spirit of partnership for cross-cultural missions. The most recent available data²¹, by researcher Ted Limpic, indicates that today there are approximately 100 associated member agencies (most, but not all, of which truly work cross-culturally, and some of which are actually international mission organizations that have operations in Brazil). That is up from 88 in 1996.²² Together, as of 2001, these organizations fielded 2803 cross-cultural workers (up dramatically from 1796 in 1996²³, and 880 in 1989²⁴) with 2055 working outside of Brazil. In addition, there are dozens, if not hundreds, of other small agencies not associated with the AMTB, as well as numerous local churches that send missionaries directly or employ a “church-to-church” sending model. Patrick

¹⁷ Bertil Ekstöm, in *Modelos Missionários Brasileiros para o Século XXI*, the manual for the 2nd Brazilian Congress on Missions, 9-13 November, 1998, 96.

¹⁸ Tim Halls, “The Missionary movement from Latin America.” *Latin America Mission* website, 12 November 2003. Accessed on 8 April 2005. <<http://www.lam.org/view.html?id=265>>

¹⁹ Ekstom, p. 96.

²⁰ According to the AMTB’s page on the Infobrasil website. Accessed on 8 April 2005.

<<http://www.infobrasil.org/amtbt/index.htm>>. While 1984 seems to be the year that the association began to function in earnest, according to Bertil Ekstöm (in *Modelos Missionários Brasileiros para o Século XXI*, the manual for the 2nd Brazilian Congress on Missions, 9-13 November, 1998, p. 97) the association actually was formed in 1974.

²¹ <http://www.infobrasil.org/agen/ing/consulta-2001/bra/_resum.htm>. Accessed on 8 April 2005.

²² <http://www.infobrasil.org/agen/ing/consulta-1996/bra/_resum.htm>. Accessed on 8 April 2005.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ As reported in *Modelos Missionários Brasileiros para o Século XXI*, the manual for the 2nd Brazilian Congress on Missions, 9-13 November, 1998, p. 5.

Johnstone puts the total number of Brazilian mission agencies at 132,²⁵ with the total number of Evangelical missionaries being either 4754, which he reports in the Brazil section of *Operation World*, or 5925, which he reports in the Brazil section of the *Operation World* database, contained on the *Operation World* CD-ROM.²⁶ Of the 5925 missionaries reported in the database, 4160 of these work cross-culturally, with 2229 of those working in Brazil, and 1931 outside of Brazil.

So the good news is that there are, very possibly, *over* 150 Brazilian cross-cultural mission agencies, fielding *over* 4000 cross-cultural missionaries, reflecting a significant increase over the past 15 years. This can, by many standards, be considered positive and exciting news, especially in light of Brazil's political and economic realities over the past three decades. But the bad news – if not bad, at least disheartening – is that there are *only* about 150 Brazilian cross-cultural mission agencies, fielding *only* about 4000 cross-cultural missionaries and, according to Limpic's data, only about 420 of those – that's less than 15% – are working in the 10/40 Window. *Should we be further along?* Very possibly. After all, 150 agencies and 4000 missionaries is paltry for a church of 27 million people. According to Johnstone's data,²⁷ the Brazilian Evangelical church ranks sixth in sending cross-cultural missionaries in absolute terms, but only thirteenth if the measurement is the number of churches necessary for the sending of each missionary.²⁸ *Could we be further along?* Absolutely! And *we will be*, as we increasingly develop and employ better ministry models, contextual models that take into consideration both the developmental/historical realities of the Brazilian Evangelical church and the economic

²⁵ And, confusingly, at 139 and 155, depending upon where the data is reported. He puts the number at 132 in the Brazil section of *Operation World*, 139 in Appendix Four and 155 in the *Operation World* Database on CD-ROM.

²⁶ Patrick Johnstone, *Operation World*, CD Version.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Which, in Brazil's case, is 14.5 churches per missionary. Finland ranks number one at 1.5 churches per missionary.

realities of Brazil itself, and their accompanying challenges. It is my intention, then, to propose a model that will propel the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement further, faster. But is there really a need for a new model? What kind of model should it be?

After a decade of helping build a Brazilian cross-cultural sending agency which focuses on the Turkic, Kurdish and Arabic Muslim world, I'd like to suggest that the answer to these questions has to do, in large part, with wineskins. That is to say, we have been using old models in a new reality (a Copernican reality!), models that simply do not fit the Brazilian – and much of the emerging church – context. In all fairness to the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement – to which I continue to joyfully and wholeheartedly dedicate my fulltime energies – the missionaries that helped establish Evangelical Christianity in Brazil over the past one hundred and fifty years – and for which I and my colleagues are eternally grateful – did a less than stellar job in equipping the fledgling church to be what Paul Hiebert and others have called “self-theologizing,”²⁹ – there is no comprehensive Brazilian Evangelical theology of missions to be found.³⁰ Neither did many of the foreign missionaries effectively practice what Hiebert calls “critical contextualization,”³¹ at least not when it came to facilitating the development of contextualized models to enable Brazilians to do effective cross-cultural ministry, which is, of course, a key component – called “self-propagating” or “self-extending” in Venn and Anderson’s Three Self model³² – of a biblical, healthy, indigenous church planting movement. So the 150 or so mission agencies – most of which have only a handful of workers and are struggling for their very existence – have the historical cards stacked against them. They are trying to overcome

²⁹ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1985), .

