

Summer Reflections 2000

by Kenneth B. Mulholland, Former President (Winter, 2000)

Summer provides time for reflection. Here are three things that have caught my attention this past summer: MOMENTUM, PARTNERSHIP and RESOURCES.

Momentum

The two-thirds world mission movement is gaining momentum - even in the United States. This struck me when I looked at my fall speaking engagements. Of six fall ministry invitations, two are in a Euro- American context: a Christian Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids and an Evangelical Free Church in New Jersey. Four are from ethnic groups - Asian and Hispanic, respectively. And the Hispanic invitations require Spanish as the means of communication! Has your experience been similar?

Partnership

The theme of the Triennial is "Working Together in the New Millennium." The resolution on Vision 2025 approved at the June, 1999 SIL International Conference and the June, 1999 WBT International Convention is a pacesetting document that provides an example of the kind of thinking needed as we face the future. Here it is:

RESOLUTION ON VISION 2025

Motivated by the pressing need for all peoples to have access to the Word of God in a language that speaks to their hearts, and reaffirming our historic values and our trust in God to accomplish the impossible, we embrace the vision that by the year 2025, a Bible translation project will be in progress for every people group that needs it.

We acknowledge that this cannot be accomplished simply by our working harder or doing more of what we are doing now. It will require us to make significant changes in our attitudes and ways of working. Our desire is to build capacity for sustainable Bible translation programs and Scripture use activities.

Therefore, we urge each entity within our family of organizations to give priority to strengthening present partnerships, forming additional strategic partnerships, and working together to develop creative approaches appropriate to each context. To this end, we commit ourselves to pray for the fulfillment of this vision, seeking God's guidance and obeying Him in whatever new directions He may lead.

Resources

Many resources come across my desk. Here are three that I found both promising and refreshing:

1) Darrow L. Miller's *Discipling the Nations* is not really a book on strategy. It's a book on Worldview. Contextualization efforts sometimes stagnate at the level of syncretism because the issue of worldview - that set of assumptions held consciously or unconsciously in faith about the basic makeup of the world and how the world works - is overlooked. Ideas have consequences. Miller writes out of his background in relief and development work. His thesis is that the most crucial contribution we can make on behalf of the needy is a biblical worldview. This book spells

it out. Mission executives and field missionaries need to read this book as it relates to the development of strategy. Missions professors need to think about including this book on a course in missions theology and/or cross-cultural communication.

2) Mission Frontiers' latest issue on Women and Missions is first class. Here is the material you need to flesh out this often neglected theme. There are great articles by Elizabeth Elliott, Francis Love, and others, plus Robertson McQuilkin's thoughts on dependency. Fine vignettes about Joy Ridderhof, Lottie Moon, Amy Carmichael and others are included in the issue. Want to make it available to your students at no extra charge? E-mail mission.frontiers@uscwm.org.

3) The long awaited film on William Carey "Candle in the Dark" is out at last. Better yet, there is a splendid educational video complete with an educational kit to teach about Carey in four lessons. Great for missionary orientations, mission history or local church education. Write to Vision Video, P.O. Box 540, Worcester, PA, 19490-0540.

How has your summer been? What do you have to share with the rest of us? Bob Lenz [BobLenz@compuserve.com] would love to hear from you.