A Constructive Missiological Approach to Short-Term Mission

by

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To Mary Gray-Reeves, Gerard Mpango, Sadock Makaya
and in memory of Michael Perham
siblings in Christ who inspire me

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Chapter 1

1 This Historical Moment in Missiology: Problems and Hopeful Signs

This thesis moves toward a constructive theology of mission amidst the core problems associated with short-term mission: paternalism, dependency and disempowerment, and lack of critical reflection. Voices in World Christian are prioritized by engaging these problems in conversation with world theology, the contextualization of scripture, and critical reflection on mission practice. From this conversation, nine principles are identified to shape constructive practice: *encounter, incarnation, worship, empowerment, narrative, proclamation, repentance, reconciliation,* and *discernment*. These principles are applied to case studies of innovative short-term mission and cross-cultural relationships. Resources to support constructive mission practice will arise from the case studies and review of literature.

1.1 Introduction

Much has been written about problems caused by short-term mission, and international development work or foreign aid in general. Best-sellers have opened the dialogue beyond the scholarly realm, including: *Dead Aid*, *The White Man's Burden*, and *Toxic Charity*.[1] The work of this thesis will be to develop a constructive theology of mission which can inform short-term mission engagement. Real-world case studies will

[1] Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa* (2009; repr., New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010). William Easterly, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good* (2006; repr., New York: Penguin Books, 2007). Robert D. Lupton, *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help, And How to Reverse It* (2011; repr., New York, NY: HarperOne, 2012).

be explored in light of this theology and key literature in an effort to distill better practices for short-term mission.

In this chapter, key concepts for this constructive theology of short-term mission will be defined and examined. It will be argued that prevalent problems in short-term mission include paternalistic behavior flowing from a focus on transformation of the other which disempowers causing dependency and a lack of critical reflection about these behaviors. However, these problems are mirrored in hopeful developments, including contemporary immigration of Christians to the United States including non-Western missionaries, the contextualization of scripture and tradition by World Christians, and the world-wide mission conversation which is bringing both critique and an opportunity for transformation to Global Christianity.

1.2 Definitions

The following terms are defined in depth because they are central to the argument of this thesis, and are terms which have been used in different ways, misunderstood, or are not standardized. Discussion of the key problems of short-term mission, begin in section 1.3.

1.2.1 Short-term Mission

Brian Howell defines short-term mission as "short travel experiences for Christian purposes such as charity, service or evangelism."[2] The length of time signified by "short-term" has meant anything from a few days to a few years. Howell narrows the definition into two groups. The first group is trips that are designed for working adults or students

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[2] Brian M. Howell, *Short-Term Mission: An Ethnography of Christian Travel Narrative and Experience* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012), 20.

for a short vacation, one to two weeks in length. The second is for students and working adults who take several months or a year off to do service. For Howell, the length of time does not define short-term mission, but rather the sense of the cultural and social location of the traveler.[3] For this thesis, the length of short-term mission will be from a few days to a few weeks, because this reflects the more common length of short-term mission experience in The Episcopal Church at present.[4]

Howell also names the cross-cultural dynamics of short-term mission, the presence of power relationships, and the influence of economic/social position which could further create social divisions and hierarchy.[5] For this thesis, short-term mission will be considered as an exchange between groups of Christians from different economic, cultural, or geographic contexts, with a power differential between the groups.

Motivations for short-term mission are also an important part of its definition. Howell's study of narrative around short-term mission identified motivation for adventure/tourism, pilgrimage, evangelism, and poverty alleviation.[6] In addition to these categories, I have found in research of mission engagement in my own diocese, motivations for personal formation, as well as cross-cultural relationships, and/or the support and building up of long-term partnership relationships (companion diocese, link parishes, for example).[7] These motivations can be broken into three categories according

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[3] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 46-48

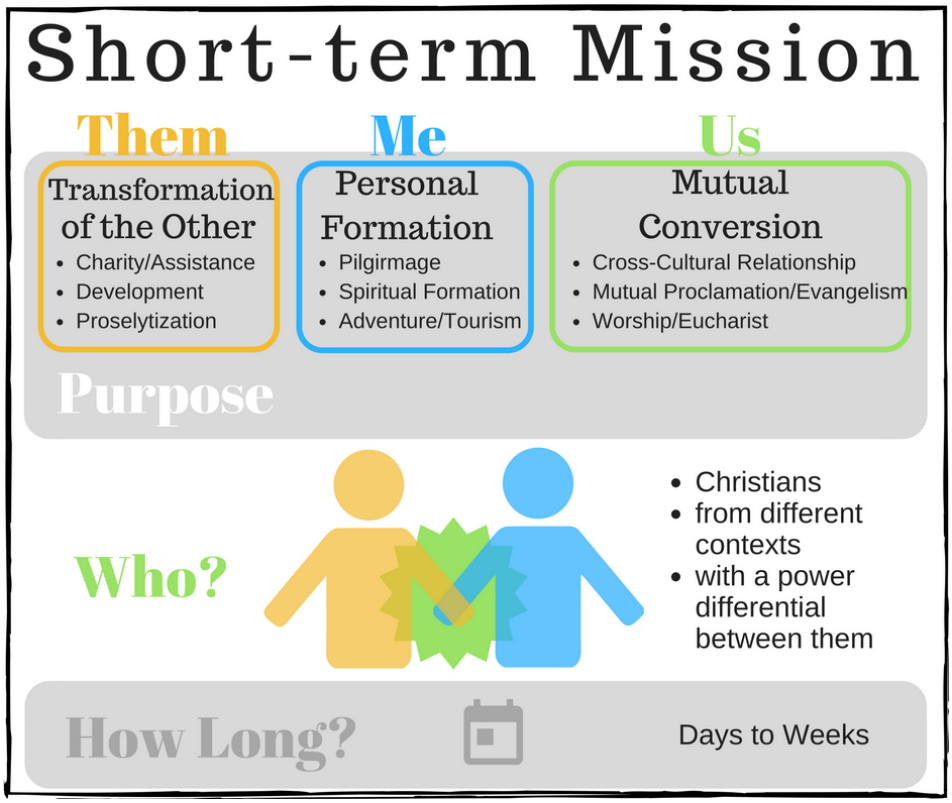
[4] There are approximately 30 or fewer Young Adult Service Corps (year-long foreign mission service) participants from The Episcopal Church each year (looking at records available on episcopalchurch.org), while in my diocese alone, more than half the congregations will send individuals or teams on trips that are days to weeks in length in a given year (from research data 2008, see next footnote).

[5] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 30.

[6] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 44-64.

[7] In 2008 I conducted survey research of the foreign mission activity of all the parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real, for the creation of the ECR World Mission Network, which only launched briefly (archived source material: http://worldmissionnetwork.blogspot.com, see mission data files). These two motivations were among those frequently mentioned by those engaged in mission.

to the locus of the desired change that motivates short-term mission: transformation of the other, personal formation, and mutual conversion. The first category is focused on changing the other person, including charity or assistance, development or empowerment, and proselytization. This category is often, but not always, framed by paternalism (see 1.2.5, 1.3.1), especially if it is the only motivation for short-term mission. The second category of motivation is focused on changing the self, including pilgrimage, spiritual formation, and adventure or tourism. The last category of motivation is one of mutuality, which seeks something deeper than change. The final category seeks mutual conversion, by the Holy Spirit, through worship or Eucharist, mutual proclamation or evangelism, and cross-cultural relationship building. Worship is included here, because worship is a corporate act of proclamation. Through worship and sharing in the Eucharist, the gathered groups are knit together into a community of fellowship, and transformed into the body of Christ.



In The Episcopal Church, evangelism is not a commonly identified purpose for foreign short-term mission.[8] However, proclamation as evangelism cannot be ignored, because it is central to definitions of mission (including Howell, Bosch, and the 5 marks of mission[9]). While the term evangelism historically was associated with foreign mission in The Episcopal Church, the church's discomfort with the idea of evangelism also dates historically to The Episcopal Church's rejection of the religious passion aroused by leaders of the First Great Awakening.[10] The word "evangelism" does not appear in the Book of Common Prayer, a sign that Episcopalians continue to neglect and misunderstand the term.[11] What might be meant by the term will be addressed in the following section.

1.2.2 Evangelism

While evangelism might be construed in negative terms associated with aggressive fundamentalist preachers, it is possible to think of the practice in more dialogic and holistic ways. David Gortner writes that evangelism is a person's "natural expression of gratitude for God's goodness," which is expressed through both the act of proclamation of one's own story, as well as listening to the stories of others.[12] David Bosch states that evangelism is an essential part of the activity of the Church, and that it

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[8] None of the foreign mission activity in my 2008 diocesan survey (see previous footnote), was evangelism related. In conversation with mission leaders of The Episcopal Church, this limited sample seems to be indicative of the church at large.

[9] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 20. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology Series, No. 16 (1991; repr., Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016), 11, 418-429. Andrew F. Walls and Cathy Ross, eds., *Mission in the Twenty-First Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), xiv. The first mark of mission, "To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom"

[10] David Gortner, *Transforming Evangelism*, Transformations (Church Publishing) (New York: Church Pub, 2008), 2-3.

[11] Gortner, *Transforming Evangelism*, 11-14.

[12] Gortner, *Transforming Evangelism*, 1.

involves "witnessing to what God has done, is doing, and will do."[13] Evangelism must flow from life lived as a Christian, and from a Christian community which manifests the Gospel to the world. Evangelism must begin with repentance and conversion of one's self and one's own community.[14] Gortner argues evangelism requires that the evangelist be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit within themselves, and in others. It emerges only from true personal conversion, and is fed by continual transformation. Being open to the Spirit allows the evangelist both to be open to the direction and empowerment of the Spirit, but also to allow the Spirit to kindle in one's own heart love for others, based not on one's own ability to love, but on the love that God already has for them.[15] Thus evangelism, by this definition, is always a mutual act. Transformation of both parties engaged in evangelistic conversation happens when both are open to the agency of the Spirit, and both are able to share and hear witness about God, as revealed in the Gospel and in each other's lives.

1.2.3 Constructive

The word constructive defines both the theology constructed here and its application. First, constructive theology refers to a branch of theology which looks at the insights, challenges, and blind spots of specific theologies, as well as the real-world problems of social and political structures which highlight difference and practice exclusion and oppression.[16] The Workgroup on Constructive Theology explains that they begin with the world as it is now, looking at the actual brokenness and harm in light of

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[13] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 422.
[14] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 424.
[15] Gortner, *Transforming Evangelism*, 2-3.
[16] Joerg Rieger, *God and the Excluded: Visions and Blind Spots in Contemporary Theology* (Minnepolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 15-16.

the "embodied, compassion-oriented Jesus who had the courage to live and die for the integrity of others, even others unlike himself."[17] Joerg Reiger describes the field of constructive theology thus:

> The relationships of different theologies need to be seen in greater relief, including a better understanding of their repressions and blind spots and more specific understanding of how different modes of theology relate and reconstruct each other… In the process it will become clear in which ways those different modes might work together in resisting the powers of exclusion and in serving the interest not only of one group of people or another, but of all.[18]

Constructive theology therefore casts a broad net that encompasses theologies formed in the context of real-world oppression, including liberation theology, post-colonial theology, and feminist theology. Constructive theologies should then, by definition, constantly be in dialogue with one another, with lived experience, and with dominant theologies, in order to continually construct theology which is nuanced, dynamic, and provides avenues for action.[19]

The constructive theology of mission I begin to develop in this thesis is critically reflective, grounded in the interplay between scripture, theology, and practice (chapter two) and is applied to case studies of innovative short-term mission (chapter three). This theology begins to provide a framework for developing and evaluating short-term mission practice which can be fruitful and life-giving to both the visitor and the host (chapter four).

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[17] Laurel C. Schneider, Stephen G. Ray, and Workgroup on Constructive Theology, eds., *Awake to the Moment: An Introduction to Theology*, First edition (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016), 3-5.
[18] Rieger, *God and the Excluded*, 16.
[19] Rieger, *God and the Excluded*, 13-16.

1.2.4 Western and Non-Western

There is a danger in over simplification, or binary thinking when grouping or referring to regions and cultures in generalized terms. I will try to mitigate this danger by emphasizing particular contexts and producing supporting evidence. The terms themselves I will adopt from non-Western writers, with the intention of finding terms which are more expansive and less hierarchal and Euro-centric than the older terms "First/Third World" or "Developed/Developing World." The more common "Two Thirds World" or "Global South," are also problematic because they are used to denote a demographic and economic division.[20] As this thesis attempts to move toward better mission practice, which includes models of listening, examining assumptions, and power analysis, it is especially important that the language being used reflects that process.

I will adopt Hanciles' practice of using the terms "West" or "Western" and "non-Western," as broad categories for discussing historical and contemporary interactions between nations and cultures.[21] These terms can be problematic in their suggestion of uniformity across a category, and that "non-Western" in particular tries to categorize different realities on the basis of what they are not. However, the distinction for Hanciles is helpful because Western culture tries to make a claim of universality, which makes it distinctly different from other cultural perspectives. Additionally, the terms capture the concept that the conditions and cultures of non-Western societies are beyond the reference and understanding of most Westerners.[22]

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[20] Jehu Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom: Globalization, African Migration and the Transformation of the West* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 25.
[21] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 2.
[22] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 25.

The West or Western, here refers to nations and peoples of Western Europe, and their descendants in different parts of the world. It also suggests the heritage of Western Christendom, from the Western Roman Empire. Non-Western is, in essence, everyone else.[23] However, in agreement with Randy Woodley and Gregory Cuéllar, an additional distinction of indigenous peoples needs to be made within the category non-Western. Structures which seek to erase and exploit indigenous people continue to exist within Western and non-Western nations.[24] Therefore this thesis will also consider the voices of indigenous theologians, and conduct a case study in an indigenous context. This thesis will adopt Lamin Sanneh's language distinguishing two forms of Christianity "World Christianity" and "Global Christianity." For Sanneh, Western Christianity was domesticated by bureaucracy from the time of Christendom (imperial Christianity from the Middle ages). Global Christianity, by name, is a parallel drawn with globalization. It suggests the replication of Christian forms developed in Europe, through the modern missionary movement. In contrast, World Christianity refers to the many forms Christianity takes in non-Western or indigenous societies, shaped and expressed through culture, custom, and traditions of the people who adopted the faith, rather than by Western culture or bureaucracy.[25]

1.2.5 Paternalism

Paternalism can be understood as actions done on behalf of the other, for the other's best interest, without reference to or in opposition to the other's own decisions or

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[23] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 25.
[24] Kay Higuera Smith, Jayachitra Lalitha, and L. Daniel Hawk, eds., *Evangelical Postcolonial Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014). 64.
[25] Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?: The Gospel beyond the West*, 4th edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 22-23.

wishes.[26] Paternalism is named in reference to the relationship between parent and child, in which the child does not have full autonomy, and the parent makes decisions on behalf of the child. Paternalistic action betrays the underlying assumption that the other is either unfit or unable to make their own decisions. Paternalism can be motivated by love of neighbor but, when directed at autonomous adults, is also rooted in arrogance. The corrective for paternalism is to balance love of neighbor with respect for autonomy. On the other hand, respect for autonomy without love can produce indifference to the other's needs.[27] Missiologist David Bosch refers to the paternalism that grew in relationships between Global Christians and World Christians (as defined 1.2.4) in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Protestants were influenced by a Calvinist understanding of the depravity of human nature but were more ready to see it in non-Western peoples than in themselves. While Global Christians spoke of indigenization and "self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting" churches, practically they continued to hold paternalistic control over mission churches.[28] Paternalism continues to plague mission relationships, especially in the case of short-term mission (see 1.3.1).

1.3 Problems

Given the definition of constructive theology (1.2.3), critical reflection on some of the key problems in short-term mission is an important point of departure for this thesis. Such critical reflection, as will be seen, provides not only analysis of malpractice but also hopeful signs that lead to the constructive theological vision for mission proposed in chapter two.

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[26] James F. Childress and John Macquarrie, eds., *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986), 449-451.
[27] Childress and Macquarrie, *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, 449-451.
[28] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 300-301.

1.3.1 Paternalism and Transformation of the Other

One of the primary purposes of short-term mission (not as this thesis would construct it but as it has often been practiced and defined) is transformation of the other which could include charity or assistance, development, or proselytization (1.2.1). Desire to transform the other, especially according criteria imposed on the other, can often betray a framework of paternalism. Deconstructing paternalistic frameworks which are present in short-term mission is therefore a crucial precursor to the critical evaluation of short-term mission, and the identification of best practices and structures which address or prevent it. Because more significant scholarly work has already been done evaluating paternalism in the international development field, and mission field (beyond short-term mission), this thesis will draw also on those sources,[29] to identify shared principles between these fields and short-term mission.

Alleviation of poverty is a shared humanitarian concern between short-term mission and contemporary international development. Contemporary concepts of development have their roots, according to Jonathan Barnes, in the humanitarianism of the colonial era. Barnes makes the distinction between aggressive and reformist humanitarianism. Aggressive humanitarianism involved increased intervention and colonial settlement in the name of humanitarian concern. For example, colonial powers used anti-slavery concern to justify their increased colonization and intervention in foreign nations. Reformist humanitarianism, which recognized the excesses and exploitation of colonialism, called for those in power to work for the benefit of all. For example, making demands on intervening national or corporate powers to act not only for

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[29] Including Easterly, Lupton, Moyo, and Rostow.

their own profit or interest, but also to give to local humanitarian assistance. While this was an improvement, the reformist humanitarian view was still shaped by latent paternalism and a sense of cultural superiority.[30] After World War II, the concept of development of non-Western nations evolved from this reformist humanitarianism, and was still plagued by paternalism and cultural superiority. Barnes points out the hypocrisy in Truman's Four Point Plan for America's involvement in the world, which promoted direct monetary investment in Europe through the Marshall Plan, versus a "bold new program for making… our progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas."[31] Dambisa Moyo draws the distinction between the largely successful Marshall Plan, an injection of cash for infrastructure redevelopment in post-war Europe, versus the disastrous effect of decades of unregulated aid to countries in Africa, which has pervaded all sectors of government and economy. The former was a limited, temporary effort, producing a successful and economically independent Europe, while the latter has effectively crippled economic development and propped up corrupt governments across Africa.[32]

Robert Heaney describes the overt racism that was present in nineteenth century mission practice, in the suppression and displacement of local leadership, and in literature, in which certain races were seen as more susceptible to sin.[33] William Easterly explains that after the devastation of World War II, the West began to see the dangerous fallacy of the idea of racial superiority. While mission and development agencies

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[30] Jonathan S. Barnes, *Power and Partnership: A History of the Protestant Missionary Movement*, American Society of Missiology Monograph Series, vol. 17 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 7.
[31] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 241.
[32] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 36-37, 50.
[33] Robert S. Heaney, "Missiology and Ministry," in *The Study of Ministry* (SPCK Publishing, forthcoming), 4.

changed the racist words they used, thought patterns or behavior were not necessarily changed. For example, "underdeveloped" replaced "uncivilized" and "third world" replaced "savage peoples."[34] Many other parallels for more recent language could also be drawn: "empowered" or "capacity building" instead of "civilizing." It is possible to use these words without intending the historical assumptions listed here. However, it appears that the assumption persists, that it is desirable for more communal or subsistence economies to develop into high-consumption industrialized economies. According to Barnes, this widespread evolutionary theory of development was systematized by Rostow in 1960, and has pervaded the international development industry from non-governmental organizations, to nations, to the UN.[35] Proponents of this theory believed they were ushering in a new age of transformed relationships from the "parent-child" of colonialism, to a "tutor-student" or "older sibling-younger sibling" relationship, in keeping with the rise of independent states, and the new Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, the lived experience of the newly independent nations was that Western wealthy countries were still exerting control over resources and finances. Barnes argues that the aggressive and reformist strains of colonial humanitarianism are still present in international development, and Christian mission. Barnes gives the example of Communauté Evangélique d'Action Apostolique (CEVAA), a mission agency widely hailed for its radical inclusion of input and direction from world Christian partners since the 1970s. However, though it was considered one of the best examples of shared leadership and direction, the Bangalore Consultation of 1996 identified problematic issues within CEVAA including: unwillingness of Western churches to fund programs

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[34] Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*, 24.
[35] Walt Whitman Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1990).

they did not control, differing opinions on the criteria for funding, lack of trust, and disproportionate money and "envoys" from the West.[36] Despite decades of partnership discussions in the World Council of Churches gatherings around mutuality and solidarity, paternalistic practices continue to be common.[37]

These paternalistic mindsets and practices also continue in contemporary short-term mission practice. Howell asserts, "poverty and alleviating physical need have become strongly attached to the notion of mission work generally, and short-term missions in particular."[38] Short-term mission, which is focused on alleviation of need (charity/assistance/development), can be tempted to follow the path of paternalism because it is easier and quicker to act unilaterally than to do the hard work of cross-cultural relationship building. Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert argue one of the core problems with short-term mission is that participants see poverty fundamentally as a lack of material resources, and that they therefore focus their effort on giving materials to those who they consider to be poor.[39] This prevailing attitude betrays both a misunderstanding of poverty, and an inherent paternalism. Bryant Myers asserts that the place to begin understanding poverty is relationship with people who are poor. "The beginning of healing the marred image of the poor is to accept that they alone have the right to describe their reality and to shape their vision of their better future."[40] Howell, who is interested in the narrative of short-term mission, highlights the way in which short-term mission participants interpreted what they saw through their previously held

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[36] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 378.
[37] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 413-414.
[38] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 63.
[39] Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor... and Yourself*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2012), 155.
[40] Bryant Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*, Revised (2011; repr., Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 185.

narratives of poverty.[41] The trips themselves (which he studied) were not long enough, or did not provide the opportunity or necessity to challenge or re-write previously held narratives about poverty and its alleviation.[42] In humanitarian eagerness to alleviate poverty, the focus of the short-term mission trip can be on transformation of the other, without respect to the other's own narrative, autonomy, experience, or wishes.