³⁰ To be sure, theologies of mission have been developed elsewhere within the broader Latin world, namely, the Spanish speaking world. Notable work has been done by Orlando Costas, René Padilla and Samuel Escobar, among other. Brazilians, however, have little affinity with Spanish-speaking Latin Americans.

³¹ Paul G. Hiebert, “Critical Contextualization.” *Missiology: An International Review* (Vol. 12, No. 3, July 1984), 287-296.

huge obstacles using a model that is simply not working for them. Granted, there are variations, but they are derived from the same fundamental model. What is that model? Let's call it the "Professional Missionary Model" or PMM.

Mike McLoughlin provides a helpful description of the PMM:

The well beaten path of the modern missions movement is the way of the supported worker. One often hears inspiring testimonies of zealous Christians who "laid down" their secular employment to enter missions "fulltime." The professional missionary with a Bible School diploma and technical training in development is the epitome of a successful missions strategy. He or she is also the spiritual icon of the Church, held up as an example of counting the cost and a model of spirituality. However, in the history of the Church the professional missionary is a recent phenomenon. During its first four hundred years of existence, the Church grew from being an obscure religious sect of Judaism to the dominant religious influence of the world principally through people who lived their faith in the marketplace.³³

I would add that there is very substantial evidence to support the contention that Christians who took the Gospel to "the ends of the earth" throughout the Middle Ages (the Nestorians, for example) and right up through the Reformation period (the Moravians, for example) and into the 19th century (the Basel Mission, among others), like the Christians of the first four centuries, also did so in connection with their business and trade endeavors.³⁴

The professional missionary model, then, is typically employed by someone who has sensed a calling from God to work in fulltime cross-cultural ministry and, in order to do so, has received some sort of theological and/or missiological training (very possibly based on the

³² See Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church*, 1953.

³³ In "Back to the Future of Missions: The Case for Marketplace Ministry." Accessed on 11 April 2005. <http://www.scruples.org/web/articles/Back%20to%20the%20Future%20of%20Missions%20VI.htm#_Toc487092753>.

counsel of his well-intentioned pastor). In addition, this person either receives a salary from a denominational mission board or raises his or her own support as a missionary of an interdenominational sending agency. As McLoughlin points out, this model has developed fairly recently, and I believe not coincidentally, concurrently with the age of industrialization. This model has worked for two hundred years in industrialized nations that have Judeo-Christian principles of giving ingrained in their cultural fabric and whose people have disposable incomes. This is a staggeringly different reality than that of most emerging churches, where giving to noble causes such as missions is not inculcated virtually from birth, and where the point would be largely moot since there is very little to give. An additional factor that exacerbates the support-raising problem in countries like Brazil is the centuries-old distrust of institutions, especially religious ones, and the accompanying expectation that it is the institutions which take care of the people, and not vice-versa. The concept of support-raising is still fairly foreign in a context where the Evangelical church is very young and the para-church movement even younger. I suspect that the Brazilian para-church movement is today roughly where the American para-church movement was in the 1930's, 40's and 50's, with groups like Wycliffe, Campus Crusade and the Navigators cutting their teeth in the support-raising department. However, American Evangelicals by that time nonetheless had nearly a 100 year head start, with groups like Hudson Taylor's China Inland Mission paving the way, and great movements like the Student Volunteer Movement making significant strides on behalf of supporting professional missionaries. Brazil and other emerging churches do not have these luxuries. Any Brazilian missionary who seeks to serve in the PMM mold faces an uphill battle and runs a significant risk of never achieving critical financial mass and finally being able to serve among the people to whom he or she is called. And any Brazilian mission agency that chooses to perpetuate this

³⁴ Heinz Suter and Marco Gmür, *Business Power for God's Purpose*. (Grenng-Murten, Switzerland: VKG, 1997), 19-40.

model will very possibly continue to struggle year after year to place even a single worker or family in a cross-cultural ministry (not to mention having to fight the feelings of irrelevance and the forces of extinction).

