

## A Single Priority or Two Commands to Be Obeyed?

Steve Strauss

**M**y thanks to Kurt Nelson for his strong, clear article, "The Universal Priority of Proclamation." I found myself positively connecting with Kurt at many levels, but I also felt an urge to respond.

In one sense, I am happy to affirm the priority of evangelistic proclamation in mission. All Bible-believing Christians can agree that it is better for a person to spend eternity fellowshiping with the Lord than go to bed with a full stomach or receive medicine for a disease. I agree with Kurt that the apostles speak more of proclamation than of ministry to human need, that their ministry was centered on evangelistic proclamation, and that Jesus' primary ministry on earth was to provide our eternal salvation, not to meet the physical needs of those he encountered.<sup>1</sup> I also agree with David Hesslegrave in *Paradigms in Conflict* (329) that the basis for meeting all other individual or societal needs is becoming right with God through the new birth.

Nevertheless, I find myself uncomfortable with the language of the "priority" of evangelism over meeting human need for the simple reason that Jesus commanded us to do both. I fear that elevating any one of Jesus' commands as "more important" than any other command will inevitably lead to inadequate obedience to the "less important" command.

In his article Kurt pointed out that

both Jesus and the apostles seemed to talk more about proclamation than meeting human need. I won't argue with that (though I might quibble with the implications he drew from some of the passages). But, as Kurt also pointed out, Jesus and the apostles commanded disciples to proclaim the gospel and to do good to all people. The Great Commission and the Great Commandment are both imperatives that every believer, especially every missionary, should be about all the

an evangelist choose to share the gospel, but not meet human need? When should a missionary agriculturalist choose to teach better ways to plant gardens, but not share a word about Jesus? When should a mission send out church planters who are not going to do good to all men and women? When should a mission send out relief workers who refuse to share a word about their Lord when the opportunity presents itself?

Of course there are times when individuals, a ministry team, and an entire mission must make choices. But these choices should never be driven by a sense that, because either proclamation or ministry to human need is more important, one can be done

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**EVANGELISM AND MINISTRY** to human need may not be equal "priorities," but both are our responsibility in all circumstances of life.

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time. Citizens of Jesus' coming kingdom should proclaim salvation in the King and live out Kingdom values all the time.<sup>2</sup> Evangelism and ministry to human need may not be equal "priorities," but both are our responsibility in all circumstances of life. There should never be a time when we are not doing both. Because both are commanded, I am uncomfortable with a mere verbal "tip of the hat" to meeting human need; I believe our stress should be on the necessity of both proclamation and meeting human need.

But are there not times when, practically, we need to establish which is more important? When? When should

without the other. Both are part of what our Lord has commanded and commissioned us to do; if we ever find ourselves excluding either one or the other in any sphere of ministry, then we have gone astray from his will.<sup>3</sup>

Kurt made a strong point that we must set priorities and decide whether proclamation or ministry to human need is most important. This is where we part company. If both are commanded in Scripture and expected of our calling, it would seem to me that God expects us to always do both. Kurt quoted a leader from the business world to make the point that we cannot have multiple priorities, but only

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one priority; however, mission is not business. The commands of God do not conflict as business priorities may conflict. If we are called to both proclaim the gospel and minister to human need, we should always be asking how we can be obedient to both of God's expectations in every circumstance, not seeking to do only the one which is the "highest priority."

I was a field missionary in Ethiopia for 19 years and I do not remember a single time when I had to make a decision: "Which is more important, that I share the gospel or minister to this person's human need?" Yes, I often asked, "Should I give or not give to this person," but the criteria was whether giving or not giving would

try to those who are victims of HIV/AIDS and the families and churches that surround them. Sharing the gospel permeates every part of Hope for AIDS, not because there is a "priority" on evangelism, because those who minister are Gospel People who are looking for every opportunity to share the good news. They are also Kingdom People who are living out the values of Christ's coming Kingdom in the way they minister to the physical needs of those around them.