This persistence of paternalistic behavior, despite conversations about mutuality at the international level, is a major problem. Naming and describing the problem and conversation about the problem, it appears, have changed rhetoric more than they have changed behavior. It seems that what is needed first and foremost is not a transformation of others or even a change in model (though that may be necessary as well), but rather a profound conversion of those behaving in paternalistic ways (2.2).

1.3.2 Dependency and Disempowerment

Misapplied charity and development work can cause dependency and disempowerment from the national level to the individual, and from ecumenical relationships to short-term mission. The missionary zeal of the colonial period, was replaced in the late twentieth century by a "failure of nerve about the missionary enterprise."[43] This led to a discontinuing or reduction of mission evangelism, and an increased focus on development in short-term mission, which can blur the distinction between Christian mission and secular development work.[44] Heaney warns that this "secularization" of mission can produce an "over bloated sense of human agency."[45]

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[41] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 63-64.
[42] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 62-65.
[43] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 7.
[44] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 7.
[45] Heaney, "Missiology and Ministry," 6.

When that agency remains with the missionary, it can be disempowering to those served. When God is not the center and source of mission, when mission is made to be about lack of wealth or standard of living, the temptation may be strong for the missionary to see themselves as the savior, doing the work of saving the poor. This is not the proclamation of the Gospel.

Proclamation of the Gospel is central to mission (see 1.2.2), and to interpreting and evaluating mission. Lesslie Newbigin explains that word and deed are integrally connected in Christian faith and life. There is no dichotomy between the two in the New Testament. Healing and proclamation of the Good News are not two things but the same thing. Thus without proclamation, deeds go uninterpreted.[46] Uninterpreted deeds in short-term mission, focused on the transformation of the other (charity, assistance, development), disconnected from the Gospel message "do to others as you would have them do to you," are more likely to produce paternalistic action, which in turn promotes dependency and disempowerment by the disrespect of autonomy and agency (see 1.2.5). The World Council of Churches in the 1960s is a telling example of this. Though strides were made toward more inclusion of World Christians, and the creation of bodies for mutual ministry (Joint Action for Mission and Inter-Church Aid), cooperation did not produce change in the realities of mission. Despite carefully worded resolutions with the intention for mutuality in partnership, practically partnership continued to look like "benevolent trusteeship."[47]

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[46] Lesslie Newbigin, "Cross-Currents in Ecumenical and Evangelical Understandings of Mission," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 6, no. 4 (October 1982), 146–51.
[47] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 295-296.

Rostow's theory of development,[48] discussed above in terms of paternalism, also produces dependency. International aid, which has been used to promote development, can be used as an example of how this concept of development can become destructive. Moyo describes aid as a "vicious cycle," which, "chokes off desperately needed investment, instills a culture of dependency, and facilitates rampant and systematic corruption."[49] She goes as far as saying that aid keeps African countries in a childlike relationship with Western nations.[50] This is an illustration of how paternalism and dependency can be linked.

Gustavo Gutiérrez ascribes to a theory of dependence which argues that the underdevelopment of poorer nations is a direct byproduct of the development of wealthy nations.[51] The word development, he claims, has become a pejorative term in Latin America "developmentalism" (*desarrollismo*), because as it was applied to deal with surface level economic problems rather than attack the systemic root of those problems. He argues that if development is applied more broadly to encompass historical understanding and human values, then it enters the category of liberation.[52] Short-term mission being linked with development, by word and practice, can inherit both the association and history that World Christians have with the term, as well as the functional negative effects.

Besides systems of dependence between nations, dependence and disempowerment can also happen in the individual through short-term mission. Paulo

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[48] Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*.
[49] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 49.
[50] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 32.
[51] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*, trans. Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (1973; repr., Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 51-52.
[52] Gutiérrez, *Theology of Liberation*, 15-16.

Freire was concerned with the liberation of the oppressed, including breaking dependence and disempowerment, through the use of different educational models. Through Freire's work with peasants in Latin America, he learned from them that oppression leads to emotional dependence. Though short-term mission should not be overtly oppressive, it may occur in the context of relationship with people who are experiencing oppression. Additionally, oppression comes not just in the form of violent oppressive structures, but also paternalistic acts of charity which keep the poor dependent upon the wealthy for economic gain or survival. Freire argues that the oppressed experience themselves to be "under" or dependent upon those who are oppressing them.[53] The oppressed person internalizes the oppression, and can become inhibited and resigned to their suffering.[54] This resignation is at the heart of disempowerment. A person whose agency has been inhibited and has become resigned to their reality, does not recognize their own ability to act. Acts of charity which keep the poor in a position of dependence are merely surface level assistance without change to the structures which keep people poor.[55] Archbishop Hélder Câmara said, "When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist."[56] This famous quote alludes to prevailing social constructs which glorify paternalistic action while being wary of systemic change.

The oppressor, to Freire, is not only the person who is actively subjugating the people, but also the person who by right of the social status of their own birth, finds themselves benefiting from systems of oppression. Given the definition of short-term mission as happening in the presence of a perceived power/wealth differential between

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[53] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Penguin Group, 1996), 31, 49.
[54] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 29.
[55] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 31.
[56] Hélder Câmara, *Dom Helder Camara: Essential Writings* (Orbis Books, 2009), 13.

groups (1.2.1), this dynamic of oppressor/oppressed could be in play. Freire cautions that some people who find themselves in the place of oppressor unwittingly, may choose to side with the oppressed. However, these converts cannot divorce themselves from unconscious assumptions they carry about the poor and over-confidence in their own agency. Freire warns, "Our converts… truly desire to transform the unjust order, but because of their background they believe that they must be the executors of the transformation."[57] Freire is emphatic that only the oppressed can be the agents of their own liberation, not the oppressor, no matter how well-meaning they may be. Furthermore, only the liberation of the oppressed by the oppressed, can serve to liberate the oppressor as well.[58] This is a radical concept for short-term mission.

1.3.3 Lack of Critical Reflection

Critical reflection can produce confession and lament, as well as transformation of behavior. The transformation which Freire calls for, in the person who wishes to help the oppressed, is a radical transformation. "Conversion to the people, requires a profound rebirth."[59] Transformation cannot happen without critical reflection. The pervasiveness of well-meaning but destructive paternalistic behavior is due at least in part to a lack of critical reflection about mission practice, including short-term mission practice. Howell declares that the prevailing experience of short-term mission lacks adequate follow up and review. In the absence of review and reflection on what ideas and thought patterns need to be changed, previously held narratives about poverty and assistance will persist.[60]

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[57] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 41-42
[58] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 26
[59] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 43.
[60] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 233.

Despite decades of global churches promising to change paternalistic behaviors, those words have not been translated into action.[61]

Critical reflection brings different concepts and ideas from other perspectives and contexts into conversation with one another, and evaluates what is said about mission with the lived experience. Without it, problematic prevailing narratives about short-term mission endure. One such problematic narrative focuses on the need of the local people and work done by the missionary during the experience, when relating the experience back to the home community.[62] The structuring of narrative in this way, over-values the agency of the short-term missionary themselves over and above the agency of the ones they seek to help, or even of God. Howell's research revealed a meta-narrative among short-term missionaries which focused on the work of the missionary as sacrifice and service, for which they received a spiritual blessing from the poor who they served and from God.[63] These assertions are brought into question by quantitative research. Most short-term mission research studies focus on the impact of the experience on the visitor rather than the impact on the host.[64] This in itself is an example of the problem of lack of critical reflection in mission practice. One study in Honduras revealed that local Christian organizations who build houses had a more significant and longer-term impact on residents than short-term mission teams who did similar work.[65] A number of quantitative research studies done on short-term mission teams showed that while participants reported that their lives were changed by the experience and their faith deepened, when

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[61] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 8.
[62] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 173-184.
[63] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 177-178.
[64] Kurt Alan Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling: Review of Quantitative Research on Short-Term Missions," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right*, ed. Robert J. Priest, Evangelical Missiological Society Series, no. 16 (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 477-478.
[65] Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling," 478.

they were subjected to before and after surveys regarding their spiritual maturity and behaviors, there was no actual change.[66]

Coming to the experience with strong narratives already in place can limit what participants experience, and what they see. Critical reflection of the actual experience, versus the expectations may change the narrative that is told. Howell gives the example of a high school student who goes on a mission trip, without change to his ideas about "why the people are poor," but after going to college, and taking some classes which address the complexity of poverty, his narrative about the trip changed.[67] Critical reflection in the educational process seems to have produced more change in this young man's opinions about poverty, than the short-term mission experience did. One study which looked at the effect of short-term mission experience on the paternalism of participants, found that university participants in short-term mission did not have a reduction in their paternalistic behavior, except for a small number who were also studying mission at the university. The continued learning and reflection on mission seems to have encouraged them to reflect on their experience and change their thought patterns.[68]

Freire promotes critical reflection as part of pedagogy. He describes the top-down education system (which he opposes) as a "banking" style of education, which is controlled by those in power, and sees learners as depositories of information. This style of education does not require critical reflection. Facts are to be learned and used.[69] Freire

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[66] Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling," 481-487.
[67] Howell, *Short-Term Mission*, 178.
[68] Kyeong Sook Park, "Researching Short-Term Missions and Paternalism," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right*, ed. Robert J. Priest, Evangelical Missiological Society Series, no. 16 (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008). 522-525.
[69] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 58.

prefers a different model of education which is critically reflective. He emphasizes that true reflection leads to action, and that action will only be authentic if it is critically reflected upon.[70] If conversion in short-term mission is to be mutual, it cannot happen in the absence of critical reflection.

Lack of critical reflection has plagued the modern missionary movement throughout the twentieth century.[71] Many conversations around mission partnership happened at the international level, and tremendous progress was made in defining partnership in terms of mutuality, and even experimenting with restructuring of mission organizations. Yet despite this change in rhetoric, the reality of paternalism persisted.[72] Barnes points out that those involved in mission want to see their partners as equals, so they do not look critically at inequalities in power, wealth, and opportunity.[73] Ignoring power imbalances only serves to exacerbate them, and prevents the self-transformation that is possible through critical reflection in cross-cultural relationship building.

Critically reflecting on the mistakes that have been made by the Church, and the brokenness and injustice of systems that create poverty is a necessary first step. Myers argues that broken relationships and injustice are part of the problem which causes poverty, and if Christians are to engage in the work of change-making, repentance and forgiveness must be a part of the process.[74] Prayer and internal transformation are necessary before reconciliation can happen. "Praying the Kingdom means asking God's action in exposing the god complexes of the non-poor, and for the even more difficult challenge of repentance by the non-poor for having assumed roles that only God should

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[70] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 48.
[71] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 417.
[72] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 416-417.
[73] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 422.
[74] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 185.

play."[75] According to Barnes, repentance, and truth telling are necessary first steps for reconciliation, along with openness and transparency, which have not been adequately expressed by churches and mission agencies to this point.[76]

1.4 Hopeful Signs

The lived-problems in short-term mission of paternalism, disempowerment, and lack of critical reflection (1.3) are the starting place for developing a constructive theology of short-term mission. Those problems are directly related to three hopeful signs, which suggest that a way out of these problems is possible. Immigration brings World Christians and non-Western missionaries in contact with Westerners. Contextualization of scripture and theology, is both a sign of empowerment and empowers those who engage in it. Growing critique of Western mission from non-Western and indigenous people is an opportunity for transformation. The definitions and problems explained in this chapter provide a point of departure towards hopeful signs and a constructive theology of short-term mission proposed in chapter two.

1.4.1 Immigration and Non-Western Missionaries

The center of World Christianity is no longer the West. Today there are more non-Western Christians, by far, than Western Christians. As Christianity is on the decline in the United States, immigration is bringing World Christians to the United States. These immigrants have the opportunity, by their presence and witness, to challenge and shape Christianity in the United States.[77] Immigration in the past has made the United States the most religiously diverse nation in the world. This new wave of Christian immigration, as

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[75] Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 234.
[76] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 395.
[77] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 6.

their churches become more established, will be able to reach out to wider populations, beyond their own immigrant groups, and may contribute to the "de-europeanization" of American Christianity.[78] This new reality of Christian immigration and the decline of Western Christianity in the United States, means that the US has become a missionary-receiving nation. The Christian immigrants largely come from evangelistic traditions, making it likely that their churches will develop strategies for cross-cultural evangelism and mission locally.[79]

This means that the opportunities for cross-cultural relationship are not limited to the foreign travel, but can be experienced in one's own home community. Additionally the decline in American Christianity and the potential of evangelism by non-Western missionaries, is a reality which challenges the paternalistic thinking of Global Christians, who are confronted with the reality that they need something which World Christians can provide. The presence of people from diverse backgrounds presents a challenge to the church in Western contexts to examine its traditions and theology through encounter with other views, and provides the opportunity for life-giving transformation, by way of encounter, empowerment, and reconciliation (2.3).

1.4.2 Contextualized Scripture and Theology

In the face of the disempowering influences of colonialism and development, World Christians have rejected dependency and subverted hegemonic intent, sometimes with the help of missionaries, to contextualize scripture and the theology of the West, to

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[78] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 248.
[79] Hanciles, *Beyond Christendom*, 277, 298.

reflect their own experience of God in their context and culture.[80] One example Sanneh gives is Western missionaries insistence that witchcraft did not cause death which failed in convincing African Christians. African Christians found examples in scripture which confirmed their experience of witchcraft, and also suggested methods for healing. They contradicted western missionaries by contextualizing healing rites from scripture as a remedy for witchcraft.[81] As scripture is interpreted and translated into a local language, and theological concepts are wrestled with, recognition happens of the divine already present in every culture. Citing Paul's speech on Mars Hill, Sanneh explains, "It had never been Christianity's part to fabricate the idea of God or of the divine where it did not exist."[82] Contextualization is a process by which scripture and theology are adapted by people in light of their own culture and experience of the divine. Hybridization is an interpretive, creative process by which the Gospel witness is influenced by intentional resistance to colonization, and the unintended consequences of colonizers.[83] When the Gospel is contextualized and hybridized by indigenous people, it begins to spread more quickly through local agency, than it did by Western missionaries. Many Western missionaries who witnessed this phenomenon were not only humbled by it, but inspired afresh by the witness of the Gospel through the lens of indigenous culture.[84]

Scripture in itself is a witness to diversity and, when contextualized, is a source of empowerment, and encouragement to resist hegemony. Each different cultural

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[80] Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 2nd ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 211-226, 250.
[81] Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 212.
[82] Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 192.
[83] Robert S. Heaney, *From Historical to Critical Post-Colonial Theology: The Contribution of John S. Mbiti and Jesse N. K. Mugambi*, African Christian Studies Series 9 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 16.
[84] Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 216-217.

perspective on the story of God's love through Jesus, adds richness to whole picture of the Gospel in the world.[85] The Gospels have multiple voices, and in that plurality address the deep issues of solidarity and brokenness in human community and relationship.[86] The nature of the Gospel is Good News to the poor. Gutiérrez argues that the Gospel upends unjust social orders, and promises liberation of the oppressed, from physical and political oppression, and from sin. He gives the example of the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) which is at the same time a humble declaration of what it is to be loved by God, as well as a powerful declaration of God's liberating work in the political sphere.[87] "He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly" (Luke 1:52).

1.4.3 Critique as an Opportunity for Transformation

Bosch highlights the affirmation by a number of world mission conferences that mission is the "whole church bringing the whole gospel to the whole world."[88] This definition of mission is seen to stand in contrast to historical models of mission. The fifteenth century, known as the Age of Discovery, "was as much an age of European colonization and Christian expansionism as it was an age of subjugation and slavery."[89] A paternalistic understanding of mission, prioritizing Western agency, continued with colonization through the nineteenth century. Missionary societies of that time were uncritical of colonialism and paternalism, seeking to "civilize" as much as convert.[90] In the twentieth century, participation from World Christians at mission conferences

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[85] Christopher Duraisingh, "Toward a Postcolonial Re-Visioning of the Church's Faith, Witness and Communion," in *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Ian T. Douglas and Pui-lan Kwok (New York: Church Publishing Inc., 2000), 351.
[86] Christopher Duraisingh, ed., *Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1998), 197-198.
[87] Gutiérrez, *Theology of Liberation*, 103, 120, 174.
[88] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 10-11.
[89] Heaney, "Missiology and Ministry," Draft Copy, 2.
[90] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 20, 419.

allowed for dialogue and critique of Western perspectives. Recommendations challenged and called Global Christians to transformation. Barnes points out:

> Just as world Christians were able to indigenize their faith through the agency of Global Christians, especially in vernacular translation, it is now the global churches that need the agency and assistance of world Christians as they seek to understand the Gospel in new ways.[91]

It is important to note that critique of Global Christianity in the age of Christendom did not only come from World Christians. Sanneh praises Roland Allen, a missionary at the turn of the twentieth century, for his critique of Global Christianity, and the role of enlightenment and civilization in mission. Allen also critiqued the association of mission with colonial rule, preferring to see mission as the work of the Spirit, through Christ and the witness of the apostles.[92] Newbigin criticized Global Christian perspectives that both conflate mission with the forces of globalization, as well as those who confuse the gospel with values of Western culture.[93] Timothy Dakin suggests that the historical moment we live in, where the West is increasingly non-Christian, and Christianity is increasingly non-Western, demands a refounding of Anglicanism. He calls for a return to the basics of faith, following Jesus in mission, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and recognizing the ultimate significance of Christ to all peoples.[94] This particular historical moment in missiology is ripe with opportunity for transformation through listening to critique from both within and outside of Global Christianity, and through critical cross-cultural conversation and relationship building both at the level of the ecumenical world councils, and at the level of individual Christians. The critical theology of mission

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[91] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 421.
[92] Roland Allen, *The Ministry of the Spirit* (London: World Dominion Press, 1960), iii-iv, 1-7.
[93] Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1986), 2.
[94] Timothy J. Dakin, "Missionary Work in the Anglican Communion," in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to the Anglican Communion*, ed. Ian S. Markham et al., The Wiley-Blackwell Companions to Religion (Chichester, UK: John Wiley and sons, 2013), 696, 698.

developed in chapter two is shaped by this concept of listening and prioritizing World Christian voices, as well as seeking critical reflection.

1.5 Conclusion

The core problems in short-term mission of paternalism and intent to transform the other, dependency and disempowerment, and a lack of critical reflection in mission practice, are challenged by the hopeful signs of immigration and the presence of non-Western missionaries in the West, contextualization of scripture and theology by indigenous and non-Western peoples, and critique of mission practice by World Christians. The destructive and disempowering influence of paternalism in short-term mission practice by Global Christians is replicated in the absence of critical reflection. Yet, World Christians have creatively contextualized theology and critiqued Global Christianity. This contextualization not only serves to liberate World Christians from the oppression of paternalism, but also to liberate Global Christians through transformation in mutual cross-cultural relationship. The next chapter will seek to lay out a constructive theology of short-term mission, which is critically reflective, and grounded in the interplay between scripture, theology and practice.

Chapter 2

2 A Constructive Theology of Mission

2.1 Introduction

The following constructive theology of mission is developed out of the current moment in mission history in which we find ourselves. The problems and hopeful signs of short-term mission in this moment discussed in the previous chapter, and reviewed below, lead us to work toward theology which engages world theologians, contextualizes scripture, and is critically reflective. The principles which arise in light of this theology and contextualization of scripture are: *encounter*, *incarnation*, *worship*, *empowerment*, *narrative*, *proclamation*, *repentance*, *reconciliation*, and *discernment*. These themes will be used to evaluate the case studies in chapter three, and will be explored in relation to practice in the final chapter of this thesis.