If these contextual and practical drawbacks of the PMM are significant, there are additional issues, theological and historical in nature, which must be addressed, and with a sense of urgency, for nothing less than our effectiveness in taking God's glory to the nations is at stake. While it is not within the purview of this paper to undertake a detailed analysis of these issues, I would be remiss not to touch on them.³⁵ I am speaking of the false dichotomy which the PMM model perpetuates between the sacred and secular, the clergy and the laity. Our word *laity* derives from the Greek word *laos*, which is always used to denote the entire community of God, or the whole people of God. It is never employed to mean only a portion of the people of God or in opposition to the word *kleros*, from which we derive the word *clergy*. In fact, it can reasonably be argued that *kleros*, too, refers to the whole people of God. For example, in the three instances in which it is employed in the New Testament with reference to people (Acts 26:18, Colossians 1:12, and 1 Peter 5:3), it either refers to the inheritance of *all of God's people* or *entire congregations of God's people*. It never refers to the selection or setting aside of religious professionals. The laity/clergy dichotomy as we understand it today, then, is simply not biblical. This distinction seems to have its origins in Clement of Rome's use of the work *laikos* in a letter

³⁵ For further study on the theological and historical development of the sacred-secular dualism, see, among others: R. Paul Stevens, *The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective* (Eerdmans & Co., 2000); C.J. Bulley, *The Priesthood of Some Believers: Developments from the General to the Special Priesthood in the Christian Literature of the First Three Centuries* (Paternoster, 2000); and Hendrik Kraemer, *A Theology of the Laity*. (Westminster Press, 1958).

in about 96 A.D. to refer to those distinct from office-holders within the church.³⁶ According to Mark Balfour,

the history of the early church tells the story of an increasing retention of liturgical and other functions to the bishops and presbyters, with the 'laity' rendered passive, no longer the ministering people of God but the 'ministered-to'. This reaches its apogee in the third century with Cyprian's analogy between the clergy and the Levites, and his development of a sacerdotal theology of priesthood.³⁷

And we cannot forget the contribution of one of Christendom's most controversial figures, Emperor Constantine. By making Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, Constantine effectively and inextricably sewed the thread of Greek dualistic sacred/secular thinking within the fabric of the fledgling Christian church and established for all posterity the privileged role of the clergy and the second-class citizenship of the laity. For the new official religion had to have bigger and better temples than the competing pagan sects and couldn't be without a professional priesthood since the pagans had that too, not to mention the fact that the church was now full of nominal Christians doing the socially acceptable thing, and with neither the desire to serve God sacrificially nor the scriptural understanding of what it means to be the Body of Christ, to "preach good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Luke 4:18-19)

I concur with Balfour that, "any continuation of a sacerdotal priesthood invested in individuals, constituting a separate order within the people of God, not only has no warrant in the

³⁶ Mark Balfour, "Abolish the Laity – New Wineskins," Hopeful Amphibian Website. Accessed on 10 April 2005. <http://hopefulamphibian.blogs.com/hopeful_amphibian/2005/01/abolish_the_lai.html>

³⁷ Ibid.

New Testament, but contradicts the New Testament's understanding of the *missio Dei* in Christ and in his Church.”³⁸ I further affirm that church history has done the *missio Dei* a disservice by creating a structure that promotes the passivity of the laity and thus serves to perpetuate the need for the “Professional Missionary Model.” I conclude with Dallas Willard that

There truly is no division between sacred and secular except what we have created. And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause of Christ. Holy people must stop going into “church work” as their natural course of action and take up holy orders in farming, industry, law, education, banking, and journalism...³⁹

...and that this should be done with a passion and zeal for God’s glory among the nations, fulfilling His mandate to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth, but in an “as you are going” mode rather than a “professional missionary” mode.

So we conclude, then, that the “Professional Missionary Model” is unworkable for the Brazilian and other emerging missions movements both from a contextual and a practical standpoint, as well as being questionable from a biblical and theological standpoint. It simply is not the best model to enable and unleash these missions forces to overcome the major obstacles they face and function as active participants in the *missio Dei*.

With that in mind, let’s look briefly at the major barriers – I see four of them – that the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement is facing and then take a look at an alternative, innovative model that has solid biblical support and a strong historical track record, one that I believe can have a liberating and enabling effect on the Brazilian missions movement. To better

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1990), 214.

understand the need for a new model, I want you to try to get into our shoes and *feel* our frustration, the frustration that comes as we struggle day after day to release a potentially world-changing missionary force, but just can't seem to do it, despite the sure conviction of a calling, and knowledge that we have much to offer in God's plan for His global glory. I feel the frustration and a sense of helplessness everyday. I see the Pedro's and the Claudia's and the Andre's and the Maria's, people who are equipped and ready to serve the Lord among the least-reached peoples of the world, but cannot do so because they simply do not have, and cannot find, the financial resources to do so. Or – perhaps even worse – those who have left Brazil, because they were, amazingly, able to raise their own support (perhaps through partnerships with North American or European Christians and organizations), but are floundering in ministry as traditional profile missionaries employing the “professional missionary model,” or possibly struggling with the internal and external pernicious effects of certain duplicitous tent-making models. I want you to feel our frustration and helplessness, but I do not intend for you to keep feeling that way. My prescription, both for you and for emerging missions movements around the world, will be to offer what I believe is not only a key for unleashing these missionary movements, but also a model that is, potentially, more holistic, integrated and *scriptural* than most any other. The name of this remedy is called “Business as Mission.” It is creative, innovative and dynamic, and it is my prayer that you will feel a sense of excitement as you ponder its potential.

But first, back to four major obstacles and the sense of helplessness that you are not yet feeling! These are barriers that bring mission executives and strategists and missionaries to their

wits' end. Simply put, the obstacles relate to getting out, getting in, staying in and sinking in. Let me explain.