Kurt and his mission are actively ministering to human need, and I warmly commend them for that. However, sometimes I suspect that what drives some presentations of the "priority of proclamation" is a justification

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be the best thing to help this person, both spiritually and physically. I have been the SIM USA Director for the past five years and I have never had to "set a priority" about proclamation versus ministry to human need that excluded one or the other. Yes, some circumstances lend themselves to an emphasis on one or the other. But we always try to ensure that both are part of our wider impact. We do not want to send out missionaries who will proclaim the gospel but ignore human need, or missionaries who will minister to human need but not share the gospel. We will not spend money that only ministers to human need but does not allow us to proclaim the gospel. Nor will we spend money on evangelism and church planting that consciously turns a blind eye to pressing human need.

SIM's Hope for AIDS<sup>4</sup> is an outstanding example of the way that missionaries and missions must be engaged in seamless Kingdom proclamation and living. Hope for AIDS programs touch on every aspect of minis-

try for ignoring human need. As soon as we use the language of "priority" we are (perhaps unconsciously) inferring that one of our New Testament responsibilities may, at times, be set aside (i.e. disobeyed!).

Let me respond to one other possible criticism of the position I am taking: Won't ignoring the issue of priorities lead to liberal theology and an exclusive emphasis on the social gospel? My understanding of church and mission history is that liberal theology did not result from an emphasis on meeting human need, but preceded sole preoccupation with the social gospel. Once liberals had given up the exclusive claims of Jesus Christ, "mission" was reduced to a drive for ecumenical unity and ministry to human need alone. As long as we hold firmly to our commitment that hearing and responding to the message that Jesus is the only way to God, we have nothing to fear by avoiding the language of "prioritization."

Continued on page 6

# A Brief Apology for Holistic Mission:

## My Response to “The Universal Priority of Proclamation” by Kurt Nelson

Mark L. Russell

**K**urt Nelson’s recent article gave me another opportunity to wrestle with the relationship of social engagement and gospel proclamation. In my response to his argument, I would like to affirm the significant areas of agreement that I had with it. First, I appreciate and agree with his sincere concern that the importance of gospel proclamation not be ignored. People need to hear the story of Jesus. They need to know the good news. His articulate reminder of this is something I affirm.

Furthermore, I also appreciate the way he and his ministry have effectively ministered to people spiritually as well as physically. Though, as will be seen, we differ somewhat on the formulation of his argument, I am thankful that he affirmed “the great value and requisite” ministry of social engagement (6). He noted that social engagement can play a role in making evangelism more effective and even stated that they “belong together” (5).

I sense that I have much more in common with Kurt Nelson than not. However, I must move directly to the focus of this article, namely to state my case for holistic mission. Hopefully, this article will generate helpful discussion and interaction. If it is not found convincing, I believe it will at least be helpful for those ahead in years and faith to understand the mentality and approach of younger evangelical missiologists like myself.

### The Problematic Framework

Much of my contention with missiologists who support the priority of proclamation is with the framework they use to draw their conclusions. Nelson poses us with a “dilemma”, specifically the “longstanding debate

surrounding the relationship between evangelism and social action” (3).

Asking the wrong question creates the false dilemma. What deserves priority, gospel proclamation or social engagement? It is a well-intended question but ultimately it is troubling. It is the equivalent of asking what is more important for a car, to have functioning brakes or an operable steering wheel?

This dilemma, I’m convinced, is a post-biblical invention and a result of Western modernist compartmentalized thinking. This approach would have been completely foreign to the biblical actors as it is in most parts of the world today when Western missionaries do not import it. Their thinking was (is) holistic, rather than reductionistic. This holistic approach is popular among younger evangelical missiologists. In September 2006, I attended the Lausanne Younger Leaders Gathering in Malaysia and surveyed approx-

imately forty younger leaders from around the world on this topic. From these conversations it appears that every single one would affirm the point I am making.

imely forty younger leaders from around the world on this topic. From these conversations it appears that every single one would affirm the point I am making. Of course, someone could contend that, although the word “priority” was not used in the Bible, the concept is definitely present. I agree. However, if we look closely we will see the priority in the Bible is more obvious than this longstanding debate would seem to indicate.