Mission is part of God's being demonstrated to the world through the incarnation, and the church is invited to be a part of that mission, in incarnational encounter with God and one another across cultural divides. The mission of God empowers the disempowered, and raises them up for liberating action. The mission of God is reconciling the world to each other and to God. Through repentance and critical reflection of practice, the church constantly discerns how God is calling the church to participate in God's mission.[95]

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[95] See for foundational arguments: John G. Flett, *The Witness of God: The Trinity, Missio Dei, Karl Barth, and the Nature of Christian Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub, 2010). Rieger, *God and the Excluded*. Stephen B. Bevans and Roger Schroeder, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, American Society of Missiology Series, no. 30 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004). Walls and Ross, *Mission in the Twenty-First Century*.

The key problem of short-term mission is paternalism and an attempt to transform the other (1.2.5, 1.3.1). This problem is informed by the hopeful sign that immigration and the presence of non-Western missionaries in the West, provide opportunity for challenging of these paradigms, forming of relationships, and encountering different cultures and understandings of Christ (1.4.1). Thus, exploring models and concepts from world theology may be helpful in constructing a theology of mission which leads to practice that breaks down paternalism and focuses on transforming the other (2.2).

As shown in chapter one, issues of disempowerment and dependency (1.3.2) relate to mission which carries a paternalistic mindset, with reference in this work to short-term mission specifically. This major problem arises from short-term mission which is uncritical of the relationship between culture and gospel and disregards the liberating nature of God. Despite the influence of disempowerment and dependency, World Christianity has contextualized scripture and theology in ways that subvert disempowerment, and Western hegemony (1.4.2).[96] This chapter, in moving towards a constructive theology of mission, will draw on *The Gospel in Solentiname,* a particular contextualized interpretation of scripture which continues to be foundational, encouraging practice informed by and drawn from the context (2.3).[97]

Despite changing models of mission informed by World Christians, it would seem that a lack of critical reflection in Western mission practice replicates a reality of short-

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[96] Sanneh, *Translating the Message,* 191-228. Heaney, *From Historical to Critical*, 8-22.

[97] See for further discussion: Dave Johnson and Russ Turney, *Theology in Context: A Case Study in the Philippines* (APTS Press, 2016). Clara Sue Kidwell, Homer Noley, and George E. Tinker, *A Native American Theology* (New York: Orbis Books, 2001). Jean-Pierre Ruiz, *Readings from the Edges: The Bible & People on the Move* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011). Fernando F. Segovia, *Decolonizing Biblical Studies: A View from the Margins* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000).

term mission practice which does not match changing rhetoric (1.3.3)[98]. Conversely, as World Christians offer up critique of Western short-term mission, an opportunity arises for transformation through critical reflection, which may include repentance and lament (1.4.3).

2.2 World Theology

Paternalism has been pernicious in mission practice despite criticism from World Christianity and post-colonial theology (1.2.5, 1.3.1). In discussing the history of mission, and partnership, Barnes describes the pre-modern hierarchical vision of God, who gives divine right to rule to those in power, and the conservative nature of pre-modern Western society in terms of idealizing this hierarchical structure, and harkening back to more ideal ancient times. This pre-modern notion of God's order of the world, suggested that the rulers were rulers by God's ordering, and the poor were poor, by the same ordering. The concept of progress, from which development flows, came later in the Enlightenment's rejection of these pre-modern concepts.[99] Paternalism is related to both the pre-modern acceptance of the ordering of social status as divine, as well as the notion of progress from the Enlightenment. Barnes argues that while the Enlightenment brought significant changes to Western thought, paternalism was strengthened by the notion of Western superiority of civilization and knowledge. The missionary movement began using language suggesting their role as divinely appointed parent.[100] Colonialism in the nineteenth century was held up as the way that Anglicanism could become universal. As America became an imperial power in the twentieth century, the general secretary of the

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[98] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 8-12, 291-299, 416-418.
[99] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 12-13.
[100] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 13-14.

Church Missionary Society even proposed a theology of imperialism, justified (not least) by an appeal for order and the greater good.[101] Because paternalism's root is in systems of thought and theology, it is there that work of constructing a theology of mission which rejects paternalism must effectively begin. One response to paternalistic theologies has been the concept of *missio Dei*, which has greatly influenced mission theology in the twentieth century. The next section will look at several models of *missio Dei*, and their implications. Different voices from World Christianity will be brought into the conversation, to cast a more expansive vision of theology, demonstrating a means to work against paternalism. This widening vision cannot ignore the recent contribution of post-colonial theology.

2.2.1 *Missio Dei*

Karl Barth grounds *missio Dei* in the idea of sending. Mission, he argues, originates from the divine sending of Christ in the Holy Spirit. Because it is God's mission, the church can participate only through obedience to God's grace. The church must both confess the revelation of God in Christ, and be obedient to Christ's call.[102] The concept of *missio Dei* influenced mission thinking in the twentieth century to think about the church as the one sent rather than the sender. Newbigin expressed this shift: the church is mission, every Christian community is a missionary community, and mission is partnership.[103] However, *missio Dei* was also used, in the wake of discomfort with the modern missionary movement, to distance or even exclude the actions of the church from

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[101] Heaney, "Missiology and Ministry," 3 of 10 (draft copy).
[102] Paul S. Chung, *Reclaiming Mission as Constructive Theology: Missional Church and World Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 107. citing Karl Barth's paper to the Brandenburg Conference, 1932.
[103] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 379.

God's mission. We are left then in a confusing place where the term is used both by those who would encourage and those who would discourage mission activity.[104] Heaney defines these as "inculturationist" and "institutionalist" views of *missio Dei*. He comments, "To develop a theology of the *missio Dei* with an emphasis on inculturation is to take a position that emphasizes God's work in all cultures… An institutionalist emphasis sees the church as central to the mission of God."[105] Newbigin labels these extremes as "unchurchly mission" and "unmissionary church."[106] A balance is needed then between saying that nothing of the action of the church is God's mission, and justifying all actions of the church as ordained by God.

John Flett identifies the problem in focusing on a particular understanding of sending as the essence of *missio Dei*. Sending as the core of God's mission, highlights division between God and creation, mission and the Church, God's own being and God's doing. Flett rightly renders *missio Dei*, defining God as a missionary by virtue of the incarnation. God's own being incarnationally bridges into God's creation, even before creation had begun. "The plenitude of the Father begetting the Son in the unity of the Spirit means that an 'above' and 'below' in an outward-turning history belongs to the one God's perfect life."[107] This understanding of *missio Dei,* in its commitment to the unity of God's being and doing, counters the possibility of the "sending" model of *missio Dei* being used to highlight separation between God's being and doing, or the church and mission. This incarnationally focused *missio Dei* encourages understanding the life and work of the Church as inherently part of the *missio Dei*.

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[104] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 402.
[105] Heaney, "Missiology and Ministry," 6 of 10 (draft copy).
[106] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God; Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (1954; repr.; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008), 148.
[107] Flett, *The Witness of God*, 288.

Bosch also agrees with this notion of the church called to join in the *missio Dei* and affirms, "To participate in mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people, since God is a fountain of sending love."[108] Heaney asserts that "God is mission," and that the sending nature of God's love is not only in the incarnation and sending of the Spirit, but in the act of creating itself. God's love is made known in terms of movement across boundaries.

> The one God is overflowing ever-living light and boundary-crossing love. That overflowing and boundary-crossing love is not, however, hidden in the being of God. On the contrary, that overflowing grace is revealed in the first missional act, "let there be light." That is to say, God is mission and mission is what God does.[109]

Thus, love and incarnational presence crossing boundaries and divides, are at the heart of what the church's participation in God's mission should look like.

One caution is that those with unexamined latent paternalism could look at this interpretation of *missio Dei* and see boundary crossing only in one direction, from Western to non-Western; to see Westerners as the ones with agency who would be the incarnational presence doing the loving. A possible means of overcoming this way of thinking is to read, listen to, and prioritize Christian theological reflection from non-Westerners. What this means in practice will be addressed presently.

2.2.2 Voices from World Christianity

World Christianity (1.2.4), has come to be used by scholars to refer to the complex and varied manifestations of Christianity around the world today. Jonathan Tan and Anh Tran argue that the past five hundred years of Christianity (in the modern age)

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[108] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 400.
[109] Robert S. Heaney, "What Is Mission? I," *The Episcopal Church, Short-Term Mission Essay Series*, accessed December 17, 2015, http://www.mission-centered.org/resource/what-mission-i.

have been dominated by Western narrative, interpretation, and knowledge. However, Western expressions of Christianity have always been influenced by expressions from other parts of the world.[110] Sanneh maintains that there is no one way to interpret World Christianity, it is interpreted through a "plurality of models of inculturation."[111] Tan and Tran claim that World Christianity must constantly critique any local form of knowledge which is lifted up as being universal. World Christianity is therefore not local manifestations of Christianity in isolation, but rather an encounter and dialogue between the local and the global, so that Christian understanding might be broadened, and "reflect the open-ended nature of the divine."[112]

Epistemic violence is one of the ways in which paternalism has played out in the hegemonic extension of Western thought through colonialism and globalization Western academic, scientific knowledge and logic is seen as "superior" to other non-Western and indigenous forms of knowing and experience.[113] Correcting this tendency to prioritize Western knowledge is not something which can be done in the course of this section. It must be discerned by Christians consistently and constantly in short-term mission theologizing and practice. Theological reflection should not be done in a vacuum, but in encounter with voices from World Christianity. In order to model this practice of entering the world-wide narrative of World Christianity, this section will engage several non-Western and indigenous theologians, in response to the problems identified in chapter one: subversion of paternalism and the attempt to transform the other, countering

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[110] Jonathan Y. Tan and Anh Q. Tran, *World Christianity: Perspectives and Insights* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016), 3, 12.
[111] Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?* 35.
[112] Tan and Tran, *World Christianity*, 5.
[113] Heaney, *From Historical to Critical*, 20.

disempowerment and dependency, and encouraging critical reflection in cross-cultural conversation.

Richard Twiss helpfully explains the way in which many missionaries to the indigenous peoples of North America were unable to shed their own paternalistic framework which prioritized Western knowledge.

> So many of the early missionaries were unable to recognize and embrace the intrinsic, God-given value of the people to whom they were sent. Craig Storti describes this blindness in terms of how our worldviews affect our interpretations of what we see as we ascribe meaning and value to what is observed or experienced. When it is something unknown, it can only be interpreted through the lens of previous "non-experience," an empty vacuum, and is typically misunderstood.[114]

It seems that what might be conversely true is that previous encounter through conversation and experience of specific non-Western or indigenous realities may, in fact, open a person to better engage in encounters in different non-Western or indigenous contexts (see 3.3, Navajoland case study).

Temba Mafico draws parallels between common themes in theologies across different cultures in Africa. He identifies the difference between African and Western theology centered around knowledge and experience. He portrays African theology as a different way of being from its Western counterpart in which faith is a lived experience in the context of culture and place.[115] Such tension is endemic in cross-cultural interaction (see 3.5, Holy Family case study).

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[114] Richard Twiss, "Clashing Worldview Assumptions That Brought Social, Economic, and Spiritual Devastation to Native American Peoples," *Cultural Encounters* 2, no. 2 (2006), 81–93.
[115] Temba L Mafico, "The Land and the African Context for Theology," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* 37, no. 1–2 (2011), 57–68.

> African culture and religion are intrinsically one and the same thing. An African cannot live or experience life outside of religion. Life is guided by one's religion, and religion is how one interacts with all nature… African theological philosophy of life and Western theology is simply this: Western theology is based on abstract thinking while African theology *is* the experience of life on the land that God entrusted to them.[116]

Mafico explains that this deep importance of ancestral land is a way of being, and of recognizing value of that which is, rather than what it can be utilized for. Because of this, African peoples who may still be suffering under material poverty are able to praise God for the empowerment of liberation from colonial power, for the right to call the land their own, and for the hope that the same God will liberate them from the current oppression and violence, toward a peaceful, prosperous, and just society.[117] Such liberation is a strong theme in the context of the Cristosal case study (see 3.4).

Elizabeth Joy describes Dalit theology as seeing liberation from the perspective of a people who have been systematically crushed and dehumanized for over two thousand years. Joy argues that liberation for one group or another is not enough, but that both the Gospel and Dalit experience demand total liberation of all people. This liberation must take place in more than just the structures of oppression, but also in the language, culture, and hierarchical paternalistic values. Strong parallels can be drawn between Dalit theology and the liberation theology of Latin America, as the liberation-seeking of an oppressed people. Reflecting this, the Salvadoran context will be further explored in 3.4the Cristosal case study (3.4).

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[116] Mafico, "The Land and the African Context for Theology," 57.
[117] Mafico, "The Land and the African Context for Theology," 64-67.

> [I]t is not possible to have a total human liberation as long as the language and culture of caste and empire speak of entities that are governed, ruled over and dominated in a hierarchically graded society where power, position, and exploitation flow from those above in this structure to those below them resulting in exploitation, oppression and dehumanisation.[118]

This liberation which she calls for is a healing and reconciliation where people are brought together in communion with each other and God. Joy is clear that this liberation action belongs to God. It is God's mission. All are called to participate in that mission, as one body.

> Mission here calls us to *Empower* downtrodden, *Embrace* Oppressors giving a space for repentance, *Explore* new meanings, *Experience* Christ and become his body and blood. Thus when we are one in Christ, from a Dalit perspective, Mission becomes Exciting, Embracing, Efficient, Empowering and Effective.[119]

These words (Joy's emphasis), "Empower, Embrace, Explore, Experience," are all lived actions or ways of being, not structures of knowing. She weaves the theme "this is my body, this is my blood," through her argument, grounding this notion of liberation and reconciliation in her understanding of being one body, and the action and experience of worship and Eucharist.[120]

Ken Miyamoto argues that Christian worship is inherently missiological in nature. Worship can be a transformative encounter with God which gives grace, faith, healing, reconciliation, and identity. Worship is a key function of the cross-cultural relationship that will be explored in the Holy Family case study (3.5). Despite this importance of worship, Global Christianity has prioritized the dissemination of Christian knowledge over worship as mission.

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[118] Elizabeth Joy, "This Is My Body, This Is My Blood: Implications for Mission Theology from a Dalit Perspective" (Mission Theology in the Anglican Communion, Lambeth Palace, 2016), http://www.missiontheologyanglican.org/article-mt/this-is-my-body-this-is-my-blood-implications-for-mission-theology-from-a-dalit-perspective/, 6.
[119] Joy, "Mission Theology from a Dalit Perspective," 9.
[120] Joy, "Mission Theology from a Dalit Perspective." 9.

> God draws nearest to the world in the midst of worship, particularly in the Eucharist. There the broken relation between God and human beings is healed…There the repeated personal encounter with God helps us internalize the divine grace and gradually nurtures our faith in God, and we thus develop a new identity as members of God's people. This personal encounter with God is the true foundation for personal transformation. Contrarily, theological knowledge as such does not have such a transforming power although it certainly serves as a guide and framework.[121]

Miyamoto points out that worship has been overlooked or omitted as a topic of mission. From the 1910 Edinburgh Conference, which set aside worship because of controversy between denominations, to the Anglican five-marks of mission, to the themes of the 2010 Edinburgh Conference. Worship is noticeably absent.[122] Though the ecumenical movement has achieved a shared sense of mission, and even shared ministry, the Eucharistic table continues to be a place of division between denominations, a symbol of the sin and brokenness, and a "grave obstacle to our witness."[123] Miyamoto draws the conclusion that the secularization in contemporary Japanese society is linked to the failure of the particular Western missionary strategy in Japan, of equating knowledge and faith, thus imparting Christian knowledge was confused as evangelism. In post-modern, post-Christian urban Japan Christian knowledge is granted no priority or authority.[124] Benno van den Toren documents a conversation he had with a Nigerian student studying at Oxford, which suggests a similar phenomenon:

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[121] Ken Christoph Miyamoto, "Worship Is Nothing but Mission: A Reflection on Some Japanese Experiences," in *Mission in the Twenty-First Century: Exploring the Five Marks of Global Mission*, ed. Andrew F. Walls and Cathy Ross (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2008), 161.
[122] Miyamoto, "Worship Is Nothing but Mission," 157-160.
[123] Miyamoto, "Worship Is Nothing but Mission," 162-163.
[124] Miyamoto, "Worship Is Nothing but Mission," 159-161.

> '[M]y English fellow students have a much better understanding of the Christian faith than I see in Nigerian Christians. I truly appreciate that. But at the same time it seems as if the Gospel lacks power over here. If we organise an evangelistic campaign in Nigeria, hundreds will come to faith. If we pray with people for healing it happens. Over here people organise so many activities, but so few people come to faith. It seems as if the Gospel does not have any power over here. How can that be?'[125]

This student's lived experience is one of feeling the power of God in an environment which prioritizes worship over Christian knowledge. Neither this student nor Miyamoto suggest that Christian knowledge should not be passed on, but rather it seems that the problem is in the prioritization over worship which is the transformative experience of encounter with God. This tension between worship and understanding is present in the Cristosal case study (3.4).

In 2007, a conference of thirty-five theologians from Asia, Africa, and around the world, met in Changseong, South Korea, to explore the concepts of *Ubuntu* and *Sangdaeng* and their usefulness in World Christian conversation.

> *Ubuntu* is an expression of human relations lived in community and in harmony with the whole of creation. *Sangdaeng* is an ancient Asian concept of a sharing community and economy which allows all to flourish together… Resonating with the biblical concept of *koinonia*, we received *Ubuntu* and *Sangdaeng* as necessary resources for the struggle with the critical issues of theology, civilization and ecumenism in the 21st century.[126]

This group of theologians recognized the importance, not only of their own cultural understandings and resources, but of the value of bringing together into conversation these understandings that were key to their own community's life and understanding of the Gospel. From that fruitful conversation came a commitment to shared life which by its very definition defies paternalistic structures and the prioritization of western

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[125] Benno van den Toren, "Intercultural Theology as a Three-Way Conversation," *Exchange* 44, no. 2 (June 8, 2015), 124.

[126] "Bringing Together Ubuntu and Sangsaeng: A Journey toward Life-Giving Civilization, Transforming Theology and the Ecumenism of the 21st Century," *International Review of Mission* 97, no. 384–385 (January 2008), 129–134.

knowledge. In this model of community, the recognition and respect of each other and creation is inherent, as is the understanding of mutual relationship, proclamation and experience of God.

With the resources of their particular contexts and experiences, and in conversation with other contexts, these non-Western and indigenous conversation partners have demonstrated the fruit of transformation. Such transformation can be born from a commitment to de-prioritizing Western knowledge, and lifting up other ways of knowing and being, including a radical commitment to *encounter*, *worship*, and *incarnational* Christian community. Post-colonial theology is a relatively new field which seeks not only to lift up these voices, but also to critique paternalism, it deconstructs the ways in which colonialism has influenced theology and subsequently challenges our practice and reflection on short-term mission.

2.2.3 Post-colonial Theology

Post-colonial theology has arisen out of experience of colonialism and a context of conversation between fields which are shaped by resistance to colonizing influences and exploitative ideologies.[127] It takes a critical position against dominant systems of knowledge, imposed by the powerful. The work of post-colonial theology then is to "decolonize" theology and interpretations, through a commitment to the colonized, oppressed, poor or disenfranchised.[128] Because of its prioritization of disenfranchised voices, and its commitment to exposing dominant, universalizing and exploitative systems of thought, post-colonial theology is a natural resource and conversation partner

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[127] Aware of the work of R. S. Sugirtharajah, Kwok Puilan, and Wohee Anne Joh.

[128] Gilberto Lozano and Federico A. Roth, "The Problem and Promise of Praxis in Postcolonial Criticism," in *Evangelical Postcolonial Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis*, ed. Kay Higuera Smith (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 183-185.

for constructing a theology of mission which seeks to eliminate paternalism from praxis. Christopher Duraisingh argues that post-colonial theology, is a "decolonizing commitment in solidarity" with the marginalized, which starts not with theological dogma, but with "a historically discerned understanding within the life and discipleship of the believing community."[129] Post-colonial theology can be a constructive theology because it directly addresses the blind spots and shortcomings of Global Christianity, in the aftermath of colonial domination.