Getting Out

I have already dealt with this issue in some detail, and will address it more thoroughly now because it is *the major barrier* that the Brazilian Evangelical missions movement faces. Brazilian missionaries many times simply cannot get out of the starting blocks due to a lack of financial resources. As I have mentioned, this is partly a developmental and cultural issue. The Brazilian church is simply young and hasn't had much time to develop a pattern of giving to cross-cultural missions. But the issue is also partly an economic one. I can understand when a Brazilian Christian points out the difficulty of finding funding for missionary endeavors in light of the poverty and corruption and inflation that have plagued Latin American countries in recent decades. Recent economic indicators for Brazil are less than encouraging:

- Brazil, while being the fifth largest country in the world, ranks 11th in the world in GDP in terms of purchasing power parity⁴⁰
- However, Brazil ranks a mere 92nd in the world in GDP per capita⁴¹
- Brazil's real growth rate is only 74th globally, at 5.10% annually⁴²
- Unemployment in Brazil ranks 107th in the world⁴³
- Brazil ranks 177th in the world in annual inflation rate⁴⁴

⁴⁰ CIA World Factbook, online. Accessed on 9 December 2005.

<<http://www.cia.gov/publications/factbook/rankorder/2001rank.html>>. Brazil's estimated GDP for 2004 was \$1,492,000,000,000.

⁴¹ Ibid. <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>>. The 2004 estimate was \$8100 per person.

⁴² Ibid. <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2003rank.html>>. 2004 estimate.

⁴³ Ibid. <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2129rank.html>>. It was 11.50% in 2004.

⁴⁴ Ibid. <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2092rank.html>>. It was 7.60% in 2004.

It can be argued, then, that economics plays a big role in hindering the *sending* of Brazilian cross-cultural missionaries. It has also been shown that even when cross-cultural workers do manage to reach the field, it is often for economic reasons that they *return home prematurely*. According to Limpic's research, "Brazilian agencies cite 'lack of financial support' as the greatest single cause of missionary attrition."⁴⁵ This is a heartbreaking reality. Even as I write, in the past month I have been involved with families confronting both situations. By God's grace, the family that has already been at work among Muslims for more than five years has momentum and an outstanding ministry track record and should be able to raise more support in order to return to work among their people group. I have strong doubts, however, that the second family – which has spent years in what has basically been a holding pattern – will ever be able to raise enough support to reach the people group to which they are called. And the great tragedy is that this family is very well prepared and would certainly make a tremendous, eternal impact among a huge Muslim people group, *if only* they had funding. Sadly, it has not been an atypical month in my life or that of our organization, and these types of stories are encountered over and over again throughout Brazil.

But the issue is not only economic. It is also – and I believe, primarily – one of vision and stewardship. I cannot count how many times I have heard comments such as the one a Brazilian missions colleague of mine heard at his church: "Forget this idea pastor! This business of missions is not for us in the Third World. Mission is for the churches of North America and Europe who have tradition in this area and financial resources."⁴⁶ I have heard the following addendum even more, and on a regular basis: "And what about all the needs right here in Brazil?"

⁴⁵ In Taylor, William D., Editor. *Too Valuable to Lose*. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1997), 149.

⁴⁶ Oswaldo Prado, "A New Way of Sending Missionaries: Lessons from Brazil." *Missiology: An International Review*. (Vol. 33, No. 1, January 2005), 52.

What about the poverty? What about the educational needs? What about the regions of Brazil where there are not many Evangelicals? How can we invest our money in people and places far away when the needs are so great right here?” But the most frustrating posture of all can be summarized thus: “What? You mean it’s going to cost nearly \$2000 for a family of four to live in Istanbul (or Cairo, etc.)?! Our *pastor* only makes half that amount! How can we justify paying the missionaries twice as much as the pastor?! The pastor serves us everyday, but the missionaries don’t serve us at all. And the pastor is the pastor; the missionaries are, well, merely missionaries.” The vision is often limited, distorted, introverted, ethnocentric, anthropocentric, egocentric and, in some cases even anti-biblical. There is often an utter lack of comprehension of the most compelling theme of Scripture – that there is a God and He has revealed Himself through creation and through the Bible and through His Son Jesus Christ, and He desires and deserves to be known, loved and worshipped by representatives from all the peoples of the world. Church hierarchy and pecking orders are no excuse for not sending or adequately supporting missionaries. Neither is poverty an excuse for not sending missionaries to other peoples, nor is it a valid excuse for not supporting missionaries financially. After all, even if all 27 million Brazilian Evangelicals were poor (and they are not) – God could do abundantly more than we can think or imagine *if* these people practiced biblical principles of stewardship. But they don’t, and this begs the question, Should Brazilian potential missionaries be disqualified from serving the Lord cross-culturally simply because their churches don’t have a fully biblical vision concerning God’s mission to all peoples? Or, for that matter, because Brazil and the Brazilian church face continual economic difficulties? The obvious answer is NO! The whole earth is God’s! (Ex. 19:5; Col. 1:16). And the mission is God’s! The answer, then, is to find a more appropriate model, one that can utilize God’s global resources for God’s global glory.