### The Priority of Love

When it comes to discussion on priorities, we should stick to what Christ taught was the priority, namely to love God and neighbor (Matt. 22:37-39). Paul also said that love was the greatest attribute (1 Cor. 13:13) and noted that it summed up the law (Rom. 13:9). We are to love our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 John 4:7, 20) as

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imately forty younger leaders from around the world on this topic. From these conversations it appears that every single one would affirm the point I am making.

Nelson inadvertently gives me some evidence for drawing this conclusion. He points to a conversation between Peter Drucker and Bill Pollard in which Drucker notes that the term priority originated in the 14th century. Nelson’s point is to emphasize that it was not until the 20th century that priority was used in pluralized form (5). However, he brings to our attention that the word priority was a 14th cen-

well as our enemies (Matt. 5:44). To love God means to love people.

Most readers probably agree that love is the highest priority but would assert that this discussion is not about that. Once I was in a meeting with ten evangelical missionaries. Someone asked what was our priority. All of my colleagues responded that it was evangelism. I was the last to respond and said that to love God was our priority. Frustration was quite clear on the faces of my colleagues. Finally, in an obviously exasperated tone, one said, “Well, we all know that!” My intention is not to say what everyone knows

nor is it to irritate my colleagues. Nevertheless, it is quite disheartening that there are so many discussions on priorities and that no one is blowing the trumpet of love. The aforementioned biblical passages on love are the clearest, most succinct statements on biblical priorities. Any conversation on priorities must acknowledge this.

Unfortunately, love is so often an understated assumption that it is generally an underperformed action.

Love is a better framework for dialogue on the relationship of social engagement and gospel proclamation. Love is the priority. But what does this

ly, these aspects are not held in tension, but rather are mutually beneficial. They work together like fingers on a hand, not competing against each other but aiding and supporting each other. Holistic mission is about authentic integration, not artificial separation.

Others have observed the positive effect that social engagement can have for effective evangelism. Evangelical apologist Ravi Zacharias has said, "If the church of Jesus Christ rises to the challenge of HIV/AIDS, it will be the greatest apologetic the world has ever seen" (Correll 2003, 266). Social engagement and gospel proclamation

and the skills of the local ministers. It is also likely a particular organization will accent one over the other. However, these emphases should not be a result of a belief in their universal priority, but rather reflect a situation-specific strategy.

### Concluding Thoughts

There are other aspects of Nelson's article, specifically his analysis on the view of Jesus, Peter and Paul towards the poor that I would like to respond to, but necessary space limitations prevent that. Nevertheless, we both affirm the importance of gospel proclamation and the role of social engagement in enhancing the effectiveness of evangelism. My primary contention is that the priority framework is a post-biblical modernist construction and prevents us from thinking and acting in an effective and integrated manner. As long as our framework is wrong, the longstanding debate will not come to an end and unfruitful debates will continue ad nauseum. It is my hope that our energies will be redirected from discussing which is most important to determining how we can integrate them into a holistic mission of loving God and neighbor that brings forth the fruit we all desire.

*Soli Deo Gloria.*

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## HOLISTIC MISSION affirms the necessity of both social engagement and gospel proclamation.

mean for social engagement and gospel proclamation? Rather than seeking to determine which is the ultimate priority, we should be discussing the absolute necessity of both.

### The Absolute Necessity of Social Engagement and Gospel Proclamation

It is claimed that St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the gospel always, and if necessary, use words." And this is exactly the point; it is necessary to use words. Holistic mission is not code for "do whatever you want" nor synonymous with secular humanitarianism. It affirms the necessity of the verbal proclamation of the kingdom of God. Paul pointed out, "How can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them (Rom. 10:14)?"

Holistic mission affirms the necessity of both social engagement and gospel proclamation. It is a paradigm for the integration of apparently distinct activities of the church. There is no inherent superiority or inferiority in either. Both are expressions of love to God and neighbor. Approached correct-

ly, these aspects are not held in tension, but rather are mutually beneficial. They work together like fingers on a hand, not competing against each other but aiding and supporting each other. Holistic mission is about authentic integration, not artificial separation.