Kay Higuera Smith explains how imperial powers depend upon a falsely constructed concept of "other" in order to support the "distancing, alienating, subsuming, or conquering" of peoples. The objectifying of the other is a means by which empires seek to suppress the agency of the colonized. This concept of the other pervades paternalistic thinking (1.3.1). Smith questions why the Church has tolerated and subsumed such a violent construction of identity.[130] Njongonkulu Ndungane explains that while colonial models were intended to maintain control, the overturning of those models does not mean revoking everything which is not African in genesis. Contextualization, as will be seen in the next section, allows for the inclusion of the traditions of Christianity in conversation with African symbols and traditions.[131] This kind of dynamic hybridization of culture is a core attribute of post-colonial theology, which highlights the agency of the colonized, and recognizes not only the resistance of non-Western cultures to Western

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[129] Duraisingh, "Toward a Postcolonial Revisioning," 342-343.
[130] Kay Higuera Smith, "Embracing the Other: A Vision for Evangelical Identity," in *Evangelical Postcolonial Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis*, ed. Kay Higuera Smith, Jayachitra Lalitha, and L. Daniel Hawk (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 197-198
[131] Njongonkulu Ndungane, "Scripture: What Is at Issue in Anglicanism Today?," in *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ian T. Douglas and Pui-lan Kwok (New York: Church Publishing Inc., 2000), 242.

hegemony, but also the hybridizing and indigenizing of Christianity, to form something new.[132] Heaney argues,

> [To decolonize] is to identify and participate in hybridizing processes which have been realized in the face of hegemonic agenda and practice. It is to recognize the importance of exercises of power in cultural and academic, as well as social and political, interfaces and to struggle towards the decentering and displacing of "Western" knowledge.[133]

While this hybridizing influence is important, it is not always apparent. Jaci Maraschin points out that in the experience of Anglican worship worldwide, the form and movement of worship appears to be strongly governed by the tradition of the Church of England. Maraschin calls for liturgical renewal in which the Book of Common Prayer might be transcended, through dialogue with other denominations, mysticism, and the beauty of both ancient and contemporary expressions. "Liturgy and mission are sisters dancing together in the direction of the beauty of the kingdom of God."[134] Worship functions with memory and remembering as do evangelism, community life, healing, and reconciliation. Smith argues that an oppressive act of dominant groups is to choose to forget or erase the contributions of those around them who they deem to be other. Through these acts of forgetting, they limit the story that is told, and create "fixed identities," employing "social memory as a weapon of destruction."[135]

> [O]nly when evangelization becomes a real sharing—one in which the humanity, the voices and the contributions of all parties involved lead to a conversation of mutual trust, respect, and enrichment—can we envision a postcolonial evangelical approach to embracing the other.[136]

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[132] Heaney, *From Historical to Critical*, 15-18.
[133] Heaney, *From Historical to Critical*, 21.
[134] Jaci Maraschin, "Culture, Spirit, and Worship," in *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ian T. Douglas and Pui-lan Kwok (New York: Church Publishing Inc., 2000), 329-330, 335-336.
[135] Smith, "Embracing the Other," 209.
[136] Smith, "Embracing the Other," 209.

Nicholas Rowe claims that healing begins with a disempowered community remembering, or rediscovering who they are, and their gifts, given by God, through their culture. The colonizer also has remembering to do for they must acknowledge the "context of domination and marginalization," repent, and commit to a new kind of relationship from that point on. This requires vulnerability and truth telling, transparency in remembering and in sharing about both the wounds and the journey to healing.[137] This new relationship is one of reconciliation, not one of assimilation. For Ray Aldred warns that the drive in the West to erase cultural distinctiveness results in eradicating or assimilating the other. He observes how dominant Western culture in North America has sought to erase indigenous identity through a Western-constructed notion of indigenous identity based on race. However, Aldred also recognizes that true sharing and legitimization can happen. This mutual proclamation may result in hybridization, or "dynamic development of a mosaic of peoples."[138]

Denise Ackermann argues that for healing to happen, after the acknowledgment of the pain and suffering that has taken place, there must be action. "Healing is inseparable from justice-seeking."[139] She recognizes the difficulty of this statement in tension with societal calls for amnesty, as in the case of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, she sees justice not as a single action for a single case, but a larger movement. "For healing praxis to be truly restorative, it has to be

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[137] Nicholas Rowe and Ray Aldred, "Healthy Leadership and Power Differences in the Postcolonial Community," in *Evangelical Postcolonial Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis*, ed. Kay Higuera Smith, Jayachitra Lalitha, and L. Daniel Hawk (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 212-213.

[138] Rowe and Aldred, "Healthy Leadership and Power Differences," 218-219.

[139] Denise M. Ackermann, "From Violence to Healing: The Struggle for Our Common Humanity," in *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Ian T. Douglas and Pui-lan Kwok (New York: Church Publishing Inc., 2000), 106-107.

collaborative and sustained action for justice, reparation, and liberation, based on accountability and empowered by love, hope, and passion."[140]

In this brief overview of post-colonial theology, it is apparent that this field brings attention to hybridization, and decolonization, as potential frames of reference for countering paternalism. From such discussion the themes of *incarnation*, *encounter*, *worship*, *empowerment*, *narrative*, *proclamation*, *repentance*, *reconciliation*, and *discernment* arise. These are not separate and unrelated topics, but rather part of the process of hybridization and decolonization. A powerful example of this theology in practice, is evident in the contextualization of scripture.

2.3 Contextualization of Scripture

Contextualization of scripture may be considered in two parts: the translation of scripture into local languages, and the subsequent interpretation of that scripture by local people. Sanneh has written extensively on the power of translating scripture into vernacular languages. He considers culture and language to be "essential aspects of Christian transmission, especially where these interact with the themes of cross-cultural appropriation and pluralism."[141] Because language and culture are so intertwined, the act of translating scripture in itself is a recognition of culture, and a lifting up of previously obscured or marginalized cultures to the awareness of a broader world community.[142] The process of interpreting the Gospel into local languages began theological conversation, inquiry and reflection between missionaries and indigenous people, and opened the way for the indigenizing of Christianity. "Nothing has done more to differentiate Christianity

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[140] Ackermann, "From Violence to Healing," 106-107.
[141] Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 1-3.
[142] Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 1-3.

from Western civilization as a prerequisite of faith that the vernacular Bible translation projects."[143] Sanneh points out that this commitment to interpreting the Gospel in light of different cultures is not an innovation of the modern missionary movement, but rather is present in the Christian faith right back to the first century. "It seems to be part of the earliest records we possess that the disciples came to a clear and firm position regarding the translatability of the gospel, with a commitment to the pluralist merit of culture within God's universal purpose."[144]

The translation efforts of the modern missionary movement were not confined to scripture. Dictionaries were written, and culture, oral tradition, and proverbs were translated to help interpret Christian theology and scripture. Ndungane explains that because "African culture and tradition were treated as the primary source alongside the Bible," theologies that developed began to undermine some of the colonial models of church.[145] The process of interpreting scriptures into vernacular languages produced a body of scripture that was contextualized as well as groups of indigenous people experienced in Christian theologizing. Possessing these vernacular texts seemed to produce confidence and validation of culture as well. These were foundational aspects for the indigenizing of Christian faith. Sanneh gives the example of Matthew Ajuoga, a church leader in Kenya, who after reading the Bible (in 1953) in his own language was struck by the word *hera.* The Luo word, meaning brotherly love, opened his eyes to the "scandalous failure" of Christian missionaries, in his experience, to express that kind of love. This realization drove him to work for reform in the church, and eventually to found

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[143] Lamin Sanneh, "Bible Translation, Culture, and Religion," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to World Christianity*, ed. Lamin Sanneh and Michael J. McClymond, Wiley-Blackwell Companions to Religion (Chichester, UK: John Wiley and Sons, 2016), 269, 265-279.
[144] Sanneh, *Translating the Message*, 1.
[145] Ndungane, "Scripture: What Is at Issue in Anglicanism Today?" 241.

a new denomination.[146] This example, showcases the success of the translation endeavor of Christian missionaries and indigenous people working together. Contextualized scripture has empowered indigenous people to name and break down paternalism and Western hegemony, and indigenize Christian faith.

Thoughtful translation and interpretation of scripture lays the foundation for reflection on scripture by those who previously had been allowed little access to it. One model for the contextualization of scripture was shaped by liberation theology, and developed in the Christian base ecclesial communities (CEBs). Groups of "ordinary" people would interpret scripture through the lens of their own experience of poverty. Such groups, particularly well developed in Brazil, play a "central role in being the church."[147] They are founded on the people's struggle for recognition and justice, and incorporate experience from life, culture, and popular religion to interpret scripture.[148] CEBs are also active in El Salvador, and have played a role in shaping Cristosal, the focus of the second case study (3.4). Ernesto Cardinal spent significant time in El Salvador, and lived with Jesuit theologians who were martyred there. He famously recorded the conversations of a CEB in Nicaragua, over a number of years, in four volumes titled *The Gospel in Solentiname.* Cardinal asserts that the poor are the best interpreters of scripture, because the "Good News to the poor" was written for them, by people like them.[149] This approach to the study of scripture was profoundly empowering to the people of Solentiname. Some were even compelled, through their reflection, to

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[146] Sanneh, "Bible Translation, Culture, and Religion," 273-274.
[147] Christopher Rowland, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6.
[148] Rowland, *The Cambridge Companion to Liberation Theology*, 1, 6-7.
[149] Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1982; repr. one–vol ed. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010), xi.

action in their civil war. In retaliation their community was destroyed and several of them were martyred. Cardinal reflects:

> These discussions took place during the Somoza dictatorship; the dictatorship was always part of them, as well as the hope that liberation would soon come… All of us in the community were radicalized by these discussions of the [G]ospel… We knew that the hour of sacrifice was coming… After the triumph of the revolution, everything was rebuilt that had been destroyed in our community… [The martyrs] are buried beside the little church where we held the dialogues… For each of them there is a stone, engraved with words spoken in these commentaries about the resurrection.[150]

Cardinal also reports that a copy of *The Gospel in Solentiname* was discovered among Somoza's possessions when he fled at the close of the war. One of the passages which the dictator underlined was a reflection by a young peasant Paulo about Herod: "He must have felt hatred and envy. Because dictators have always believed they were gods. They think they are the only ones, and cannot allow anyone to be above them."[151] The reflection of this community not only empowered them to action, but also spread their dialogue and influenced people around the world, including the very man they opposed.

As has been demonstrated the contextualization of scripture is a process through which ordinary people have both access to a vernacular translation of scripture as well as the freedom to study and interpret it. As people make meaning of scripture in the context and narrative of their own lives, experience, and culture, they are empowered to act. Theological conversation then is shifted away from a prioritization of Western knowledge and transformed by a willingness not only to bring these voices into the conversation, but to seek to genuinely listen to those voices. The widely disseminated contextual Bible study method from Solentiname remains a foundational model for

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[150] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, xiii-xv.
[151] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, xiv-xv.

contextual Bible study.[152] It challenges others to do the same in their context, and as demonstrated in the story above, the act of Bible study moved the community from reflection to significant action. To illustrate this model, and to give a sense of the depth and richness which contextual Bible study can provide, contextualized scripture from Solentiname will be used to explore the themes in this section. The nine principles which will be explored through the text of *The Gospel in Solentiname* arise from the study of world theology above, and from the concepts of contextualization of scripture, and critical reflection which will follow. The discussion will respond to the key problems of paternalism, disempowerment, and lack of critical reflection.

2.3.1 Encounter, Incarnation, Worship

Paternalism appears to be a persistent problem in short-term mission (1.2.5, 1.3.1). The hopeful sign of immigration bringing non-Western people (including non-Western missionaries) into Western communities, allows for encounters which challenge such paternalistic thinking (1.4.1). An examination of different voices from world theology, and post-colonial theology challenges us to break down paternalism (2.2). These theologies break down paternalism through encounter, or meeting across a difference. It has been argued that we collectively encounter God in worship (2.2.2 and 2.2.3), and God's very nature is incarnational (2.2.1).

In discussing the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-36), the contextual Bible study group in Solentiname reflected on what it meant for the savior to be incarnate among the poor.

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[152] As evidenced by an internet search showing reviews, many manuals and parish resources which site *The Gospel in Solentiname* as well as its recent republication in a single volume after 40 years of distribution.

> Old Tomas Peña: "The angel congratulates her because she's going to be the mother of the Messiah and he congratulates all of us because he means that the savior is not going to be born among the rich but right among us, the poor people."
> Felix: "The thing is that the liberator had to be born among the oppressed."
> Julio: "It's because he came to liberate the oppressed. That's why he had to be one of them. If he had come to liberate the rich, he would have been born among the rich…"
> Pablo: "It's not the rich but the poor who need liberation. The exploiters aren't the ones who are going to be liberated…"
> Oscar: "They'll be liberated from their exploitation."
> Olivia: "The rich and the poor will be liberated. Us poor people are going to be liberated from the rich. The rich are going to be liberate from themselves, that is, from their wealth. Because they're more slaves than we are."[153]

The group immediately identifies the social location into which Jesus is being born, and what that says about the incarnation, and about liberation. They recognize how important it was that God take up residence among the poor, but also that in order to liberate the poor, the liberator must themselves be poor. This concept is inherently anti-paternalistic. Their conversation builds to Olivia's comment which sees the way in which the rich or the oppressor is also held captive by their social location, and the way in which only a poor savior can liberate both.

Later in the conversation, while discussing the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:6-7), Julio and Felix point out the way in which Jesus breaks down assumptions that people make about the poor.

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[153] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 8-9.

> Julio: "Why do you suppose people think that poor people can't teach anything? But Jesus showed that poor people can teach. And also that liberation comes from the poor."…
> Felix: "[Jesus] came to share the lot with the poor. And Joseph and Mary were turned away from the inn because they were poor. If they had been rich they'd have been welcomed in. God wanted his son to be born in a pigsty, in a stable… he wanted his son to belong to the poor class right?... I see in this the humility of God… Jesus came to free the world from these injustices (which still exist). And he came so that we could be united and struggle against these injustices. Because we go right on being like that, with somebody's foot on our neck. And the rich, how do they look at us? They look down on us… [Christ] was the greatest revolutionary,
> because being God he identified with the poor and he came down from heaven to become a member of the lower class and he gave his life for us all. The way I see it, we all ought to struggle like that for other people, and be like him."[154]

Julio and Felix see in the particular circumstances of the incarnation a lesson that God has to teach those who "look down on" the poor. God accomplishes that teaching in humility, simply by becoming one of the poor. Incarnation is far more radical than visiting, it is a deep solidarity, shared identity, a communion with the poor.

On a different occasion, after Maundy Thursday services, the people of Solentiname gathered to talk about the institution of the Eucharist (Mark 14:12-25), and reflected on what communion is to the worshiping community.

> Carlos Mejia Godoy: "Christ wanted us really to commune with one another this way; and this communion, this union, will make us afterwards have everything in common."…
> Gianantonio: "I believe that the logical consequence of the Eucharist is that people have everything in common. Until they live in communion they can't celebrate the true Eucharist that Christ began."…
> Olivia: "And what I see is that that institution of the Eucharist compromises everybody that takes communion. Although many believe that just by eating the host they're saving their souls, what's important is to realize that injustice that exists, and the exploitation. And that's why I've said it would be better to close the city churches, because they're no good, those big masses, and those big communions: they make the people blinder, more asleep."[155]

This is a very radical picture of what it means to experience the Eucharist. The Eucharist, in itself, is revolutionary according to Carlos and Gianantonio. It seems they are

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[154] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 14, 24.
[155] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 537-539.

suggesting that the Eucharist either produces this kind of radical unity, or it holds people accountable to that vision. Olivia does not see value in taking communion if the community does not, in its life, live that communion.

If this dialogue from Solentiname is brought into conversation with short-term mission, as it is conceived of in this thesis, the following questions arise. Firstly, can wealthy Christians *encounter* Christ as liberator? Though they seem to disagree on this point, the people of Solentiname's conversation moves toward a consensus that recognizes Christ liberates all people, specifically through the poor themselves. This suggests that the wealthy are dependent upon both Christ and the action of the poor for their liberation.

Secondly, how can systems of thought that discount or look down on the poor (paternalism) be changed? By the strength of their voice and witness, the people of Solentiname suggest that they believe they contribute much to theological dialog, despite what traditional systems of power think about them as poor people. Their reflection on the *incarnation* seems to suggest that release from paternalism can be found in contemplation of the social location in which Jesus was born, grew up, and ministered.

Thirdly, can two groups of Christians *worship* together in true communion if there is a power and wealth differential between them? The answer from this dialogue seems to be a resounding "no." For true communion requires deep, radical, life-transforming, resource-sharing unity. Given the difficulty in achieving this kind of unity in communion, is it acceptable to share communion and fall short? Olivia's comment is strongly opposed to communion which upholds the "blindness" of the people, and shows very little tolerance for calling something communion which falls short of this picture. It would be valuable to critically reflect and dialogue about specific short-term mission experiences.

2.3.2 Empowerment, Narrative, Proclamation

Disempowerment and dependency are problematic outcomes of short-term mission. Contextualization of scripture and theology, the hopeful sign discussed, have empowered communities to make the Gospel their own, and to act upon its teaching. The process of contextualization of scripture can be empowering. For ordinary people are lifted up as theologians, and encouraged to interpret the story of the scripture though their own narrative. When this happens, the Gospel is proclaimed in new ways. Thus the core themes of *empowerment*, *narrative*, and *proclamation* arise. Empowerment describes the lifting up of the marginalized or disempowered for action in the name of Christ. Narrative captures the idea of the way that the stories, experiences and lives of ordinary people influence how the Gospel can be read, and how it is put into practice. Proclamation then is the mutual work of bringing together and proclaiming these stories across a cultural divide, providing opportunities for mutual conversion.

The people of Solentiname see their own narrative reflected in the Song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55).

> Natalia: "[Herod would] say she was crazy."
> Rosita: "That she was a communist."
> Cardenal: "And what would they say in Nicaragua if they heard what we're saying here in Solentiname?"
> Several voices: "That we're communists."
> Someone: "That part about filling the hungry with good things?"
> A young man: "The hungry are going to eat."
> Another: "The revolution."
> Laureano: "That is the Revolution. The rich person or the mighty is brought down and the poor person, the one who was down is raised up."
> Another: "If God is against the mighty, then he has to be on the side of the poor."
> A young person: "[Mary] spoke for the future, it seems to me, because we are just barely beginning to see the liberation she announces."…
> Mariita: "Mary sang here about equality. A society with no social classes. Everyone alike."[156]

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[156] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 18-19.

They see a call to radical action in the song of Mary. They see their own story of revolution against a dictator as part of the story as well. But it is not always clear what action is to be taken. Oscar naturally brings other scripture into the conversation with the question: "Can you take riches from the rich by force? Christ didn't force the rich young man. He said to him, 'If you wish…'"[157] They do not agree on the answer. A danger of contextual Bible study (which will be discussed in 2.4) is uncritically seeing scripture as supporting your decisions or culture. One way to mitigate this danger is by bringing different scriptures into conversation.

A scripture which challenged the community was Luke: 6:27-31, "love your enemy." After a prolonged silence, the conversation only begins with invitation to speak.

> Laureano: "No, I don't want to speak; that nonsense is very confusing. That's crazy."
> Olivia: "That's a very difficult thing, but we have to do it, because the Gospel orders us to do it. The words are very clear."
> [Cardenal asked] if they thought it was practiced here in Solentiname. And some answer yes, others no.
> Andrea: "Nonsense! We answer evil with evil. When they insult us, we insult back."…
> Rebeca: "I understand that God wants us all to love each other, not to have enemies, because he has come to give us love here on earth. He hasn't come to give us hatred. Then what we wants is for all of us to love each other, and to not have enemies."…
> Manuel: "But we have class enemies. And how are we going to manage to struggle against the enemy if we have to love him? How are we going to defend ourselves?"
> Marcelino, slowly: "If we hate, we are no longer struggling against the enemy—We are the enemy, because we are evil—He says we must love the enemy, but he doesn't say we can't fight them—The question is how are we going to fight them. If they hate, the weapon against them is love. The difference between us and the enemy is that we fight them without wanting to oppress them, only to liberate them. They do hate us. But we are no longer the opposite of them if we answer hatred with hatred—I say that it is with love that we can defend ourselves."[158]

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[157] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 19.
[158] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 202-203.

This passage about reconciliation is especially difficult for this group experiencing oppression, and locked in a civil war which will ultimately claim the lives of many in their community, including Laureano. But in the conversation between their own experience and the scripture, Marcelino finds a way forward, a reshaping of what they are called to do and be, even in the midst of conflict, proclaiming the Gospel anew.