BUT finances are only the first of four obstacles to overcome, and the traditional support-raising, “professional missionary model” – even when the worker manages to raise all of his or her support – does not usually provide the means to overcome the next three obstacles.

Getting In

I get fired up when I read stories about people like Brother Andrew and George Verwer and others who are willing to risk life and limb in order to briefly infiltrate Communist or Muslim contexts so that they can share Christ or encourage believers. I thank the Lord for people like these and pray that He will increasingly raise up others. I also thank the Lord for the thousands of cross-cultural workers from around the world who, with the same sense of calling and conviction, seek to enter countries in North Africa or the Middle East or Central Asia as tourists or students in order to stay for months or a couple of years seeking to advance God’s cause in those places. These are viable means to enter restricted access nations, but they do not provide credible long-term solutions. And we must recognize that very few people – even Brazilians – are able to enter many of these geopolitical contexts, even as tourists or students. And even if they can manage to enter in these ways, the fact is that many unreached peoples live in regions that tourists and students do not normally go and are immediately suspect if they do. Certainly there is a better way to get into closed contexts.

Staying In

If getting in is difficult, staying can prove to be nearly impossible, especially on a tourist or student visa, for while both are *viable* for several months or possibly even several years, they are not *credible* for a long-term presence and do not allow for a long-term impact. Who ever heard of a tourist in, say Turkmenistan or Saudi Arabia, who has been in the country for several

years, rents his own apartment and speaks fluent Turkmeni or Arabic? Do not try this at home! It simply doesn't work. Even if the worker manages to reside in the country for years, he or she has long since lost credibility. People are not stupid, and they are much less gullible than we think. In our experiency, the more cosmopolitan among them will realize fairly quickly that the worker in question is a missionary. The rest will very possibly assume that he or she is a spy for a foreign government (probably the U.S., even if the worker is obviously Brazilian). After all, who else besides a church or government institution could possibly be paying the bills for someone who apparently never has to work?

The goal of most frontier mission organizations is to help establish church planting movements, and that does not happen overnight. They take years and decades, if not centuries, to take root, as experience over the past 200 years has taught us. Neither are communities and societies and peoples and nations transformed in one generation. In order for Brazilian or any other cross-cultural workers to make a lasting impact, they must find both viable *and* credible ways to stay among their chosen people group for the long haul.

Sinking In

Of course, staying for decades among a people group does not guarantee that effective ministry will take place, that lives will be changed, that churches will be planted and that societies will be transformed. Sadly, that lesson has been learned in places like Rwanda in 1994, where at least 700,000 Christians were killed by *other Christians* in a matter of months. Cross-cultural Good News bearers must find mechanisms by which they can penetrate social networks and make a fully-orbed Gospel proclamation, in word and deed. They must penetrate to the core level, the worldview level, of a culture, and the best way to do that is by rubbing shoulders with real people everyday, empathizing with them as they struggle to make ends meet and deal with

the existential issues of life. The professional missionary model, more often than not, neither encourages nor allows for this kind of “in the trenches,” “in-your-face,” “down and dirty,” incarnational ministry to take place. The Word who became flesh and dwelt among us was not a religious professional! He could empathize with people because He faced the same issues that they did as part of His human existence, and that included working for a living, for most of His life. He understood and practiced, in the truest sense, a theology of presence. Certainly that should receive more than token attention from us as we seek to emulate Him by sinking into the cultures we wish to reach.

Getting out, getting in, staying in, sinking in. Can you feel my frustration now? Can you feel our sense of helplessness as a missions movement? The Brazilian church has a calling and has certain distinct and unique qualifications that equip her to be at the forefront of taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth, but NOT with the models that have been handed down to her. What is the solution to our frustration and sense of helplessness? The more time I invest at the helm of a cross-cultural missions agency, the more time I spend studying Scripture, the more time I spend researching and planning and strategizing, and the more time I spend *praying*, the more convinced I am that the “business as mission” model will serve the Brazilian church and other emerging churches well in the 21st century, unleashing them for effective, holistic, God-pleasing frontier ministry. The “business as mission” model is perhaps uniquely qualified to help Brazilian and other cross-cultural workers get out, get in, stay in and sink in.

What is the “business as mission” model (also affectionately called BAM), how does it work, and why is it relevant not only for unleashing missionary forces, but also for *reaching* the least-reached peoples of the world? Let me preface my explanation of BAM by saying that it is not my intention to go into great detail here, because there is a growing number of outstanding

resources available in the form of articles, papers, books, seminars and courses that deal with BAM's many facets.⁴⁷ What follows is largely based on the Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission, which I helped write and which Mats Tunehag, Wayne McGee and Josie Plummer edited. It should be noted that despite considerable agreement with what is contained in the Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission, what follows is my personal understanding of, description of, and desire for, "business as mission." I do not speak on behalf of the entire Lausanne Business as Mission issue group.