Others have observed the positive effect that social engagement can have for effective evangelism. Evangelical apologist Ravi Zacharias has said, "If the church of Jesus Christ rises to the challenge of HIV/AIDS, it will be the greatest apologetic the world has ever seen" (Correll 2003, 266). Social engagement and gospel proclamation seamlessly integrate together to equal effective ministry. Good deeds prompt questions. This is why Peter instructed his readers to do good and then followed by saying, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15).

Nelson acknowledges that ministering to people's physical needs play a role in creating a loving environment where people respond affirmatively to gospel proclamation (6). Which then is the priority, the gospel proclamation or the other activities that enhance its effectiveness? That is the wrong question. It is not about which is the priority, but rather an issue of the absolute necessity of both in order to love God and neighbor. Love is not a technique or strategy. It is the fundamental essence of our calling on this earth. Social engagement and gospel proclamation are absolutely necessary, but they are activities under the umbrella of love.

In particular contexts it may be justified to have a greater emphasis on either gospel proclamation or social engagement. However, this should be determined by the unique situation



# The Priority of Jesus' Command

Kurt Nelson

**I am grateful to Bob Lenz for the opportunity to review the responses to my previous article written by Mark Russell and Steve Strauss and to be given the privilege of a final response.** I am also grateful for the healthy spirit of dialogue evident in Mark and Steve's remarks. We share much in common in our mutual affirmation of the requisite nature of both proclamation and demonstration of the good news of Jesus Christ in the dual ministries of evangelism and social action. Sadly our real departure is not so much with each other as it is with those Christians who carry out worthy programs of humanitarian assistance and social ministry but remain forever silent when it comes to acknowledging the love of Jesus Christ as the impetus for these ministries and proclaiming His gospel message hand-in-hand with these appropriate acts of love and compassion.

The assignment that I undertook in my previous article (which was not stated explicitly in the article) was to review, respond to and interact with David Hesselgrave's discussion of "Holism and Prioritism" in chapter four of his recent book, *Paradigms in Conflict*. Hesselgrave defines three basic historical positions on this matter (radical liberationism, holism and prioritism) and then argues his case in favor of "traditional prioritism" which he describes by stating that, "The mission is primarily to make disciples of all nations. Other Christian ministries are good but secondary and supportive."

## Response to Russell

Mark Russell's affirmation of the critical necessity of both gospel proclamation and social engagement is heartening. I agree with Biblical mandate for these dual ministries that, together, reflect the love of God to a hurting and dying world. Mark's emphasis upon the biblical priority of love is excellent, particularly as he de-

velops his application that our mandates to love God and to love mankind are the basis for our engagement in the combined ministries of evangelism and Christian social action. I could not agree more.

the law, Jesus actually replied with two commandments, while acknowledging that one was indeed the foremost of the two, when He replied, "Love the Lord your God with all heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' " (Matthew 22:37-39, NIV)

bor". Neither would I dare to suggest that the priority of the ministry of evangelism could ever be a rationale or an excuse for failing to respond to the physical needs of others to whom we minister. In my article I repeatedly affirm the necessity of practicing both social humanitarian ministry and gospel proclamation. So does Hesselgrave in *Paradigms in Conflict*. Never did I advocate any separation of the two ministries, nor did I classify either one as being more "important" (a word used in a quote by Peter Drucker but never in my discussion of the relationship between evangelism and social ministry).

**IRONICALLY WE FIND** that Jesus prioritized these two commands on love when He found Himself tested by the Pharisees.

While Jesus clearly prioritized the commandment to "love God" above that of the commandment to "love man", He made it unmistakably clear throughout His teaching and His ministry that He fully intended for His followers to do both! One would be loathe to argue that Jesus taught that "loving God" could ever be used as a justification for failing to also fulfill His mandate of "loving our neigh-

bor". Neither would I dare to suggest that the priority of the ministry of evangelism could ever be a rationale or an excuse for failing to respond to the physical needs of others to whom we minister. In my article I repeatedly affirm the necessity of practicing both social humanitarian ministry and gospel proclamation. So does Hesselgrave in *Paradigms in Conflict*. Never did I advocate any separation of the two ministries, nor did I classify either one as being more "important" (a word used in a quote by Peter Drucker but never in my discussion of the relationship between evangelism and social ministry).