As the conversation continues to the seemingly disempowering phrase "turn the other cheek," the community wrestles with what that means. William finds a powerful answer in naming the turning of the other cheek as a form of empowering, non-violent resistance, akin to hunger strikes or peaceful demonstrations. He tells a story from their community:

> Something like this happened here with that guard who was bothering us so much because of what we were saying in these meetings and he kept on saying that he was going to [expletive] us because we were communists. The boys and girls of the Youth Club went and talked with him in a friendly way. They treated him with love, and he changed. Not right away. At first he denounced them to the commanding officer at San Carlos, saying that a group of young people had gone to his house to attack him. And he went on saying bad things about all of us. The group went back again. They told him he was poor like them, one of the exploited. And he admitted that he was, that he was very badly paid. Now… he's even our friend. And it was clear that at heart he was not an evil person. He was a guy who thought he had to be evil because he was a guard… This too is blessing those who curse us, doing good to those who hate us.[159]

William identifies the key turning point, the change in heart of the guard, as the point when the students and the guard were able to name their shared story of exploitation. Reconciliation, it seems, requires this intention to love across a barrier or divide, as well as giving attention to one another's stories of identity and experience, and making an effort to find a place of commonality.

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[159] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 204.

This conversation from Solentiname, has insight to impart to the discussion of short-term mission this thesis has been developing. Firstly, what is the source of *empowerment* of the poor? These discussions in Solentiname suggest that empowerment of the poor happens within the poor themselves through encounter with God, in reflecting on the life of Jesus in scripture, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit in conversation.

Secondly, how can *narrative* be used in relationship/reconciliation? It seems like narrative is key to this process of contextualization of scripture. There seems to be a conversation between the narrative of scripture and the narrative of the community interpreting it. In the process of reconciliation, love is employed to both hear and share narrative, and find a place of commonality.

Thirdly, can *proclamation* of the Gospel of love be used in building relationship in short-term mission between groups which have an inequality in resources, or imbalance in power currently or historically? What attitudes can help bridge this differential? The reflection from Solentiname on the directive by Jesus to love one's enemies, casts a vision for just how far love can go. Because a power differential reflects the relationship between enemies in oppressive situations, even though in short-term mission that differential is between groups in relationship with one another, it may be wise to approach those relationships with the same kind of commitment to love in the extreme, which the people of Solentiname exhibit.

2.3.3 Repentance, Reconciliation, Discernment

Lack of critical reflection in short-term mission may cover up destructive practice, including paternalism, and prevent the reality of mission experience from changing, even when the rhetoric about mission changes. The hopeful sign of the critique of Western

mission practice by World Christians, gives the opportunity for engagement in critical reflection that subsequently transforms practice. A new relationship may be born. In seeing the brokenness of short-term mission practice, lament of such problems and destructive practices is an appropriate response. Repentance, however, takes a step beyond lament to ask forgiveness from God and neighbor, with the intention of living life differently. Repentance suggests that transformation has begun. Reconciliation is a more difficult theme to place. It is linked with shared story as was seen in the last section, and which is only possible through encounter. It is placed in this section however, because the asking and offering of forgiveness is a key part of reconciliation. Discernment, the final theme, is in the context of right relationship with God and community. It provides the context in which to exercise critical reflection, and to evaluate both progress and process.

The people in Solentiname reflected on repentance in looking at Luke 3:1-20, on John the Baptist.

> Tomas: "[John the Baptist] was coming to baptize them, it seems to me, so that they would change their attitude and look for the straight path and not look for the crooked path. The water wouldn't do it. They had to change their attitude."
> Olivia: "It is a lesson for us because we're all baptized and yet even now every one of us is full of selfishness. The one who has most and is rich doesn't want to share his riches with the rest. He doesn't' want to give—not even to pay what's fair, much less to give. So the baptism we have is just a baptism of water, not a change of attitude."…
> Tere: "It is interesting to see that he, a *campesino*, was sent to baptize and *conscientize*, and not a priest."…
> Felipe: "I think a person has to change his attitude so that it's noticed in his conduct. That's why he told them to behave in such a way that people would see that they had changed their attitude."
> William: "Because conversion can't be only inward. It does no good to be converted inside if we don't change society. They went there to ask for baptism, so that their sins would be forgiven, John's message is change society so that it will be clear that you are converted. But all they wanted was the ritual."[160]

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[160] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 48-51.

Repentance focuses on change in attitude and change in behavior. They do not discuss the act of lament or asking for forgiveness, in this passage, the denial of Peter, the garden of Gethsemane, or the women weeping for Jesus on the *via dolorosa*. It is more the fruit of reconciliation, the proof of a changes life that concerns them.

This conversation about pruning in John's supper discourse (John 15:1-13) is one of the few times they name the seeming link between grief, suffering, and redemptive fruit.

> Marcelino: "Maybe they weren't rotten branches, but green branches that need more pruning."
> [Another:] "The pruning must be the suffering that falls to our lot"
> [Another:] "Sacrifice in the revolution then."
> [Another:] "That pruning is also when the revolutionaries are removed. When they kill them, many more are reborn. They used to produce good fruit, but with their deaths they produce much more."
> [Cardenal:] "There can be no revolution without grief."[161]

In this context they are not talking about the lament of wrongdoing, but rather the lament that comes from a painful process of revolution or change. In talking of Jesus' tears over Lazarus, Alejandro (who was one of those martyred in the war), also talks about the pain of transformation,

> Here we have many church beams that are from *madroño* trees that used to bear flowers in December, and now they don't, but now they're all painted and they'll last for many years. Human beings are different, they produce more, but they're the same in that the transformation is always painful.[162]

These reflections are a hopeful way of looking at suffering. Even in the pain and grief, there is trust that this kind of suffering produces transformation.

In discerning what changed behavior of the repentant soul should look like, Jesus' summary of the law is a natural starting place, since it is his answer to "which law is the

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[161] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 565.
[162] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 511.

greatest?" The people of Solentiname reflected on the summary of the law in Mark 12:28-34.

> Felipe: "To Love your neighbor then is to love God. You can't love God without practicing justice. And you can't love your neighbor without practicing that justice that God commands."
> Gloria: "I think Jesus made him see that if we love God and don't love our neighbor, we're really not loving God."…
> Felipe: "I think that's why Christ says that to that teacher of the law, because they used to be confused and thought that God was a God separated from the people. That you could commit injustices and then light a bunch of candles to God. At that time they thought God was a personage separated from the people."…
> Gustavo: "…they must have been startled at those new ideas, right? That all their rites, the animals they sacrificed, the incense they burned, and all that was valueless. Then they didn't wasn't to ask him any more questions because they were afraid; what Christ was saying was too revolutionary."[163]

The participants in this conversation draw a strong parallel between loving God, and doing justice. They draw on this passage to say the proof of loving God is not in religious ritual, but in working for justice. This idea seems to flow from seeing God as intimately connected with the people, specifically the poor, given their discussion on the incarnation (above 2.3.1).

The relationship between repentance, reconciliation, and discernment, and short-term mission can be explored using questions aimed at these reflections from Solentiname. Firstly, what is the role of lament and *repentance* in moving toward right relationship in short-term mission? The people of Solentiname recognize the pain involved in transformation. That period of pain must be experienced on the way to living a changed life, and they are interested in seeing changed behavior and attitudes from those who repent, not only words.

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[163] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, 528-532.

Secondly, what is the link between *reconciliation* and doing justice in short-term mission? The people of Solentiname seem to be more interested in seeing changed actions and behaviors than in repentance. Can working together for justice produce reconciliation?

Thirdly, in what ways can those involved in short-term mission *discern* action according to God's will? Any action to be discerned according to the Solentiname reading of the summary of the law would have to be measured critically in whether it bears the fruit of justice in society, or in personal interactions and relationships.

2.4 Critical Reflection on Practice

World mission conferences have given international attention to World Christians' critique of mission practice, but despite these and other critiques, many short-term mission practitioners are not aware of or do not take advantage of these suggestions, and do not engage in adequate critical reflection about practice. This has resulted in mission practice which does not match the rhetoric about mission (1.3.3). Engaging in the process of critical reflection may be able to transform short-term mission practice, through cross-cultural conversation, self-reflection and transformation, and lament and repentance. Critical reflection may close the gap between the ideals promoted by the world mission conferences and practice (1.4.3).

Cardenal writes about his surprise in reading a collection of contextual Bible study commentaries in the style of his own *Gospel in Solentiname*, in which a congregation in Poland wrote similar things about their communist government that the people in Solentiname (many of whom were communists) wrote about their dictatorship.

> The commentary from one congregation in Poland was altogether different from ours. What we said about the Somozas in Nicaragua, they said about the communists; in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, they portrayed the communist hierarchy as the Pharisee. I kept that publication in the library at Solentiname. [164]

This is critical reflection. Rather than reject different or contrary approaches to deeply held paradigms, Cardenal chose to keep it close, and available for the community to reference, and bring into the conversation.

Critical reflection requires the evaluation of cultural influences on scripture reflection and interpretation. Though supportive of the process of contextualization of scripture, Ndungane cautions that holding culture and tradition as sources along with the Bible can lead to a lack of critical reflection. If culture is not critically evaluated, then destructive practices may remain. He gives the example of how many African churches have continued to uphold patriarchal models which limit women's leadership in the church and women's voices in theology. [165] The conference on world mission and evangelism in Salvador, Brazil in 1996, affirmed that the Gospel does not belong to any one culture, but considered a matrix for evaluating particular cultural expressions of the Gospel.

> Criteria for testing the appropriateness of such contextual expressions of the [G]ospel in mutual relationship with other churches include:
> —faithfulness to God's self-disclosure in the totality of the scriptures;
> —commitment to a life-style and action in harmony with the reign of God;
> —openness to the wisdom of the communion of saints across space and time;
> —relevance to the context.[166]

This matrix suggests, not a list to check off, but the outline of a conversation which needs to happen in the context of mutual relationship between churches. A resulting gift of cross cultural conversation, is knowing one's own culture and story better, and seeing

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[164] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, xiii.
[165] Ndungane, "Scripture: What Is at Issue in Anglicanism Today?" 241.
[166] Duraisingh, *Called to One Hope*, 67.

one's own culture and self in a new way.[167] This self-revelation that comes from open cross-cultural conversation plays a key role in the process of transformation.

The keynote speaker at the Salvador conference, Musimbi Kanyoro, addressed the concept of critical reflection as part of the process of self-transformation. Kanyoro pointed out that critical reflection requires an acceptance of one's own brokenness. Thus the process of change is often painful. "To hope for wholeness means to face our own lack of wholeness with courage and to be prepared to go through the pain of self-examination which leads to change. Change is, more often than not, a painful metamorphosis."[168] Barnes explains that the Melbourne Conference on World Mission and Evangelism 1980, called churches to a deep and critical self-reflection. The conference named a problem at the core of mission partnership being that churches have tended to support and reinforce structures of society and the status quo. The conference called for churches to judge whether they were actually working for the poor, or working to consolidate their own power and influence. In naming these faults as sin, the conference encouraged repentance and amendment of practice.[169]

The painful part of self-reflection leads to confession and lament. Ackermann recognizes the particular role of lament as a starting place, for it "opens up blocked channels and makes ready the ground for change."

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[167] Author's own experience from engaging in conversations in the context of a 3-way diocesan companion relationship, and as an Episcopal missionary in Liberia and South Sudan.

[168] Musimbi R.A. Kanyoro, "Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Divers Cultures," in *Called to One Hope: The Gospel in Diverse Cultures*, ed. Christopher Duraisingh (Geneva: World Council of Churches Publications, 1998), 97.

[169] Barnes, *Power and Partnership*, 335.

> First we begin with confession and lament. We confess that in the words of Dorothee Sölle, we have been "screaming too softly" in the face of the unending, relentless quality of human suffering. We confess our role as agents in its causes. We lament as an act of reclaiming our tongues, giving voice to pain, fear, and hope. We become confessing mourners.[170]

Safwat Marzouk draws on the rich tradition of prayers of lament in the Hebrew Bible. Lament expresses a deep "concern for justice and well-being," and a desire to create a holistic peace, *shalom*. Lament, he argues, forms people to be agents of change, through prayer which recognizes both the injustice of a situation, and the idea that it can change. This produces both empowerment to act, as well as trust in God.[171] While lament plays a critical role in preparing the way for change, it should lead also to repentance, when wrongdoing has been identified, and ultimately to changed practice in short-term mission.

Lozano and Roth recognize a shortcoming in post-colonial theology as not being focused enough on practice. By placing liberation theology and post-colonial theology in conversation, they arrive at the conclusion that the action-reflection model should be used to transform mission practice. "In combination, action and reflection together form praxis. From a liberation standpoint, praxis cannot be devoid of either aspect, but rather it is the result of the collaboration and reinforcement of action and reflection."[172] For ideas on how to engage in this kind of practice, they turn to Freire's work. Freire believed that true reflection leads to action (1.3.3) and he developed methods for educational practice which incorporate the action-reflection model, and empower learners to direct their own

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[170] Ackermann, "From Violence to Healing," 112-113.
[171] Nicholas Rowe and Safwat Marzouk, "Christian Disciplines as Ways of Instilling God's Shalom for Postcolonial Communities," in *Evangelical Postcolonial Conversations: Global Awakenings in Theology and Praxis*, ed. Kay Higuera Smith, Jayachitra Lalitha, and L. Daniel Hawk (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 233-237.
[172] Lozano and Roth, "Praxis in Postcolonial Criticism," 189.

education. For Freire, education is critical reflection of reality, and while that reflection itself does not change reality, it is the way to transformation and liberation.[173]

Embracing lament and *repentance*, seeking *reconciliation*, and engaging in critical reflection and *discernment* of practice are central concepts for transforming short-term mission practice. Action-reflection is a discernment tool, which keeps communities in conversation with one another and with God through prayer.

2.5 Conclusion

A constructive theology of mission, applicable to short-term mission has been proposed in light of a discussion on paternalism, dependency and disempowerment, and lack of critical reflection. The contemporary hopeful signs of immigration, contextualization, and critique offer an opportunity for transformation though dialogue and relationship with World Christians. These hopeful signs provide a foundation for reflection on world theology, contextualization of scripture, and critical reflection. An exploration of *missio Dei* reveals the incarnational nature of God's mission. World Christian theologians and post-colonial theologians respond to paternalism and disempowerment, with critique which promotes *encounter*, *incarnation*, *worship*, *empowerment*, *narrative*, *proclamation*, *repentance*, *reconciliation*, and *discernment*. These themes, explored through the lens of *The Gospel in Solentiname*, yield questions for the translation of theory into practice. Finally, critical reflection of practice, explored through the themes of *repentance, reconciliation,* and *discernment* begins to pave the way for transformed practice.

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[173] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Robert R. Barr (1992; repr.; London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 24.

The problems and hopeful signs of this historical moment in missiology are well illustrated in the case studies explored in the next chapter. The constructive theology of mission, discussed in this chapter, is both tested and strengthened by conversation with the experience and reality of specific Christian communities. There is much to be learned from experienced hosts and from innovative partnerships which seek to focus on relationship development in short-term mission. These case studies are a genuine attempt to listen.

Chapter 3

3 Case Studies

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is an exploration of three innovative cross-cultural relationships between communities. In each case study, the impact of the program is explored, and is brought into conversation with the process, tools, and attitudes which participants identify as key in producing that impact. Each case study is evaluated through the lens of the nine principles of constructive short-term mission: *encounter, incarnation, worship, empowerment, narrative, proclamation, repentance, reconciliation,* and *discernment.* When the nine principles were not sufficient to describe the program, they were modified. In choosing case studies I set out to identify innovative and healthy relationally-based mission programs.[174] These programs came highly recommended, and I have personal knowledge each. These three programs represent local, domestic, and global contexts, and exhibit a variety of cross cultural dynamics, in local, domestic, and international connections. While the third case study on Holy Family is not a specific example of short-term mission, it effectively represents an ideal of cross-cultural relationship which was developed using specific tools for relationship building over time. It serves as a contrast to the short-term mission experience bringing a much-needed reminder that deep relationship requires time.

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[174] By seeking advice from TEC mission and global partnerships staff, former Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori, former board members of the Global Episcopal Mission Network, Canon for congregational development in Diocese of El Camino Real, and several clergy and laypeople engaged in short and long-term mission.

3.2 Research Methods

Values behind research methods

Special attention was paid in the design of this research to be aware of the key problems of paternalism and focus on transforming the other (1.3.1), dependency and disempowerment (1.3.2), and lack of critical reflection (1.3.3). Values for the design of this research then were: prioritization of non-Western voices, agency of the interviewee in the setting and flow of the interview, and review of the write-up by leaders. Either equal numbers from each group were interviewed, or more from the non-Western group were included. Interviewees were given the opportunity to choose what setting for the interview was most comfortable to them (group or individual, and location).

Structure of Interviews

I interviewed key leaders for each case, individually, and asked them to identify participants or other leaders who I should interview. All participants were informed at the start of the interview of the purpose and use of this study. All participants gave their permission, at the end of the interview, to share their quotes and summarize their statements. Some individuals have chosen pseudonyms. For the interviews conducted in Spanish, a translator assisted. I conducted a site visit to each of the three case study locations. Most interviews were conducted in person: all interviews in Milpitas, two leader interviews for Navajoland, and Salvadoran participants and leaders for Cristosal. The remaining interviews were conducted by phone.

Interview Questions

The interview style was open ended conversational questions to encourage narrative to develop. The conversation explored questions such as: What was the

experience? What was the personal impact of the experience? What specific practices helped shape this experience positively? To what extent were the nine principles used in practice? What would you do differently, or what suggestions do you have for others?

3.3 Case Study 1: Mission Partner Covenant, Navajoland Area Mission

3.3.1 Description

Navajoland Area Diocese has many years of extensive experience with receiving short-term mission teams. In 2013, after identification of problems, as well as benefits of mission teams, and a process of discussion at Diocesan Council, they instituted a covenant process for mission partners in an effort to bring short-term mission work in line with diocesan priorities and vision, toward mutuality and sustainability.[175] Partners were informed of the diocesan priorities (formation, education, social outreach), and the desire for partners to walk with congregations toward self-autonomy. Partner teams would also be coordinated through the bishop's office and assigned based on parish needs and their willingness. Teams were asked to contribute to offset the expense of their stay, and were expected to participate in programs in Navajo history and culture.

This case study looks at short-term mission team Vacation Bible School programs in three different locations in the diocese, to see how this covenant process has been implemented. Cornelia, canon in the Episcopal Church in Navajoland, was interviewed. John, chair of the Native American Ministries Council at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati, was interviewed. For each location, one Navajo leader and one partner leader were interviewed. For Bluff, Utah: Leon, deacon at St. Christopher's mission, and David lay leader from Cincinnati were interviewed. From Farmington, New Mexico: Anna,

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[175] See Appendix A – Episcopal Church in Navajoland letter to Navajoland partners and supporters.

church lay leader and Mitzi, priest from Louisiana were interviewed. From Coal Mine, New Mexico: G.J., church lay leader, and Martha, participant from Cincinnati were interviewed.

3.3.2 Impact

The impact of the Vacation Bible School short-term mission trips, as reported by hosts and visitors, in the context of the Navajoland partnership covenant, aggregated into the three categories below.

Relationship

The primary reported impact was relationship. In Farmington, the same youth group from Louisiana has come every year for five years, and in Coal Mine, the same adults from Cincinnati, along with their youth group have been coming for several years. Anna said, “Our kids are encouraged, it is one of the highlights of their summer.” G.J. said that her youth and the youth in Cincinnati have maintained friendships. Mitzi also reported lasting friendships between her youth and the Navajo youth. Leon reported that his youth were looking forward to going to the Episcopal Youth Event (national event), because they would see their friends there. The youth kept in touch via social media, messaging, and phones. Last year, before the Louisiana youth arrived in Navajoland, they had already made plans with their friends, independent from the VBS program. “They treat us like family,” Mitzi said, “and our kids feel at home.” Anna said that some of the Louisiana youth refer to her as “grandma,” and ask her for advice. In Bluff, they have received a number of different partners doing VBS work. Leon said, “It is the connection with the people that is transforming for the partners.”

Spiritual formation

The Navajo youth and children involved in the VBS program learn connections between Navajo culture and the Bible. G.J. said that the community is more involved in the planning and running of the VBS, and the responsibility of the spiritual formation of the 80 children and youth who participate. A sign of the spiritual formation that has happened in the youth from Louisiana is that for the last three years, many of them have received the sacrament of confirmation at the annual meeting of the Episcopal Church in Navajoland, in Farmington. Anna and Mitzi both reflected on the connection that the Louisiana youth feel to the people of Navajoland, as the reason they want to be confirmed there. Leon reflected on how his youth have grown in their leadership, and spiritually, as they have helped present the VBS material to the younger children. Mitzi said that the parents of some of the youth have commented to her about the growth they have seen in their children in terms of maturity and cross-cultural awareness. Martha and David both expressed a sense of profound spiritual connection to Navajoland and individual people there. Martha called it expansive and life-giving, "I can really breathe there." David said that it is so much a part of him now after many years of visiting, that part of him feels that he never leaves Navajoland, but exists in a spiritual space there even when he is home. John said, "It's what keeps me going to church."