Let's begin by describing "business as mission" and clarifying some terms and issues. I echo the sentiments of our Lausanne issue group in that the descriptions used here are simply to aid us in clear and consistent communication. It is *not* my aim to create a "business as mission orthodoxy" or to exclude groups or initiatives that prefer other terms and definitions, such as "transformational business," "great commission companies," "kingdom entrepreneurs" and "kingdom businesses." In fact, all of these are valid terms that serve to enrich the broader movement, and I will freely use them when they are the most appropriate, for I recognize that in some contexts "business as mission" is not the most helpful or preferred term. The expression "business as mission" itself can be considered a fairly broad term that encompasses various domains where business and missions connect. For example:

- ***Business as Mission has a Kingdom of God perspective. It's about KINGDOM***

BUSINESS. Kingdom businesses start from the theological premise that God desires to be known, loved and worshipped among all peoples of the world. Kingdom businesses

⁴⁷ A good place to start is with Yamamori and Eldred's helpful compilation called *On Kingdom Business* and Rundle and Steffen's excellent book called *Great Commission Companies*. I also suggest reading the Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission that was produced by those of us who were involved in the Lausanne Forum Business as Mission issue group that convened in Thailand in October of 2004. It is available at <www.businessasmission.com>, as is the Business as Mission Manifesto that also resulted from the Forum.

recognize that all Christians have a calling to love and serve God with all of their heart, soul, mind and strength, as well as to love and serve their neighbors. Kingdom businesses further recognize that God calls some people to work for His kingdom in business just as certainly as He calls some people to work in other kinds of ministry or mission ventures. Kingdom businesses take seriously the biblical mandates to reach the unreached and to serve the poor and oppressed, in particular in those areas where the gospel has yet to be received. This leads to a focus on cross-cultural activity and should draw our attention to areas of endemic poverty and/or unevangelized communities and people groups. The business of business is business. The business of business as mission is business with a Kingdom of God purpose and perspective, to fulfil God's mission.

- ***Business as Mission is based on the principle of...HOLISTIC MISSION.*** Holistic mission attempts to bring all aspects of life and ministry and godliness into an organic biblical whole. This includes God's concern for such business-related issues as economic development, employment and unemployment, economic justice and the use and distribution of natural and creative resources among the human family. These are aspects of God's redemptive work through Jesus Christ and the church which BAM addresses and embraces. Sadly, evangelism and social concerns are often still addressed as though they were separate and unrelated to each other. This assumes a divide between what we consider 'sacred' or 'spiritual' and what we consider 'secular' or 'physical'. The biblical worldview, rather, is one that promotes an integrated and seamless holistic view of life. Ministry should not be compartmentalized or fragmented into the 'spiritual' and the 'physical'. Business as mission is an expression of this truly holistic, integrated paradigm.

- ***Business as Mission is different from but related to...MARKETPLACE, or WORKPLACE, MINISTRIES.*** Marketplace ministries are primarily monocultural and focused on taking the gospel to people where they work, preferably through the witness of co-workers and professional colleagues. These ministries encourage the integration of biblical principles into every aspect of business practice, for the glory of God. Business as mission naturally includes these elements of workplace ministry. When a workplace ministry is initiated in a business owned by believers to intentionally advance the kingdom of God, there will be substantial overlap. But whereas workplace ministry can choose to limit its focus solely "within" the business context itself, business as mission is focused both "within" and "through" the business and generally has a cross-cultural orientation. It seeks to harness the power and resource of business for intentional mission impact in a community or nation at large. And whereas workplace ministry may occur in any setting, business as mission is intentional about the "to all peoples" mandate, and seeks out areas with the greatest spiritual and physical needs.
- ***Business as Mission is different from but related to...TENTMAKING.*** "Tentmaking" refers principally to the practice of Christian professionals, who support themselves financially by working as employees or by engaging in business. In this way they are able to conduct their ministries without depending upon donors and without burdening the people they serve. Tentmaking infers the integration of work and witness, with an emphasis on encouraging evangelism by lay Christians rather than clergy and ministry professionals. Where tentmakers are part of business ventures that facilitate cross-cultural mission goals, there is substantial overlap with business as mission. However, although a tentmaker might be a part of a business, the business itself might

not be an integral part of the ministry as it is with business as mission. Business as mission sees business both as the medium *and* the message. Business as mission most often involves ‘job-making’ as an integral part of its mission. Tentmaking may involve this, but is more often simply about ‘job-taking’ – taking up employment somewhere in order to facilitate ministry.