## Response to Strauss

My first missionary service was in Benin, West Africa in 1978 where I served a summer stint as a medical student in an SIM mission hospital. Through that experience and my ministry that summer I witnessed firsthand the effective integration of evangelism and social ministry designed to respond compassionately and holistically to the pressing physical needs of the suffering people in tribal West Af-

rica. The SIM "L'Hospital Evangelique" hospital in Bembereke, Benin provided the best medical care available in this Marxist dictatorship and was integrated with church planting and evangelistic ministry.

Last year I met Steve Strauss, who currently serves at the Director of SIM USA, in Dallas and I was immediately impressed with our common heart and vision for the mission of God's Kingdom throughout the world. I heartily agree with Steve that both evangelism and practical social ministry are imperatives that all Christians (and therefore all missionaries) must engage in "all the time." Neither Hesselgrave nor I argue for omitting either responsibility or for forsaking either

"radical liberationism" which often (if not always) fails to include the proclamation of Jesus' gospel in its imbalanced and often exclusive emphasis on social justice and social action. Both "holism" and "prioritism" (especially at the present time) generally support a "both and" rather than an "either or" approach to evangelism and social action. Generally speaking, it has become common practice in recent years for those ministries that are doing evangelism well to also engage in social action and humanitarian ministry. Certainly we must all strive together to constantly improve our effectiveness in both manifestations of the love of God.

The greater concern, in my opin-

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ministry. Nor would either Hesselgrave or I ever suggest that it is permissible to "tip the hat" to our God given mandate to respond to human needs. We agree that both ministries must be an integral part of all truly biblical mission and that we are never excused to "consciously turn a blind eye to pressing human need." To imply that Hesselgrave's argument for "prioritism" suggests such a posture is both unfair and inaccurate. Neither Hesselgrave nor I would suggest that the "priority of proclamation" can ever be a "justification for ignoring human need." Setting aside or disobeying New Testament commands was never an inference (even unconsciously) of Hesselgrave or of this author.

### **The Real Omission**

I believe that the real critical issue in this dialogue is ultimately not found in the debate between "holism" and "prioritism" as much as it is between these two positions and that of

ion, lies with those Christian ministries that, for whatever reason, have bought into a philosophy of "radical liberationism" that results in the stark omission of the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ from their mission efforts. In my opinion that is reprehensible. To demonstrate the love of Christ while remaining completely silent in response to the mandate that we have to teach and proclaim Jesus' gospel condemns those who have perhaps "tasted" of His love through such efforts, to a Christless eternity. Samuel H. Moffett says it best when he says, "without the accompanying deeds, the good news is scarcely credible, without the word, the news is not even comprehensible!"

So let us all commit to continue this healthy dialogue, but more importantly, to making disciples of all nations by manifesting the "good news" of Christ's Kingdom both "in word and in deed" until He comes! ■

### **A Single Priority or Two Commands to Be Obeyed?** continued from page 2.

My plea is that, rather than being preoccupied with "priorities," we seek ways to do what Jesus has called us all to do all the time. Proclaim the gospel in season and out of season. Do good to all people. Why debate which is more important when we are commanded to do both?

#### **Endnotes**

1. However, a full Old Testament theology of mission does raise the profile of ministry to human need as a part of the mission of God's people on earth. See Christopher Wright, *The Mission of God*. In addition, a study of the ministry of Jesus and the apostles suggests that proclamation and ministry to human need were consistently and seamlessly interwoven as part of their lives and ministries (e.g. Luke 9:1-2; 10:9; Gal. 2:10).