Cross-Cultural Understanding

Mitzi and Anna both reflected on how the relationship between the adults (from Navajoland and Louisiana) has grown over the years. Trust, and love have developed. "They know that we are not there to change their culture," Mitzi said, "but to learn, and to share our cultures collectively." The youth from Louisiana learned that every culture

brings something to the table, and that they can learn from the cultures. They learned that in order to learn from another culture, they need to adapt, to listen, and build trust in relationship. The youth from Louisiana were struck by the matriarchal aspects of Navajo culture. This made them reflect on the treatment of women in their own culture, and see with fresh eyes problems that they had not necessarily noticed or named before. They also learned about how the elders are treated with respect in Navajo culture, and they have adopted practices of respecting the elders in their own church and community more. Martha also was fascinated by Navajo culture, and the interaction between youth and elders, which taught her new ways of being. She said she learned something new each year, and developed a broader sense of family, in terms of who we belong to, who gives us life, and who came before to make a way for us.

3.3.3 Analysis

This case study exemplifies critical reflection. Reflection on problematic practice and in-depth discussion and planning by the hosts in Navajoland produced the covenant process. The critical reflection process continues, and new practice is constantly being innovated. Thus, some of the process and tools below are new ideas that are being planned to implement.

Process

Cornelia explained that partners were asked to sign a copy of the covenant and send it back to the diocese. According to the covenant, work teams have the responsibility of sitting with the community and working with them on the community's vision. It is not the clergy who direct the process, but the people in conversation with the clergy and leaders. Mitzi said that she was happy to sign the covenant, and felt that their

partnership was already in compliance with it. Leon explained that previously they had received construction work teams who were not skilled, and who caused more damage. They now receive only construction work teams who are adults and have specific skills to share. They hire local crafts people to join them, and they work from a local priority list. Youth teams are engaged in Vacation Bible School, and work together with the Navajo youth to present the material. The VBS teams are committed to forming relationships, and cultural and spiritual development of the children and youth.

Anna described the team from Louisiana as prepared. They come to interact with Navajo culture and tradition. The church members in Farmington are also involved in the VBS, they work with the team, and prepare food. Anna has been involved with the youth from Louisiana, and taught them the Navajo interpretation of the curriculum topics. The Navajo teenagers were also involved in the program, and some of the elders were there too, because of their wealth of experience to share. In Coal Mine, the VBS curriculum has been designed by G.J., a child development specialist, she always incorporates Navajo culture into the curriculum, while partners have provided the funding for the program, and assisted with designing the worship according to the themes G.J. developed. G.J. said that open and frequent communication is the key. Anna described a program in the diocese of Navajoland, called the Hogan Learning Circle. It is a way of teaching and bringing together Christian and Navajo teaching. The Hogan is a holy place where ceremony happens, and where learning is passed down from the elders and the parents to the children. They were able to share this with the youth from Louisiana.

Tools

Interviewees identified the following tools and practices as best practices, which were helpful for producing the impacts noted above.

- *Local participation* – Presence and involvement of youth and elders in the program, adults prepare food, and help.
- *Pilgrimage* – Hosts and visitor travel together to historical and holy sites.
- *Youth led* – young people provide the leadership for the VBS, adults are there to support.
- *Opening fellowship* – A dinner with the local leaders who will be helping with the VBS, and the visiting group, on the first night to build relationship.
- *Celebration* –A celebratory dinner of local cuisine the last night.
- *Sustainability* – Host youth are trained to become mentors and leaders of VBS.
- *Material preparation and approval* – Texts and curriculum are either prepared by hosts, or sent ahead of time to hosts for approval.
- *Preparation* – A ten-month commitment for teenagers who want to participate in the mission trip, to properly prepare for cross-cultural relationship building, and designing and presenting the curriculum. A preparation series for adults involving sessions several months in advance in cross-cultural preparation, and respect.
- *Returning* – Making a long-term commitment by bringing the same group (with some new each year), so that trust and relationship can develop.
- *Reflection* – The visitors pause twice a day to reflect on what they have noticed and what they are learning.
- *Daily prayer* – The visitors are encouraged to personal daily devotions. The hosts and visitors gather daily for prayers.
- *Collaboration* – Develop the curriculum as a collaboration between host and visitor.
- *Reconciliation work* – The Cincinnati group celebrates "Indigenous People's Weekend" instead of Columbus Day, with prominent indigenous guests, who lead workshops and liturgy centered around reconciliation, to open the experience of reconciliation to the whole congregation and the wider community.
- *Reciprocation*- Teams from each context take turns being the host and visitor and assist in putting on VBS together at each other's churches.

- *Multiple sites* – The Louisiana group presents their curriculum, modified for culture, in Navajoland, in a predominantly African American community in Louisiana, and in their home congregation. The Cincinnati group has a relationship with both Coal Mine and Bluff.

Attitudes

Problematic attitudes had been present in some partnerships in Navajoland prior to the covenant process. Paternalism was particularly evident, and led to a breakdown in relationship. One leader noted, "Our people are not children, when treated that way, they withdraw." Both Anna and G.J. remembered VBS groups of the past that tried to push their own agenda, and would not listen. The programs highlighted in the case study represent a major shift from that attitude. G.J. directs the process of developing the VBS, she said she is thankful to have partners who are engaged, interested in learning, and open to participating with the local community. For G.J., everyone being open and committed to the time that it takes to build relationship and find common ground has been important. David said that the attitude of respect is absolutely essential, and that if would-be participants in his group are not ready to fully embrace or don't understand that respect, he has asked them to wait until another year when they are ready. Anna noticed that the youth visitors are excited and open, and that they interact as one with the Navajo youth, and relate well with the children. She was impressed with their dedication, and how they save their money all year so that they can come to Navajoland. Mitzi noted that they celebrate the Navajo culture as they learn about it, and do not try to push their culture. Mitzi is clear with the youth, and with her parish, that mission trips are about relationship, not about "doing things."

3.3.4 Interpretation

The nine principles from chapter two, can be used as a lens for interpreting the process and impact of this program. Of the nine principles, it is interesting to note that *repentance* is the only one not given a central place in this program.

Encounter, incarnation, worship

The Vacation Bible School model used here provides a framework of work time, play time, and down time together for encounter to happen. In the case of Louisiana, because of their long preparation beforehand, the visiting team was ready to be present and engage in relationship. The host team, because of their planning and engagement in the process, were prepared to make space and interact in a deep way with the visitors. In the case of Coal Mine, the youth were split up into pairs, one local and one visitor, to present VBS material together. Because of the mutual relationship developed over time through VBS partnerships, both groups were ready to welcome and celebrate each other, and deepen relationship. Anna said, "The kids in our community know that there are people out there who love them, and want to come have fun with them." The teams were involved in Sunday worship. In Farmington, some of the visitors have been confirmed each year. Leon notes that they have not focused enough on worship and daily prayer with the visiting teams in Bluff, and that is something they would like to do more of.

Empowerment, narrative, proclamation

Cornelia described the covenant as empowering for the hosts to share their culture, and to be responsible for their own community. The covenant is about sharing and mutual learning. By working together, and by learning new leadership and teaching skills, it is an empowering experience for all the youth involved. In Coal Mine, the

experience has been empowering for the whole community, who have become very involved in the VBS, both in design and in the implementation of the program. The sharing of culture and of life stories happened both in official times, like cultural programs, but also in the time spent together preparing for the day, relaxing in the evening, or traveling together. Proclamation of the Gospel was experienced in a new way by the visitors, as they experienced the synergy of Navajo and Christian spirituality, in culture and in worship.

Repentance, reconciliation, discernment

Learning about the painful past, the Long Walk of the Navajo, and the poor relations between the US Government and indigenous peoples, has been a part of the program for the visitors each year. The teams that came prepared were not as shocked by this information, but it evoked a response of empathy and sorrow for the past. There was not a planned program for repentance or reconciliation that occurred during the short-term mission experience. However, there were signs that reconciliation had taken place: the deepening of relationship with each trip, the confirmation of the Louisiana youth, and increased participation by local people. Anna said, “I am sad to see them go.” John described a reconciliation event which the partners from Cincinnati hold at their cathedral, in which a time of repentance, silently or aloud, and the lighting of candles happens. These realities represent a change from the past, thanks to the commitment of the hosts to critical reflection on mission practice, and careful thought, planning and innovation, and an openness of partners to embark on mission in this way.

3.4 Case Study 2: Cristosal Global School, El Salvador

3.4.1 Description

Cristosal is a non-profit organization, which was started as an Episcopal Church partnership with the Anglican Church in El Salvador. It is now an organization which promotes a human rights based approach to development work. The human rights approach assumes that process which respects human rights principles (participation, equality, non-discrimination, transparency, and accountability) produces better outcomes over time.

Cristosal runs a program of short courses called the Global School. Global School courses are typically one week long, and are made up of participants who come from the US, and Salvadoran participants. Salvadoran and American participants learn in workshops and activities together, and travel together to different communities and locations in El Salvador as part of their learning. The course closes with a day at the beach to deepen fellowship and review the experience. While much of their work could be considered secular, Cristosal maintains relationships with the Anglican Church in El Salvador, and with Christian Base Communities, which are visited during a typical Global School course. Some courses provide content related to liberation theology, and visit sites of the martyrs of El Salvador

I interviewed the director of Cristosal, Noah, as well as participants from three different Global School courses, five Salvadoran participants, and five participants from the United States. From a course based on Migration issues, in July 2015—Salvadoran participants: Roberto, a young professional, Rina an accountant, Tatiana a university student, participants from the United States: Chuck a deacon, Koshy a priest, Dulaney a

teacher. From a course based on community development in October 2015—Salvadoran participants: Roberto and Rina, US participant: Carmen a deacon. From a course based on security and rehabilitation in March 2016—Salvadoran participants: Abygail and Ana community leaders, US participant: Melissa a university student. I also participated in a Global School course as part of my site visit. While this case study includes only direct information from the interviews, it was also shaped and confirmed by my experience of spending two and a half weeks in El Salvador, with staff of Cristosal. I interviewed the Salvadoran participants in this case study as a group, except Tatiana. I was assisted by a translator and repeated back important information to confirm. The quotes below are translated paraphrases. I interviewed the participants from the United States by phone. Salvadoran interviewees were chosen by Cristosal staff. Interviewees from the United States were recommended to me by the Salvadoran interviewees.

3.4.2 Impact

The impact of the Global School was different for each person, and some were much more impacted than others. Their reported impacts aggregated into three categories: conversion, relationship, and behavior. The impacts are reported in the order of how common they were, with significant impacts noted.

Conversion – knowledge and faith

Paradigm shifts, change in views, and gaining knowledge were by far the most reported impacts of the Global School. Participants identified specific knowledge that they gained related to human rights process, migration and violence issues, and its usefulness. Tatiana has used the information in conversation with others, and in choosing classes. Roberto has used the information in his work. Carmen was the only one who

mentioned specific skills gained (ability to work in development with a focus on human rights) which has helped her in working with Salvadorans in the United States. Abygail learned about her own history in ways that she did not know before. Dulaney learned to be able to identify privilege and how comments can be received as hurtful that were not meant that way. Beyond knowledge there was a paradigm shift that participants had a difficult time putting words to. They used phrases like "eyes opened" and "understanding." Melissa explained that the Global School changes your perspective, because you interact with people who you would never interact with, "you see beyond the news and headlines by meeting people in these vulnerable populations." Roberto realized his own prejudice, "I realized I do not need this prejudice against these people."

A deepening or return to faith was also reported among some participants. Roberto had been estranged from the church for many years, but because of a profound spiritual experience as part of the Global School, and through the witness of welcome that the American Episcopalians showed him, he has returned to his faith. On that same trip, there was an American who had a similar experience of deciding to return to the practice of going to church. Carmen had a profound spiritual experience and felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. Most of the participants reported either a deepening faith or a sense of inspiration related to a discussion of Oscar Romero, or visiting the site of his martyrdom.

Relationship – friendship and reconciliation

All of the interviewees reported that they maintain friendships with some of the participants from their Global School. Some are in touch more regularly than others. Tatiana, Roberto, and Rina reported that twice they have had a reunion with one of the

American participants, when she visited El Salvador. Carmen talks regularly on the phone with a young Salvadoran man, which has become a mentoring relationship. Friendships have also continued among Salvadoran participants who did not know each other before the trip.

Beyond forming friendships, there was also an element of reconciliation to the experience. Ana remembers that on the final day, at the beach, they were all playing together as one united group, with a single identity. Tatiana also mentioned this idea of a unified group. Rina remembers that in the midst of a disagreement with an American, she was able to explain her perspective, and the American was able to see it her way. Roberto explained that his own prejudice against Americans was changed, as he came to know them and see a distinction between the citizens and the actions of the government. Abygail remembers an American participant being so shocked by learning the history, that he came and asked for her forgiveness, saying that he was a citizen, and it was his responsibility to know what his country was doing.

Behavior – decision making and involvement

A few participants identified specific changed behaviors in themselves because of their participation in the Global School. Koshy has become more involved in Cristosal as a regional leader in the US, helping to connect churches with Cristosal, promote the Global School, and raise funds. Ana reported that she and Abygail became so connected with the American students, that they discerned a call to work with youth in their own community. They have started several youth projects in their community, and have become community leaders. Melissa, who had been a student at the time of her visit, reported significant change in her life. She now does research on vulnerable populations

in El Salvador, and volunteers with a Latino/a organization in the United States. She has also changed her giving pattern to NGOs based on gaining the knowledge to critically evaluate their process.

3.4.3 Analysis

All the participants were able to speak in depth about the process which was used for the Global School course. Specific tools were also part of the process. Some identified attitudes that were helpful, or attitude changes.

Process

Noah explained that the process of the Global School, one of accompaniment and building relationships as mutual learners, eliminates need as the basis for relationship (they are proponents of Freire's pedagogy). Chuck reflected that this was difficult for him at first. Having been to El Salvador a number of times, he was used to being in a giving role, but the Global School was more about receiving. Koshy, Melissa and Carmen all identified the participation of Salvadoran participants in the Global School as the most transformative aspect of the process. They identified the relational aspect of getting to know each other as well as the importance of hearing their perspectives and views on issues raised in the course, and issues of common interest, like Global Warming. Melissa explained that these conversations were able to go deep, because of the safe space which Cristosal staff facilitators created, teaching and embodying the human rights principles.

The content of the course was an important part of the process. The courses presented different perspectives on the issues, and brought people to present who were outside of the experience of most participants, like a person who worked with "coyotes" smuggling people, and rehabilitated gang members, as well as government officials, and

NGO directors. All of the participants interviewed talked about the quality of the content, or the way that these different views helped change their perspective.

All of the participants identified unstructured time together as a key factor in developing relationships. This time took the form of conversations over meals, on the bus, between presentations, going out in the evening, prayer, playing, dancing, or time at the beach on the last day. Ana and Abygail said that their group spent a lot of time playing and laughing together, which broke down barriers and united them. They even asked their Cristosal staff facilitator for dance breaks during the content sessions. Because the Global School course is so tightly scheduled, this unstructured time was not always planned, and sometimes the result of delays or last minute changes.

Tools

Participants identified these tools as particular aspects of the Global School process which helped produce the impact they experienced. They are listed here in order of the most mentioned or the most enthusiastic responses.

- *Unified group* – Designing a unified group with both visitors and locals who travel and learn together.
- *Translators* – Always having at least two translators present to facilitate conversations. Making sure there are bilingual people in the group, so there are enough translators for small group work.
- *Down time together* – Eating meals together, and having a day to play and reflect together at the end.
- *Facebook* – Having a Facebook group to maintain connections after the trip.
- *Prayer together* – Having opportunities to pray together, to debrief heavy material, and to support each other spiritually.
- *Facilitator* – Having a strong facilitator who points out when people are sharing too much and names what is going well in the group. (Facilitators trained in applying the human rights based approach).

- *Human Rights* – Human rights as a topic of focus, and with presenters and facilitators that demonstrate it in action, provides a safe and respectful space.
- *Welcomed to worship* – Worshiping in a local church or Christian community.
- *Flexibility* – Have the schedule flexible enough to meet the needs of the group (ie additional sessions of conversation or down time).
- *Language Learning* – Monolingual participants learn to introduce themselves in the other language.
- *Respectful Action* – Respecting community members by not taking photos of them, by paying only what was asked for craft items purchased, and by not giving hand-outs.
- *Preparation* – Having facilitated group preparation sessions before the trip (Carmen's group)

The participants also had suggestions for tools which they believe would make the experience even better.

- *Group parity* – Equal numbers of Salvadoran and US participants.
- *Living together* – Having the Salvadoran participants present in the evening as well, or staying together.
- *Praying together* – Have more opportunities to share faith and pray together with those who want to, as a means of processing difficult material and forming supportive community.
- *Lament and Repentance* – Have the opportunity to lament the past and ask for forgiveness.
- *Preparation* – Better preparation of the groups coming to reduce the shock.
- *Power Analysis* – Discuss more power relations directly in group process
- *Reciprocity* – Having a Global School where Salvadorans visit the United States.

Attitudes

The Salvadoran participants noted that the US participants were respectful, and were careful not to dominate the discussion. Ana said, "They came to learn about our struggles." Rina and Roberto both mentioned being shy at first, but that as intimacy grew,

they were able to share more openly. Carmen said she focused her attention on seeing, listening, and observing. Some American participants noted the usefulness of the preparation material sent by Cristosal, and at Cristosal's emphasis on preventing dependency in relationships.

3.4.4 Interpretation

The principles from chapter two which most apply to this case study are: *encounter, incarnation, narration, reconciliation,* and critical reflection/*discernment*. *Worship*, *empowerment*, and lament/*repentance* were also present, but not to the same degree. *Proclamation* was missing entirely. Equality, as a principle of human rights, including non-discrimination, but also equal participation was an important aspect of this program.

Encounter, incarnation, worship

The design of the Global School, as a journey of mutual learners, ensures encounter. Many of the tools highlighted by the participants, create a space where people can encounter each other, and new ways of thinking and seeing the world. The experience also had an incarnational aspect to its structure, in terms of the constant focus on honoring human rights principles. Participants also brought incarnational attitudes with them, when they came ready to learn from each other. And when those with more perceived power, came ready to be equal learners, to lift up and love others, to welcome, and to receive. For a few participants accompanying this incarnational group into a worship service, or a holy site became an intense spiritual experience with lasting impact.

Empowerment, narrative, equality

While human rights principles in action were incarnational, they were also empowering. Abygail summed up the experience beautifully:

> Before, I felt that I was less than others, because I did not have as much education as them. But the Global School taught me that we are all equal, and that we all have something to contribute. I feel empowered. I have confidence, and have become a leader in my community. I feel now that I have more worth, as much as everyone else. There was an African American girl in the group who was struggling, and the Salvadorans helped her to accept herself and feel good. We all worked together. Experience together, takes away prejudice.

The equality Abygail talks about is in the structure of the program and the facilitation, but also in the willingness of people to hear and share their own stories, and interact as equals. That sharing of participant's narrative in formal and informal discussion was identified as a primary factor in building relationship. Melissa also talked about what an empowering experience it was for the students, in terms of focusing and galvanizing them for action.

Repentance, reconciliation, critical reflection

A time for repentance and lament happened only in informal discussions, not as part of the structured time. Abygail had a young man ask for forgiveness, while Tatiana experienced one American's expression of guilt triggering a small discussion where others were able to lament, and she offered affirmation to them. Carmen and Melissa noted that there was a lot of guilt and shocked or disturbed feeling brought up in their respective groups, but not a sufficient outlet for it. "Guilt can be crippling," Melissa said. She was able to have reconciling moments with Salvadoran friends at a later time, and affirms the helpfulness in making space for that. Reconciliation came about through some of these informal discussions, and through other discussions where participants were able to disagree respectfully, or have their perspective changed by the other. There was also a

sense of shared identity that some participants noticed, which developed by the end of the week.

The fact that participants were able to speak readily about the structure of the Global School, identify useful aspects, and suggest changes, showcases the value of process and critical reflection which were inherent in the courses. The human rights based approach, specifically the principles of transparency and accountability, promoted reflection on the content and process. The content itself, presenting a wide range of views and experiences, in the presence of constant cross-cultural conversation in the group also encouraged participants to notice the process and to evaluate the information being presented. The facilitators were also open to feedback and making adjustments to the course as it went on, and conducted a thorough review and evaluation on the last day.