- ***Business as Mission is different from...BUSINESS FOR MISSIONS.*** Profits from business can be donated to support missions and ministries. Likewise employees can use some of their salary to give to charitable causes. This can be called business *for* missions. This is different from business as mission. While this should be encouraged, none of us would like to be operated on by a surgeon whose only ambition is to make money to give to the church! Instead we expect that he has the right skills and motivations to operate with excellence and professional integrity. Likewise a “business as mission” business must produce more than goods and services in order to generate new wealth. It seeks to fulfill God’s Kingdom purposes and values through every aspect of its operations. A “business for mission” model can reinforce the false sacred/secular, clergy/laity construct, limiting businesses and business people to a role of funding the “real ministry.” While funding is an important function, business as mission is about for-profit businesses that have a Kingdom focus.
- ***Business as Mission does not condone...NON-BUSINESSES AND NON-MISSIONS***
Two approaches to business that do not come within the scope of business as mission in any sense are: (1) Fake businesses that are not actually functioning businesses, but exist solely to provide a platform and/or cover for missionaries to receive visas and enter countries otherwise closed to them. This has been called “the missionary in disguise

approach,”⁴⁸ and has little redeeming value. It is often employed by people who have little interest in business, and who seek to do the least possible amount of genuine work. And as Rundle and Steffen point out, using business as a cover is not nearly as original or clever as we might imagine. “Spies and terrorists also have trouble operating openly in most countries, and they too have discovered the usefulness of the business platform.”⁴⁹ It is simply dangerous for a missionary to employ such a duplicitous strategy and very few churches have been started this way. (2) Businesses that purport to have Christian motivations but which operate only for private economic advantage and not for the Kingdom of God. Neither these, nor businesses run by Christians with no clear and defined Kingdom strategy (they might have an excellent business plan, but they have no “Great Commission plan”), are considered BAM businesses.

- ***Business as Mission pursues...PROFIT***

Kingdom businesses must be built on viable business plans, being financially sustainable and producing goods or services that people are willing to pay for. Sustainability implies that the activity is profitable. Profits are an essential element of all businesses, in all cultures. Without profit the business cannot survive and fulfill its purposes. Accordingly, BAM businesses are *real* businesses that genuinely exist to generate wealth and profits. Business as mission does not view profits as inherently evil, bad or unbiblical. Quite the contrary, profits are good, desired and beneficial to God and His purposes, as long as they are not oppressive, or derived from gouging customers or selling products and services that do no honor Christ and His Gospel. Temporary subsidies may be utilized to establish a business as mission initiative. Permanent subsidies or financial support without

⁴⁸ Steve Rundle and Tom Steffen, *Great Commission Companies: The Emerging Role of Business in Missions*.

expectation of ultimate profitability are closer to charitable or donor-based ministries than BAM-based enterprises.

- ***Business as Mission is...INNOVATIVE AND CREATIVE.*** The business and ministry plans, methodologies, and strategies used, are intentionally creative and diverse, just as God created us in an amazing array of shapes and sizes and colors. “Business as mission” seeks to develop and deploy innovators and risk-takers – call them Kingdom entrepreneurs – people who, in Rundle’s words

are *authentic* businesspeople with proven competence in at least one area of business administration. They are spiritually gifted much like traditional missionaries, but are called and equipped to use those gifts in a business context. Kingdom entrepreneurs have a genuine desire to see communities of faith spring up in the spiritually driest places, and are willing to live and work in these places to make that happen. Rather than perceiving the business as a distraction from their ministry, kingdom entrepreneurs recognize it as the necessary context for their incarnational outreach. The daily struggles – meeting deadlines, satisfying customers, being victimized by corruption – are precisely the things that enable kingdom entrepreneurs to model Christian discipleship on a daily basis.⁵⁰

- ***Business as Mission comes in all...SHAPES AND SIZE.*** Does the size of the business matter? Yes and No! Christian micro-enterprise programs exist that help provide necessary income for families and individuals resulting in community development, churches being planted and discipleship taking place. Christian micro-enterprise development has been well accepted and is effective for the Kingdom. A significant body

(Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 22.

⁴⁹ Rundle and Steffen, 41-42.

⁵⁰ Steve Rundle, “Preparing the Next Generation of Kingdom Entrepreneurs,” in Tetsunao Yamamori and Kenneth A. Eldred (eds.), *On Kingdom Business: Transforming Missions Through Entrepreneurial Strategies*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003), 229-230.

of work about the subject already exists. It has a legitimate place in the broader definition and practice of business as mission. However, the focus of business as mission is on larger scale business, generally small to medium sized enterprises, where there has been a comparative lack of attention. If we are to tackle the enormity of the challenge before us we need to think and act bigger, beyond micro to small, medium and large enterprises.

We can summarize the above descriptions by asking and answering the question, What might one of these Kingdom enterprises look like? In Rundle and Steffen's conception,

There is no limit to the forms a Great Commission Company can take. Nevertheless, there are some basic characteristics that they all have in common, which enable us to define a Great Commission Company as "a socially responsible, income-producing business managed by Kingdom professionals and created for the specific purpose of glorifying God and promoting the growth and multiplication of local churches in the least-evangelized and least-developed parts of the world."⁵¹

For the past two centuries, education and health have been the handmaidens of the modern missions movement. However, virtually every country in the world today has a ministry of education and a ministry of health whose leadership more often than not frown upon the thought of any outsider telling them how to educate their people or take care of their health. In the 21st century, business fills the void left by education and health. Business opens doors in even the most tightly shut nations like Turkmenistan and North Korea, and business people replace (in a sense), traditional missionaries. As Neal Johnson puts it,