2. I have developed the implications of an "already-not yet" theology of the Kingdom in more detail in "Kingdom Living: The Gospel on our Lips and in our Lives," *EMQ* 41:1:58-63. In *Paradigms in Conflict* Hesselgrave argues that, "Nowhere in Scripture are we specifically called upon to obey 'kingdom mission' in the way we are called upon to obey the Great Commission. 'Kingdom mission' was and remains uniquely the mission of Christ, though we are to witness to it in very practical ways" (348). I agree that Christ's Kingdom mission was certainly unique. Yet, the Great Commandment (illustrated by the parable of the Good Samaritan; Luke 10:25-37) is quite explicit. And if the Gospels were written as "discipleship manuals" for the church, as many believe, then surely we have the responsibility to live out the Kingdom ethic that Jesus called for in the Sermon on the Mount and other passages.

3. I am not advocating giving to everyone who has a need without question or seeking to meet every need that presents itself. First, complex issues of dependency and how to nurture the maturing of the church must be answered. Second, missionaries must ask themselves how much they can afford to do for those around them without destroying their own health and long-term ministry effectiveness. Third, limited access situations may demand that every word of witness be shared carefully to preserve a wider opportunity to proclaim Christ.

4. "Hope" is an acronym for Home Based Care, Orphan Care, Prevention through Biblical Morality, and Enabling the Church.

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# Serving with Eyes Wide Open

*Serving with Eyes Wide Open—Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence.* By David A. Livermore. Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2006.

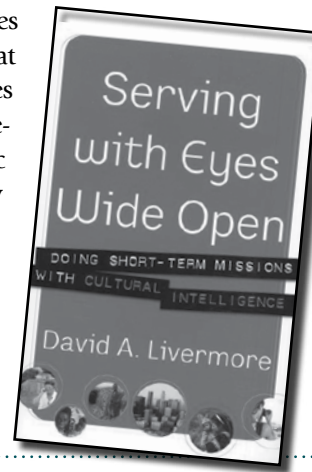
Reviewed by Elizabeth Lightbody

Short-term missions is a phenomenon that has swept over the world for the past twenty-five years. For many people it has been the means God used to call them into long-term, cross-cultural service. For others it has merely been an experience—meaningful at the time, but one that has dimmed until it is now only a distant memory of a trip to a foreign place. The effectiveness of short-term missions has been questioned by both senders and the receivers. Missionaries and nationals alike pose questions. Why are they here? Is it worth the cost? Couldn't the money spent to get them here have supported a local pastor for a year? Are they really prepared? Doesn't their lack of cultural knowledge create problems which have to be corrected after they leave?

In a straight-forward manner David A. Livermore addresses many of the issues that the mission's community has privately discussed for years. In the first section of his book, *Serving with Eyes Wide Open*, Livermore briefly, but graphically presents a world of important global issues: population growth; the increasing gap between rich and poor; disease; displaced people; the MacWorld of consumerism and the battle between cultural/religious fundamentalism and pluralism. These issues underscore the mind-numbing realities of our twenty-first-century world.

In the next section, Livermore turns his attention to the church and describes the "majority world church" as "the regions of the world where the greatest population of Christians live—outside North American and Western Europe." The majority of its members are young, non-white, poor,

theologically conservative and female. On the positive side, it is a church that is experiencing unprecedented growth, that lives by God's provision, that both sends and receives missionaries and that desires to develop dynamic leadership. It operates by making decision in community and is sensitive to the working of the Spirit. It is also a church aware of the enemy and how he works. On the



**David Livermore** addresses many of the issues that the missions community has privately discussed for years.

challenge side, it is a persecuted church and many of its members pay a high price for following Christ.

Having discussed the world and the majority church, Livermore shifts his focus to short-term workers from America. For those who have been involved in short-term missionaries as participant, trainer, recipient or sender, Livermore's remarks about their ineffectiveness, lack of preparedness and lack of cultural sensitivity may be difficult to hear. However, he presents his position with clarity, truthfulness and a desire to stimulate change.

He identifies several pitfalls that are common in doing short-term missions. First he addresses the motives of why people go. Is it only to go, have fun, and see the world? Another common pitfall he cites is going out of a false sense of urgency. Americans would comment, "We've got to do something—the opportunity is now!" However, national leaders might think, "If you do that, the implications for our churches will be with us long after you leave."