3.5 Case Study 3: Holy Family Merger, Milpitas, California

3.5.1 Description

Holy Child, a Tagalog and English speaking Filipino congregation in Milpitas California, and St. Joseph's, a primarily Anglo, English speaking congregation, in the same town, merged to become Holy Family Episcopal Church, in November of 2016, after five years of intentionally building relationship. They signed a covenant in 2012, to work on relationship building on a journey toward the potential of merging. These interviews and site visit took place in August 2016. St. Joseph's was a self-sustaining parish, with dwindling numbers and an aging population, while Holy Child was a mission, receiving some financial support from the diocese, growing with young people and families. Neither congregation had their own building, but they were both renting space from the same Methodist church. The diocese was supportive of the idea to merge,

and provided facilitation and training. At the same time, the diocese employed the Kaleidoscope Institute, to train teams from different congregations in cross-cultural relationship building, with the goal of making churches more welcoming to diverse communities, and in helping some churches to integrate or merge congregations.

I met with the leader of each congregation Ernie and Ruth. At the time I visited, it already felt like a united congregation with two priests. They shared the roles of the service equally. After the merger, Ruth was to become the rector of the parish, and Ernie would retire and serve as a volunteer associate priest. I interviewed them individually. I met with members of St. Joseph's who had been highly involved in the merger relationship: Robin and Paul (a married couple) and Shona. I met with members of Holy Child who had been involved: Marina, Nancy, Cora and Angie, as a group.

3.5.2 Impact

The impact of the merger process on Holy Child and St. Joseph's, was to make a united church, Holy Family, which was financially self-supporting, was intergenerational, had healthy internal relationships, celebrated diversity, and was ready to step out in evangelism and mission. The first two points were strategic reasons to merge, finances and numbers, however relationships was the primary focus of the work done during the covenant period which led to the merger. After aggregating the stories of specific impacts, the following categories emerged.

Cross-cultural skill

Trust was built between the congregations and between individuals. The St. Joseph's congregation developed skill in cross-cultural conversation, while the Holy Child congregation learned to look past cultural differences. Paul was able to see

dominant American culture more clearly, and was able to learn about and see his own assertiveness in conversation. Ernie learned that time is critical for developing trusting relationships. Shona came to greatly value multicultural community, and the richness it brings. Ruth said that even when the cultural difference caused difficulties, the genuineness of the people from St. Joseph's helped she and those from Holy Child to understand that St. Joseph's was not trying to dominate, it was just their cultural expression. Ruth said that Holy Child experienced St. Joseph's as being a very welcoming and accepting community, and that Holy Child gained these values as well. Nancy said "[St. Joseph's] have adjusted more to us than us to them, because we already had to adjust to the US culture." She explained that the work was harder for St. Joseph's, and she respected that they had to work to understand Filipino culture and to connect. She said they have learned to adjust to a different rhythm of time, and they understand the importance food. She said, laughing, "They now bring take out containers to events, and come late." Angie pointed out that Holy Child also learned new methods of fundraising from St. Joseph's.

Personal Conversion

Beyond skill in crossing cultures, profound personal transformation took place in those I interviewed, due to the relationship building process, especially in the people from St. Joseph's. Shona talked about how inspired she was by the stories of persistence she heard from her Filipino friends. When she finds herself in stressful situations, she calls to mind Cora's perspective on gratitude, and it helps to change Shona's perspective. Robin talked about how many more people she has in her life now, who she loves and who love her. She talked about how her son had been adopted by Filipino "Aunties" who

fretted over whether he was cooking enough living on his own. Paul talked about how he learned not only how assertive and efficient he was, but how to stop, watch and listen. These tools were useful to him outside the realm of cross-cultural relationship. He also said he had been inspired by the importance of extended family among his Filipino friends. He realized how long it had been since he had been in touch with his own extended family. He worked to rebuild relationships with family members out of state, and went to visit them. Cora spoke about how profound her personal experience was of being accepted by her Anglo friends, for who she was. She had experienced alienation and unease as an immigrant living in America, but she now experienced belonging. "They embraced us. Before we were secluded, now we are exalted. I feel more comfortable in US society now."

Community Conversion

Conversion also happened communally. These were previously two distinct congregations with significant history and identity. The most obvious conversion is the merger itself: Holy Family, representing a new shared identity, a unity in diversity. Cora said, "unity is not a coincidence, it is the plan of God. 'That you be one.' The Holy Spirit had a plan for us." Though the merger had not yet officially happened, and though I met with the participants separately by congregation, there was still enough shared identity that had already formed, that I often had to ask for clarification as to who "we" referred to. Marina said, after years of building relationship together, "now our goals are the same." She said that the barriers between the communities had come down, and they were ready to marry. Angie said, "There was no distinction for the children, they took to the adults from St. Joseph's right away, they know they belong to both congregations."

Paul remembers noticing how the children from Holy Child referred to Filipino adults as "aunt" and "uncle," and how in about the second year of relationship building the children began to call the Anglo adults "aunt" and "uncle" as well. Both congregations identified wider circles of relationship, and a sense that they were now a part of a bigger family. The St. Joseph's congregation learned stronger connection to family, and they learned to open their hearts in concrete ways. Angie remembers, "they wanted to be solemn at first, but now they enjoy our lively kids." They also learned to care about and be connected to the wider world in a different way. Ernie noted, "if there is a disaster in the Philippines, it is like it happened to us, we share the pain and the concern."

Proclamation: evangelism and mission

During the covenant phase, the two congregations began doing mission together, including jail ministry, caroling in care homes, and supporting food pantries. In these ministries they got to know each other better, had fun, and also made an impact on the people they met, by acting as an example of cross-cultural relationship.

The two congregations that merged had different traditions around evangelism and different outward expressions of their faith. In worship, intersessions and thanksgivings are done by all the people in Holy Child, and they have a stronger tradition of sharing their faith stories. Shona said, "Because of Nancy's example, I am less reluctant to share my faith." The St. Joseph's congregation was already learning to be more open, and to tell their story of faith. They had a shared vision, that the next step for their Holy Family congregation is to move forward to be welcoming and accepting of different cultures, and to share their faith and invite people to join them. They believe that they have something unique to offer. It has been difficult work, but they have been

transformed. At the diocesan convention, they did a sample of their conversation model on stage, and moved many to tears. More recently, moved by the division in the Anglican communion, they wrote a suggested covenant for the communion, using their own experience. Cora said, "I hope this unity continues, until the whole world is united, loved and accepted forevermore."

3.5.3 Analysis

Participants identified tools, process, and attitudes that made it possible for their relationship building process to produce such an impact.

Process

One of the points made by everyone was that it is important to focus on relationship first, and wait to talk about money until much later. They felt that it was important to move very slowly, because of the cultural differences and fears about the merger. Plenty of time was spent in fellowship. The covenant of their relationship building process was important to them, and covenant language shaped their process. Equal representation in all meetings and worship services was important to them. This was further supported by Ernie and Ruth's strong relationship, their time in prayer together, their work to seek consensus and consult each other. They utilized training in cross-cultural relationship building for a group from each congregation, and had facilitation from the diocese or trainers in the early stages.

Tools

This is a list of the tools which were identified by interviewees as critical to producing the outcomes they experienced. They are roughly in order of importance based on number of times mentioned, and enthusiasm.

- *Eating together* – Dinner groups for sharing of simple personal stories, to begin relationships. Having meals together. This is important to Filipino culture, for business and fellowship.
- *Covenant* – A covenant for relationship, made the merger natural, the focus was on how to be a community first.
- *Mutual Invitaiton* – (Kaleidoscope Institute) Used in small groups for telling narrative. Used for difficult decisions in the Joint Congregation Committee. Holy Child felt more comfortable expressing disagreement when invited to speak. It brought down barriers, and reduced the fear to speak.
- *Co-mingling* – Intentional co-mingling at coffee hour
- *Fellowship* – Dinner groups soup suppers, grill competition, Halloween costume competition, casual low-pressure events for getting to know each other.
- *Mission* – Jail ministry, caroling, Santa Maria Urban Mission, Food pantry, buddy runs, church fair.
- *Parties* – Getting together outside church: birthday parties, family gatherings, etc.
- *Child participation* – Involve children in everything.
- *Facilitation* – Small group exercise facilitated by diocesan staff, with breakout conversations, around important structural decisions.
- *Power Analysis* – (Kaleidoscope Institute) Tool for being aware of power dynamics, and not blaming people for power, but moving forward in a different way.
- *Culture training* – High/low context culture training (Kaleidoscope Institute) Tool introducing cultural difference. Paul felt the exercise overly emphasized difference, but encouraged being aware and intentional.
- *Direct communication*- What is the barrier, how do I know if you are upset?

Attitudes

Prioritizing the relationship building, and committing time and effort to it, was key to the success of their merger. It was important that those from St. Joseph's be both open to learning about Filipino culture, but also be willing to listen and not push. The Filipinos were also willing to be open and vulnerable about sharing, including their fears

about the merger, as well as explain deeper identity and cultural issues, and experience of being a minority. There was an attitude of respecting the other that permeated the relationship building process.

3.5.4 Interpretation

The short-term principles (from chapter two) which most apply to their merger process are: *worship, incarnation, encounter, narration, proclamation, empowerment, reconciliation,* and *discernment.* What seemed to be missing from the principles to help describe their experience was unity and respect. Respect is more of an overarching principle, which is part of each of these below.

Worship, incarnation, encounter

Worship was a key part of the covenant experience. These two communities were forming a single worshiping body. They took a long time to develop exactly what that would look like, by experimenting on different forms, teaching and learning Tagalog pronunciations and songs, and slowly increasing frequency. Their final form is an equal mixture of cultural material from each service, and an equal representation in worship leadership.

Encounter seemed to better describe the early phases of the covenant relationship where listening was especially important. There had to be extra care taken to mix people up during coffee hour, and to create low-pressure events for getting to know each other and build trust. While not all these steps are necessary now that the congregation has a shared identity, a few people mentioned, it may be time to do some more of those relationship building events. It seemed like in recalling what they used to do, they saw both how far they have come since then, but also, how powerful those tools were.

Incarnation is linked with the conversion that people experienced. Incarnation is not just being present with one another, but experiencing the unity of the body of Christ, loving each other, and reaching out into a hurting world to love and serve. The conversion experiences came from open hearts, time, presence, and love. After being incarnational to one another, they were able to turn outward, and love those outside the community in service.

Narration, proclamation, empowerment

Narration was such an important part of the relationships built. It allowed for people to see their common ground with one another, and build on that. Mutual invitation deepened that experience, making each person feel honored. Proclamation of one's own faith, and of the Gospel came easier for the Holy Child congregation, but by their witness, this became a part of the way the joint congregation speaks.

Empowerment was not directly spoken of, but the Holy Child interviewees talked about a reduction in the fear to speak out. This is a sign that empowerment has taken place. They also talked about having hope for their congregation's vitality into the future (from what had been an uncertain future). St. Joseph's interviewees talked about being empowered to share their faith publicly. These three areas seem to be connected. Does a person proclaim the Gospel because they are empowered, or are they first empowered by sharing their story or giving their witness, or by hearing other's stories and witnesses? I think it is a combination of all of those things. I also feel that while humans can help the process of empowerment by respecting one another, and sharing tools, empowerment itself comes from the Holy Spirit.

Reconciliation, unity, discernment,

This case study did not have an element of repentance or lament. There was awareness of the colonial history of the Philippines, and an awareness that it had an impact on the relationship. Reconciliation and unity were achieved through a constant and rigorous process of respectful, unified discernment. There was immense care taken to being aware of cultural differences, and being respectful and taking time. This merger used a great number of tools, and as it played out, the Joint Congregation Committee reviewed the progress according to the covenant. Space was made for disagreement, even when it required extra assurance from St. Joseph's congregation, to Holy Child that they really wanted to understand. This careful and caring process has produced more and more fruit with time.

3.6 Conclusion

All three of these programs valued relationship and structured engagement in order to produce relationship. Relationship was lasting when there was sustained contact, multiple visits, or regular communication via social media. The transformative impacts reported by participants tended to be greater in participants who continued to stay connected both to individual participants (from the other cultural group), but also to learning or cross-cultural experience in their home context. The Holy Family case study provides a picture of the depth of life-giving relationship and shared identity that is possible in a long-term relationship. The Global School, and Navajoland case studies show that life-giving relationship is also possible in short-term mission, but only if people are engaged before and after the experience in learning and cross-cultural engagement. The nine principles of *encounter, incarnation, worship, empowerment, narrative,*

proclamation, repentance, reconciliation, and *discernment* were present across the case studies. Proclamation and repentance were each missing in one, and unity and equality were each added to one. Repentance had little or no programmatic support in all three case studies. But in the limited sample where participants engaged both in multiple trips and yearly liturgically centered repentance and reconciliation at home (Cincinnati), they all identified significant impact on their spiritual formation. Because unity and equality are embodied in the principles of incarnation and reconciliation, I did not find the need to add them to the nine going forward. However, remembering that unity and equality are elements in these principles may be helpful. The fact that less emphasis was placed on proclamation and repentance is a sign that special attention needs to be paid to these principles to ensure that short-term mission moves away from problematic practice, toward life-giving practice. The question remains, what resources might be available for those seeking life-giving short-term mission?

Chapter 4

4 Resources toward Constructive Short-term Mission Practice

4.1 Introduction

Evaluating the process, the attitudes, and the tools which participants in the case studies identified as being central to the transformation they experienced presents a challenge. Applying constructive practices alone will not correct programs where the process or the attitudes are still problematic. The necessary first step then is critical reflection on the attitude and the process, and engaging in efforts to broaden both before embarking on short-term mission. This is true of visitor and host alike. While it is outside of the scope of this thesis to provide a full toolkit or handbook for constructive short-term mission practice, this chapter will seek to begin the movement from principles to practice. A collection of resources have been carefully selected to point the reader toward materials and practices which have made creative imagining for life-giving cross-cultural relationship possible. No list can be definitive, but rather this selection of resources seeks to inspire such creative imagining for both host and visitor interested in the life-giving aspects of cross-cultural relationship in short-term mission.[176]

4.2 Attitude

Cristosal (case study 2) promotes the idea that the process in itself is transformative. Their focus on process in the Global School produced impact in

[176] One problem present in most short-term mission handbooks and manuals is they assume a Western-visitor audience, which discounts the agency and key role non-Western or indigenous hosts play in short-term mission. This thesis assumes an audience of hosts and visitors and uses the word "participant" to refer to both.

participants lives, including transformed attitudes. I agree that the process is transformative, but it can only transform what participants bring to the process. Global School participants who had previous experience in cross-cultural interaction, or training in social justice, or who brought a particular attitude of loving respect, were the participants who reported the most significant impact on their lives. Navajoland exemplifies how problematic attitude in partners can be shifted by a host-led covenant process. With Holy Family, serious, long-term commitment to patient, vulnerable, loving respect produced the environment in which their covenant process could work. A similar merger process had been attempted a number of years previous and failed because it lacked this attitude. They also committed themselves to a significant preparation period for cross-cultural relationship building with consultants from the Kaleidoscope Institute.

Shifting attitudes away from paternalism, disempowerment and a lack of critical reflection, must be taken on prior to mission engagement. Preparation should not be solely about logistics and culture shock. Preparation should engage participants in deep reflection and conversation about their motives, expectations, and their latent or overt paternalism or sense of disempowerment. Preparation must be taken on by those who will visit, and ideally by those who will host as well. Preparation should include facilitated theological reflection and Bible study. Preparation should also include learning about, and even practicing cross-cultural interaction. Materials designed to bring about paradigm shifts[177] can also be helpful. Examining and shifting or transforming attitudes

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[177] For example: Lupton, *Toxic Charity*. Easterly, *The White Man's Burden*. Moyo, *Dead Aid*. Eric H. F. Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb* (Chalice Press, 1993). Corbett and Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*. Tyler Wigg-Stevenson, *The World Is Not Ours to Save: Finding the Freedom to Do Good* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2013). Myers, *Walking with the Poor*.

before the short-term mission experience will put participants in a better place to be able to engage in the process and experience in a constructive way.

The Gospel in Solentiname, highlights the power of contextual Bible study, and prioritizing non-Western voices. Exploring where the nine themes of this thesis arose in the text and what questions were sparked by the text, was an example of engaging in cross-cultural conversation with a text. This method could be used as a means of preparing for encounter in short-term mission. In keeping with that effort, questions raised in chapter two with *The Gospel in Solentiname* (2.3.1) will be brough in conversation with the resources below.

4.3 Process

The three case studies had very specific, intentional process for mission engagement. Cristosal and Holy Family planned and implemented this process. Navajoland is a redemptive example of a new process being applied to correct problems. A strong, transformative process, which corrects the key problems in short-term mission, will reflect the theological principles outlined in this thesis. These nine themes are the guiding principles below. When designing or reforming a process, leaders should seek to engage with all of these areas, remaining aware of the problematic heritage they carry. It is not necessary that every principle be embodied by a specific activity, but rather that all the principles be present. For example, a closing Eucharist with a mutual reconciliation rite applies the principles of *worship*, *reconciliation*, and *repentance* simultaneously.

Cristosal's process for the Global School is informed by the principles of human rights. These principles are the international standard for moral practice, arising from a

pluralistic discussion that included Christian witness.[178] They suggest an attitude of equality, respect, and openness. As people of faith, however, engaging in historically flawed short-term mission, we must take an extra step to embody principles arising from a theology that seeks to answer the very problems we face, and have created.

Intentionally missing from these nine principles of constructive short-term mission is the principle of service. Service is present in the five marks of mission and in the five promises of the Baptismal Covenant.[179] Acts of service are closely linked with paternalistic patterns. It is critical, therefore, that service is engaged within the practice of these nine principles, and not set apart from these principles. The Global School case study demonstrates that mission can happen without a service component at all. The Holy Family case study is an example of service together. The Navajoland case study exemplifies an effort to shift paternalistic service into constructive mutual service. Only when service serves these principles can it be truly life-giving.

4.4 Selected Resources

To create or recreate short-term mission process which is constructive, the following resources, organized by the nine principles, may be helpful. Designing process, must be approached with attitudes of loving respect and openness. If there is resistance in the leadership team to revision of the process, the group should return to a stage of preparation, cross-cultural training, and paradigm shifting (4.2). While anyone engaged in short-term mission, hosts and visitors, can encourage improved practice, design and revision should be led by the host community, and accomplished mutually. The selected

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[178] Linda Hogan, *Keeping Faith with Human Rights*, The Moral Traditions Series (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015), 1-11.

[179] Walls and Ross, *Mission in the Twenty-First Century*, xiv. Church Publishing, *Book of Common Prayer* (New York : Greenwich, CT: Church Publishing INC, 1979), 304.

resources are presented as a short summary statement and reference. This list will assist the reader in locating materials and methods they need to creatively design or transform their specific short-term mission practice.

4.4.1 Encounter, Incarnation, Worship

The principles of *encounter*, *incarnation*, and *worship* arise from the study of who God is, of world theology, and of how we are called to participate in God's mission. Ensuring these principles pervade short-term mission process, is a way of safeguarding against or curtailing paternalism and a focus on mission as transforming the other. Explored through the lens of *The Gospel in Solentiname*, these questions arose. Is it possible for wealthy Christians to encounter Christ as liberator? Is it possible to do away with paternalism? Is it possible to have true relationship across a power or wealth differential? The case studies and the following resources provide the reader with material to engage these questions. We are called to encounter the incarnated Christ in one another, as brothers and sisters in Christ, a relationship which is consecrated in worship.

Resources for communication:

- *Mutual invitation* – a procedure for engaging in conversation, where the facilitator invites someone to speak, and then each person who speaks invites the next person to speak until all have either spoken or chosen to pass.[180]
- *Cross-cultural communication training* – Provide training, as part of team or host preparation.

[180] Law, *The Wolf*, 113-114. Or found online, http://www.kscopeinstitute.org under resources.

- *Reading together* – Hosts and visitors can prepare before the short-term mission experience, by studying a book about cross cultural communication.[181]

- *Communication guidelines* – Develop a set of communication guidelines mutually. As a starting place, see Eric Law's R.E.S.P.E.C.T communication guidelines and ground rules. Example: "R-Take Responsibility for what you say or feel without blaming others."[182]

- *Bilingual conversation* – Use cell phones on a conference call with translator as simultaneous translation devices. Bilingual participants facilitate small group discussion. Translate all written material. Use a bilingual facilitator. Break out in same-language groups and report back in the opposite language. Give questions for people to ponder while waiting for translation.[183]

- *Communication activity* – Low context cultures assume little shared understanding and explain detailed meaning, while high context cultures assume significant shared understanding of meaning with little explanation. Design an activity after studying these cultural communication types, or use Eric Law's "Focusing on Differences in Communication Styles" activity to help groups understand the opposite culture and prevent misunderstanding.[184]

Resources for Power Analysis:

- *Rights, respect, responsibility*– When hosts and visitors are gathered, talk about what rights, respect, and responsibility look like for each person and the group as a whole. This activity helps build a group identity in the presence of difference. See Eric Law's formulated questions and design for this activity.[185]

- *Reading and reflection* – Use individual reflection, group work, and Bible study. Eric Law's book *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*, is a resource for understanding and leading power analysis work. He also suggests Bible study of certain passages, looking at what Jesus asks of the powerful

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[181] For example: Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010). Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Connections: Stepping Out and Fitting In Around the World* (IVP Academic, 2009). Kathryn Tanner, *Theories of Culture: A New Agenda for Theology*, Guides to Theological Inquiry (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997). Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?* Myers, *Walking with the Poor*.