⁵¹ Rundle and Steffen, 41.

the business community, because of its enormous power base of influence, resources, and expertise is in a unique position to undertake mission for Christ: worldwide and next door. This mission can be done effectively and efficiently by Christian believers in the business community. The heart of mission is helping hurting people holistically through the love of Christ. And what matters is not who does it, but who receives it; not who does it, but how and why it is done. In these instances, it is the business community itself that is replacing the traditional “sending agencies” of earlier Christian mission paradigms. It is the business community utilizing the resources God has placed in their hands to become a major part of *missio Dei*.⁵²

In other words, the “business as mission” model can, and I believe should, increasingly become the missions model of choice for the 21st century, especially for emerging missions movements. It serves as a catalyst to inspire and encourage people to get into business and to stay in business, and to get into missions and stay in missions, especially at the frontier of missions, among the least-reached peoples of the world and in the developing world. It envisions and enables the laity – who are the 21st century missionary personnel – to go to the 85% of the unreached peoples and people in the world where “professional missionaries” cannot go and the “professional missionary model” does not work. It unleashes emerging missionary forces like that of the Evangelical church in Brazil.

Now I can hear some people saying, “BAM doesn’t mobilize the poorer evangelicals – and the emerging church is full of them – for missions, and yet they are desperately needed because most of the world is poor,” To that I respond, “There are geographical considerations that we cannot overlook. Could not the poorer Brazilians reach the unreached peoples of Brazil and South America, especially the 250 or so unreached tribes? Could not the poorer Africans

⁵² Charles Neal Johnson, *God’s Mission To, Within, and Through the Marketplace: Toward a Marketplace*

reach other African peoples and Indians reach other Indian peoples and Chinese reach other Chinese peoples? It's already happening, and with great success in many areas. It makes good sense to mobilize the poorer within our global Family to reach peoples within close geographic proximity where financial outlay is minimalized. BAM's unique contribution – and BAM does, admittedly, require people with professional training and drive and creativity – is to enable the penetration of the most difficult places and people groups.

That having been said, however, I do not mean to imply that we should underestimate the power of the poor and presume that they should stay poor (that's antithetical to one of the basic tenets of the BAM model) or that they cannot contribute to reaching the least-reached. Even the secular business world does not do this. Globally recognized business consultant C.K. Prahalad provides insight here through his groundbreaking research among the poor around the globe. In his book called *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid*,⁵³ he contends that, collectively, the world's billions of poor have immense entrepreneurial capabilities and buying power, and that companies can help them escape poverty not just through job creation, but also by targeting products to their needs. Certainly the church can learn from his conclusions and make not merely a temporal, material impact on the poor, but a spiritual and eternal one as well.

Now if you haven't gotten excited about the business as mission model by now, or at least intrigued or interested, then let me conclude by highlighting one of the key words in the title of this paper, and one of the key concepts of the model itself. It is the word "integrated." The BAM model is perhaps one of the most biblical, sensible and effective models for cross-cultural frontier ministry because of the fact that it is a balanced and integrated approach. It is:

Missiology. (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. Pasadena, CA: Fuller Theological Seminary, 2004), 328.

⁵³ Wharton School Publishing, 2004.

- Integrated in that with one model, emerging missionary movements, like that of the Brazilian Evangelical church, can overcome their four most significant obstacles
- Integrated in that it doesn't separate sacred and secular, clergy and laity; it doesn't demean the secular and the laity, it doesn't overrate the sacred and the clergy
- Integrated in that business and ministry activity become one in the same, for the Glory of the Father. It's not just good theology, it's good missiology and doxology.
- Integrated in that it is both theocentric – motivated primarily by a desire to see God glorified among all peoples – and anthropocentric, because it is secondarily driven by a desire to meet the needs of people
- Integrated in that it deals both with spiritual and material needs of people
- Integrated in that the cross-cultural Good News bearer has one identity – no duplicity, no dishonesty, no representing himself or herself to the senders as one type of person and the receivers as another type
- Integrated in that it unites economic activity with social and justice concerns and plugs them into church-planting movements
- Integrated in that it unites emerging missions movements like that of Brazil with the peoples where the name of Christ is never or rarely heard

Can this integrated approach to frontier ministry – the business as mission model – truly unleash the Brazilian Evangelical missionary force and, Lord willing, release other “third church” missionaries from around the globe to penetrate the least-reached peoples of the world

for the glory of the Father? Everything we have seen in this brief examination today gives us tremendous reason to believe that the answer is a resounding “yes.” This model, perhaps better than any other, enables, in the words of the Lausanne movement, the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.

João Mordomo is co-founder and executive director of a not-for-profit organization based in south Brazil dedicated to training and sending Brazilian cross-cultural workers to the Muslim world. He serves on the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization's Business as Mission Working Group, is professor of missions and intercultural studies at two seminaries and the author of numerous articles. He holds degrees in sociology and practical theology and is currently working on his doctorate in missiology. He and his wife and their two small children live in Paraná, Brazil.