Livermore points out another pit-

fall faced by short-termers as well as by many long-termers. Our tendency as Americans is to look for similarities among cultures and to generalize from a single event to thinking we share a common view of life. Short-termers often see people using cell phones, eating at McDonalds, or watching

MTV and quickly conclude that they are just like us. They fail to understand the deeper life issues and cultural differences that are below the surface.

Lastly, Livermore points out the tendency of short-term workers to adopt a simplistic view of ministry. They come na-

ively thinking, "The Bible is a universal book. All I have to do is teach it!" Contextualization of biblical truth is not on their radar screen. They come naively thinking, "Money can fix everything!" They don't realize the implications for the national church and for the workers who will follow them. They have good intentions, but their actions can create a handout mentality.

After reading this section, one might tend to condemn short-term missions and stop reading. That's was my reaction, but I kept reading. I gained further insights on the issues and was encouraged.

After addressing the world and the problems accompanying short-term missions, Livermore then presents his suggestions for addressing these issues. He believes short-term missions should continue, but suggests that we need to increase the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) of personnel in four areas:

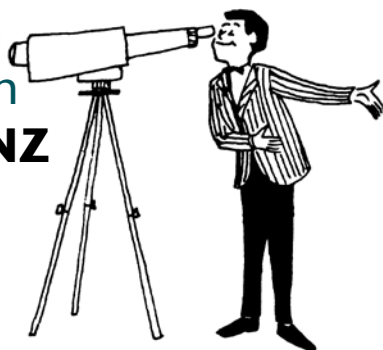
- knowledge—understanding cultural differences;
- interpretive—interpreting cues;

Continued on page 8

One of the major emphases today is in the area of justice and mercy and how this is applied in our society. In missions, this spills over also into the topic of evangelism as it relates to acts of mercy, or a holistic approach to mission. Are they on equal par, or is one more important than the other? This question is not new, but is prominent in discussions in today's mission scene where acts of mercy or service may be the only entrance into certain restricted or limited access countries.

A while back we featured Kurt Nelson's article "The Universal Priority of Proclamation" in the January 2007 edition of *Occasional Bulletin* (Vol. 20 No. 2). This was a commentary on chapter four of David

## As seen through the LENZ



Hesselgrave's book *Paradigms In Conflict* in which Hesselgrave addresses the topic of evangelism versus social action. There isn't room enough to reprint Kurt's article. The reader will have to refer back to the January issue. Nelson's article evoked two written responses from Mark Russell, and Dave Strauss which I think make an excellent feature for this edition of the *Occasion-*

*al Bulletin*. I do not think that *OB* has ever had an issue in this format. I also sent Kurt the two responses and gave him the opportunity to briefly answer both Mark and David. Any further interaction on the topic will be on a personal level between correspondents, and anyone else who has an opinion or observation on the topic. Thanks fellas for making this issue of *OB* a thought provoking dialogue. Thanks also to Liz Lightbody for her excellent review of Dr. Dave Livermore's significant book on short term missions.

**CORRECTION:** In the last edition of *OB*, credit was given to Norm Allison for the poem of remembrance written in honor of Dr. Paul Hiebert. The poem was written by Enoch Wan, and not by Norm. Please accept my apologies.

—**Bob Lenz**, editor

### Book Review continued from page 7

- perseverance—persevering through conflict and;

- behavioral—acting appropriately.

This chapter provides an excellent review of the basics in the discipline of cross-cultural communication, but Livermore incorporates new research in the field. I found helpful his inclusion of persevere through conflict as an added dimension to CQ. In a generation which seems to lack these qualities I found it an important focus, especially as we look at a world in conflict.

The concluding chapter presents a refreshing view of living-out Christ's mandate on a daily basis and not just "on location." The mandate of the Great Commission (Matt. 28: 18-20) and Great Commandment (Mk. 12:29-30) must be lived out on a 24/7 basis. As we love and care for one another we reflect His glory to the nations.

This book would be an excellent resource for orientation and training programs for both short- or long-term workers. It is well written and presents

material in a logical, readable manner. *Serving with Eyes Wide Open* is a must read for "the church" as we seek to improve living and sharing His Gospel with those of other cultures at home or abroad.

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