[182] Eric H. F. Law, *The Bush Was Blazing But Not Consumed* (Chalice Press, 1996), 86-87. The guidelines, but not the ground rules, are available online http://www.kscopeinstitute.org under resources.

[183] Law, *The Bush*, 158-159. These and other suggestions are detailed on these pages, and throughout the book.

[184] Law, *The Bush*, 100-111, 154-157.

[185] Eric H. F. Law, *Inclusion: Making Room for Grace* (Chalice Press, 2000), 120-124.

and the powerless.[186] (Note: the polar dichotomies in Law's work may not always be helpful)

- *Drama and discussion* – Role playing activities and story can be a useful way to break down barriers, and cause paradigm shifts. *Theater of the Oppressed* uses theater as an activity for empowerment and transformation.[187] Eric Law has a power analysis play and skit activity.[188]

Making space for interaction:

- *Living together* – Housing people together, hosts and visitors, gives more opportunity for interaction, and builds relationships.[189]
- *Learning together* – the Global School model of learning together creates shared identity as learners across a cultural divide. They used pedagogy principles from Freire when designing the program.[190]
- *Leisure together* – the Global School and Holy Family demonstrated the importance of planning low-pressure free time together for cross cultural interaction, like meals, fellowship, time on busses, time between sessions, prayer, and recreation.

Worship together:

- *Welcomed to worship* – Visitors participate in the regular worship of the local community. Translation may or may not be available or appropriate. If no translation will be available, visitors may request instructions before the service from church leaders, so that they know what to expect, and so they can enter into the worship experience (knowing when to confess, when to pray, how to pronounce words in hymns etc).
- *Worship together* – Cross-cultural services for visitor and host participants of the mission program, may include an opening or closing Eucharist, celebration service, or daily services like morning or evening prayer.
- *Mutual worship design* – A committee may be formed of host and visitor participants to design a joint liturgy. Use tools for communication above.

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[186] Law, *The Wolf*, 37-43 for Bible study. Note, case study 3, worked with Eric Law's materials, and were trained by Law's Kaleidoscope Institute.

[187] Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed*, trans. Charles A. McBride, Maria-Odilia Leal McBride, and Emily Fryer (1979; repr.; London, UK: Pluto, 2000), 126-156.

[188] Eric Law, *Sacred Acts, Holy Change: Faithful Diversity and Practical Transformation*, Second Printing edition (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2002), 145-166. Includes a power analysis role play and a skit.

[189] Rick Richardson, "The Impact of Urban Short-Term Projects on the Social Connections of Evangelical College Students," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right*, ed. Robert J. Priest, Evangelical Missiological Society Series, no. 16 (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 552.

[190] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Paulo Freire, "Education, Liberation and the Church," *Religious Education* 79, no. 4 (September 1984): 524–45. Paulo Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness* (New York: Continuum, 1981). Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Heart* (1997; repr.; London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

- *Conversation in Worship*– Eric Law recommends doing cross-cultural dialogue in the context of a worship service. He provides an outline and questions. This may not be appropriate in all settings.[191]
- *Worship that reconciles* – Design a service of lament, repentance and reconciliation as a team. If using existing resources, make sure to adapt them to the particular place and relationship. A simple circle with every person saying to each other one by one "Forgive me a sinner" and response "God Forgives" can be very powerful.[192]

4.4.2 Empowerment, Narrative, Proclamation

Empowerment, narrative, and proclamation arise from a study of contextualization of scripture, and its power in subverting disempowerment and dependency. These concepts, explored through the lens of *The Gospel in Solentiname*, raised the following questions. What is the source of empowerment of the poor? The people of Solentiname are very clear that the empowerment they experience comes from within themselves from a direct encounter with God, revelation from Jesus in scripture, and conversation inspired by the Holy Spirit. Because there is so much strife in *The Gospel in Solentiname* between the wealthy and the poor, the question arose, what attitudes might help bridge this gap in short-term mission? Contextualization of scripture is an act of proclamation, and leads directly to seeing Christ working in the narrative of the interpreter. Can that act of proclamation be used in relationship and reconciliation? Reflection on empowerment, narrative and proclamation in the case studies, as well as the following resources, equip the reader to continue to wrestle with these questions. The resources for communication, power analysis, interaction, and worship from the last section continue to inform this section as components for making space where respectful and meaningful empowerment, narrative, and proclamation happen.

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[191] Law, *The Bush*, 127-134

[192] For an example of a series of powerful liturgies on lament and reconciliation see the DISGRACE conference: http://www.montreat.org/disgrace/

Resources for Accompaniment:

- *Walking together* – Obtain training from a facilitator who can teach the accompaniment model. Accompaniment places love, patience and presence, before programs, and structured engagement.[193]Accompaniment prioritizes relationships over projects and focuses on assets over problems.[194]

- *Reading Together* – Before the visit, engage in study of a book which teaches solidarity or accompaniment.[195]

Using Scripture:

- *Contextual Bible Study* – In which ordinary people (not the elite) bring their own socio-cultural context as a resource for interpreting the Bible: art, symbols, narrative, history, practices, religions. They form the agenda, and lead the process.[196] See *The Gospel in Solentiname* as an example.[197]

- *Community Bible Study* – Agreed-to rules (decided on ahead of time), passage read aloud, silent meditation, prayer, (optional: leader shares contextual or literary information about the passage), individuals share a word or phrase that stood out to them by mutual invitation. Passage read a second time, insight shared by mutual invitation. Passage read a third time, share what God is calling you to do or change from this insight, by mutual invitation.[198]

Conversation programs:

- *Talking together* – Benno van den Toren suggests an intercultural three-way conversation between Western and non-Western conversation partners in attention to the revelation of God in scripture, including listening, examining assumptions, and power analysis[199] A conversation program could be designed by the hosts, or by a group made up of hosts and visitors. Eric Law details a five-session dialogue process.[200]

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[193] Andrew Skotnicki, "Inner City Poverty and the Ethic of Accompaniment," *Louvain Studies* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2001), 50–62.
[194] Kim Marie Lamberty, "The Art of Accompaniment," *Missiology (Online)* 43, no. 3 (July 2015), 324–38.
[195]For example: Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness*. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Heart*. Jon Sobrino, *The Principle of Mercy: Taking the Crucified People from the Cross* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994). Part III. Jon Sobrino and Juan Hernández Pico, *Theology of Christian Solidarity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985). Myers, *Walking with the Poor*. Donald H. Dunson and James A. Dunson, *Citizen of the World: Suffering and Solidarity in the 21st Century* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2013).
[196] Walter Dietrich and Ulrich Luz, eds., *The Bible in a World Context: An Experiment in Contextual Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2002), 17-21.
[197] Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*.
[198] Law, *The Wolf*, 121.
[199] van den Toren, "Intercultural Theology as a Three-Way Conversation."
[200] Law, *The Bush*, 135-153.

Cultural sharing:

- *Cultural reflection* – Reflecting on the image of an iceberg as a metaphor for culture, can be used as an activity individually or in groups to explore the cultural elements which are under the surface.[201]
- *Cultural presentation* – As exemplified in the Navajoland case study, time set aside for hosts to teach, present history, dance/art, and stories.
- *Cultural sites* – A shared trip to local historical and holy sites, was an aspect of both Navajoland and Global School case studies.

4.4.3 Repentance, Reconciliation, discernment

It is interesting to note that *repentance* was not a central theme in the case studies, however I am persuaded that *repentance*, along with *reconciliation* and *discernment*, are the correction for lack of critical reflection. The people of Solentiname recognized the pain involved in transformation, and they demanded that repentance be about changed behavior, not words alone. This is a challenge in short-term mission because the time is short. The participants who reported the most significant changed behavior in their lives were also the participants who continued to stay engaged in learning and cross-cultural work and in corresponding with participants. In *The Gospel in Solentiname*, the people linked reconciliation with a shared struggle for justice. Can short-term mission be a part of the longer struggle for justice? The Navajoland covenant process is an example of the application of discernment and critical reflection on the short-term mission experience, in their continual critical evaluation of the process and outcome and trying new models of engagement, led by the host community.

Evaluation

- *Critical evaluation* – As in the Navajoland case study, a diocesan body, or leadership team from the host community can evaluate the mission program according to their own vision, and the fruit it produces. The

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[201] Rah, *Many Colors*, 85-86, 188-189. Law, *The Wolf*, 4-9.

leadership of the visiting team should also be evaluating the process. The nine principles of this thesis could be used as categories for evaluation.

- *Revision* – If problems are detected in the evaluation process, revision of the relationship should be directed by the host community.

Commitment

- *Covenant* – Both Navajoland and Holy Family used a covenant to establish commitment between communities, producing trust and relationship (appendix).
- *Contact* – Continuing relationships through social media, phone, email, and future visits, deepens the relationship begun on the mission trip, and causes a greater impact on participants. Relationships between individuals become bridges which connect communities that are in partnership with each other.[202]
- *Reciprocation* – Short term mission trips are planned to both participant communities, so that each community has the opportunity to send and receive teams. See Navajoland case study, and Continuing Indaba program.[203]
- *Continuation* – A structure of accountability post-visit can help participants continue learning. This may include goal setting, mentors, accountability in pairs or to the group, and continuing to meet, pray, and act as a group.[204]
- *Changed patterns* – Follow up structures help participants to deepen the integration of the experience, and process what kind of change they may want to make in their life in response to the experience.[205]

Reconciliation

- *Lament and Repentance* – In liturgy, a special service of reconciliation (4.4.1), or in a planned session of dialogue.
- *Justice* – If a group follows the pedagogy method of Freire, it follows that issues of injustice may be identified, and in turn an action plan developed, which the team, hosts and visitors, can work together on.[206]

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[202] C. M. Brown, "Friendship Is Forever: Congregation to Congregation Relationships," in *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right*, ed. Robert J. Priest, Evangelical Missiological Society Series, no. 16 (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 231.
[203] Phil Groves and Angharad Parry Jones, *Living Reconciliation* (Cincinnati, OH: Forward Movement, 2014).
[204] Ver Beek, "Lessons from the Sapling," 494.
[205] Richardson, "The Impact," 553-554.
[206] See works by Freire especially: Freire, "Education, Liberation and the Church."

- *Indaba* – From South Africa, a meeting with the intention of bringing about reconciliation. There is a cycle of dialogue and recess, until a common understanding emerges about what happened, and a course set forward for restoring the relationship.[207]

4.5 Conclusion

The problems associated with short-term mission are widespread and profound: paternalism, disempowerment, and lack of critical reflection. Despite decades of theological reflection such problems persist. Some argue that short-term mission should cease all together or be put on hiatus. Not only is this suggestion impossible to implement, it discounts the life-giving potential of short-term mission being the body of Christ across barriers of culture and place. Application of the nine principles *encounter*, *incarnation*, *worship*, *empowerment*, *narrative*, *proclamation*, *repentance*, *reconciliation*, and *discernment* will move us toward life-giving cross-cultural relationships in short-term mission. The Christian communities present in these case studies enable us to imagine new ways of engaging in short-term mission relationship. In short-term mission, as in Christian life, there is always a tension between lament and celebration. We lament the past, our problematic attitudes and practices that continue to mar relationships. However, at the same time, we rejoice in the power of the risen Christ at work in the world. We look to the Christ of all peoples who empowers his followers to love across great divides. We hope expectantly, longing to bear the fruit of reconciliation in our lives, our churches, and our short-term mission.

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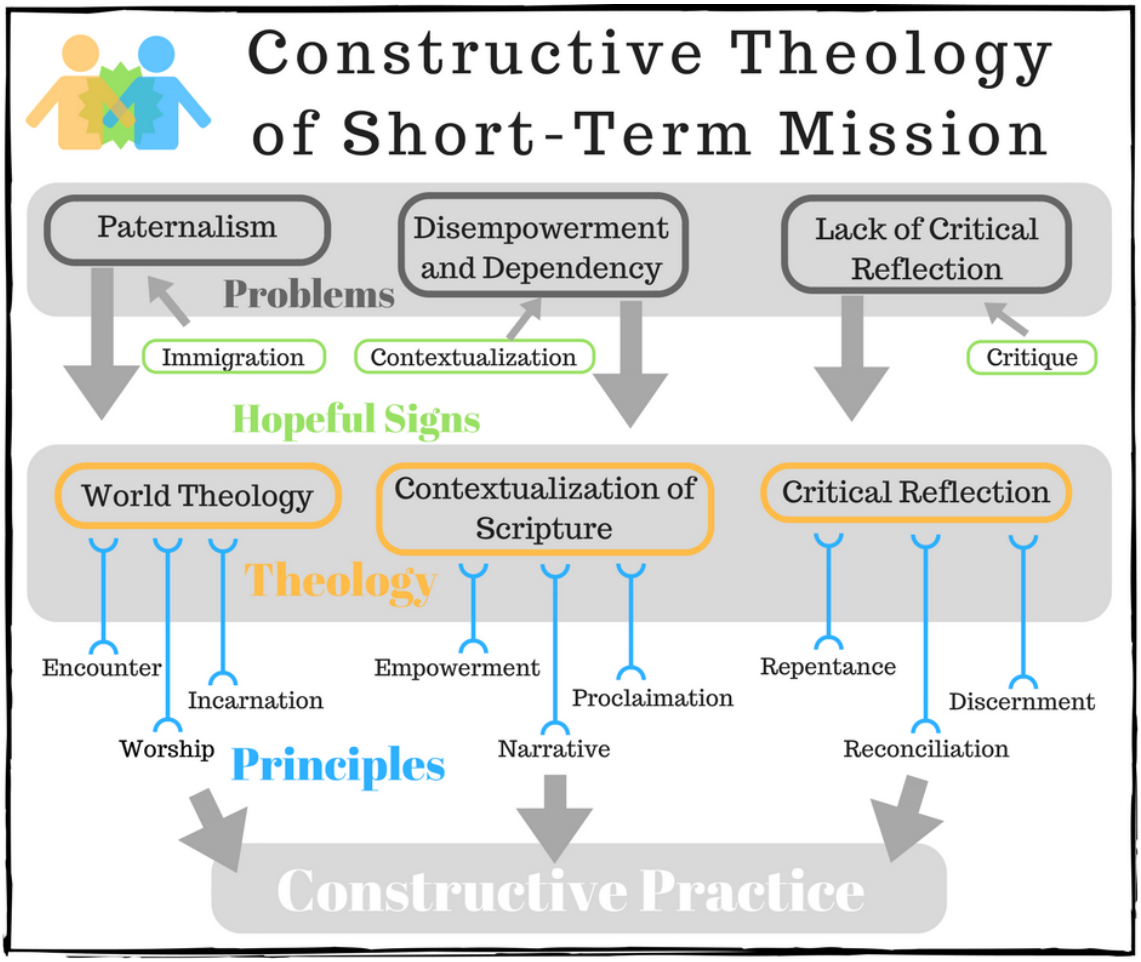
[207] Rowe and Marzouk, "Christian Disciplines," 225-231.


Constructive Theology of Short-Term Mission
Paternalism
Disempowerment and Dependency
Lack of Critical Reflection
Problems
Immigration
Contextualization
Critique
Hopeful Signs
World Theology
Contextualization of Scripture
Critical Reflection
Theology
Encounter
Incarnation
Worship
Empowerment
Proclaimation
Narrative
Repentance
Discernment
Reconciliation
Principles
Constructive Practice

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Appendix

Episcopal Church in Navajoland letter to partners regarding the covenant process

The Episcopal Church in Navajoland

Post Office Box 720
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505-327-7549
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Date: February 13, 2013

To: Navajoland Partners, Mission Teams, Supporters

From: The Rt. Rev. Dr. David E. Bailey, Bishop of The Navajoland Area Mission

I want to update all of you who are in relationship with those of us in Navajoland and who are our treasured prayerful friends. In December I introduced key operational changes to ECN Council to initiate the next step we are taking to empower the Navajo leadership of the ECN. We need your support and cooperation now more than ever as we move to a new model for our partners as well as for our congregations moving them toward self-autonomy. Some of the changes will impact the process used as we put in place procedures to support our goals. Each congregation will have ministry in these areas:

Formation – Practices and leadership development, History and understanding of The Episcopal Church

Education – Christian education for all ages, church infrastructure (altar guild, vestry, ushers, acolytes, history of Navajos in the Episcopal Church)

Social Outreach – Reaching out to community: Veterans, AA, and Alanon, teen pregnancy, parenting classes, etc.

Pastoral Care Ministry – within ECN community

Every congregation will have an appointed person as a liaison and a Bishop's Committee, both responsible to the Bishop. Each congregation will be assigned partners and mission teams by the Bishop in collaboration with liaisons and Bishop's committees, based on the needs of individual congregations. In conjunction with the Bishop, ECN congregational leadership will be responsible for scheduling and project determination of all visiting mission teams and partners.

These changes have come out of intense assessment of ECN's resources and of the methods we have used over time to engage our treasured partners and support. Some of our findings were surprising! We found fragmentation in ECN by events, projects and programs held, even duplicated, in one region, while other regions had nothing offered. Partners have lead wonderful programs for ECN but without any Navajo training so they can continue these programs independently. Although some identification of needs has been accomplished, there has been little prioritizing of all the needs in ECN. This has led to uneven and random responses that have not aligned well with ECN overall needs. It was found that some facility's expenses to host partners were far higher than expected and strained budgets. Many facilities are unsafe and falling apart. Even with over $300,000 spent above general maintenance, our aging infrastructures desperately need to be rehabilitated. Frequently partners had little direction from ECN and were left to determine a schedule and to guess at what project to do. Communication on ECN's part was poor and even disrespectful on occasion. Partners and supporters have given so very much to ECN and have received very little in return. Partnership infers a two-way street and we want to honor that relationship.

Most of you are aware of the limited capability of our aging utility systems, buildings and our limited resources for financial independence. In January we were blessed with a visit of Episcopal Church leadership I invited to help us move forward. This included a Bishop from The Episcopal Church "TEC" in New York, the Chair of Indigenous People in Cincinnati, and a Canon to the Ordinary with resource development experience, as well as others. This "Development Team" traveled to and assessed each region of ECN. Their counsel has proved invaluable as they identified assets, development and financial resources to enable ECN to become more economically independent. This deliberate and intentional evaluation of ECN, their counsel and support is ongoing.

All of this knowledge has led to new procedures as we go forward together. Your ministry to us is crucial. I ask for your cooperation and flexibility as we implement these changes. A policy packet will be sent to you, but here are some highlights of this exciting transition.

Programs will fall into the 3 categories identified above: formation, education and social outreach. Here we need your training to equip our people and leadership for ministry. I hope you can teach our people to carry on these programs independently within 3 years. When this is accomplished you will be able to move on to new exciting programs. The goal is to grow and support leadership in each congregation!

Currently, congregational leadership with my oversight, are putting together comprehensive lists of needs in the 3 program areas. Projects will center on facilities. These also will come from ECN needs prioritized and matched to your willingness to take these projects on.

In conjunction with me, ECN congregation councils and liaisons will be responsible for scheduling and project selection of all visiting teams and partners. We are also adopting a practice of asking each mission team to assist us in meeting our costs by donating a fee for each visitor using property overnight. We are also beginning to develop presentations and experiences to share Navajo history and traditions with visiting teams to enrich your experiences and honor our partnerships.

Over the years many positive changes and improvements have been made to each region only due to your work and support as partners. I cannot thank you enough for your perseverance in this challenging work in some of the most primitive conditions. The Navajo are an amazing and faithful people with much to teach us. We continue to welcome you and need your continued commitment. I ask for your flexibility, patience and sense of adventure as we listen to God's plan for the Area Mission of Navajoland. It is always difficult to let go of comfortable traditions and implement new goals and procedures. During this transition to our new ministry focus and to our scheduling and project selections I welcome your input. We look forward to working with you and the exciting opportunities which will benefit Navajoland and its people. With thankfulness for each of the unique gifts you bring, I am pleased to work together in this endeavor.

Faithfully yours,

+David E. Bailey

David E. Bailey,

Bishop of Navajoland

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Attachment A
Identification of Content

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