

# Challenge and opportunity in Global Mission

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# *Trends: the global context*

- Better or worse?
- Urbanisation and poverty
- Mass movement
- Changing economic and military power
- Socio-economic instability
- Globalisation and nationalism
- Nationalism and religious radicalism
- Climate change
- Technology and Artificial Intelligence
- What does it mean to be human?



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## *Trends: within the church*

- Churches and NGOs in poverty reduction and care
- Changing demographics
- Diversity
- Multiplication of denominations
- Church on the move
- Mega churches
- Dialogue between church traditions
- Persecution and marginality
- Vulnerability



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# *Trends: in global mission*

- Mission from everywhere
- Reverse mission to the post-Christian
- Faltering financial systems
- Multiplication of agencies
- Short term
- On the job training
- Mission in the post-Christian
- Direct church sending
- CP vs Caring
- Contextualisation and local theologies
- Rethinking mission



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# 1. *What shapes our understanding of mission?*

Christendom mission (Kreider):

- ✓ Geographically defined
- ✓ Responsibility of the church
- ✓ Special agents
- ✓ Goal is establishment of the church



## *'Mission = sending'*

**The major obstacle to the church fully participating in the mission of God**

### **Frontier mission:**

- Pioneering among ethno-cultural and ethno-linguistic populations where there is no indigenous church
- People groups/unreached-unengaged/10/40 window/finish the task





# Assumption (a): *mission is about strategy*





*Assumption (b):  
The cross-cultural  
worker is the key  
human resource*



## *The results of these assumptions:*

- Overemphasis on ethno/linguistic barriers
- Reductionist: mission=task
- Faulty eschatology
- Homogeneous church the goal
- 'distant', powerful, cross-cultural workers key
- Marginalises the church in mission



## 2. *Mission and power*

Complex

Power-boat

- Neo-colonial attitudes
- Fixation with strategy, speed and scale
- Often ignores what God is already doing



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### 3. *What is mission?*

Missio Dei

*With all wisdom and understanding he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.*

Ephesians 1 verse 9-10

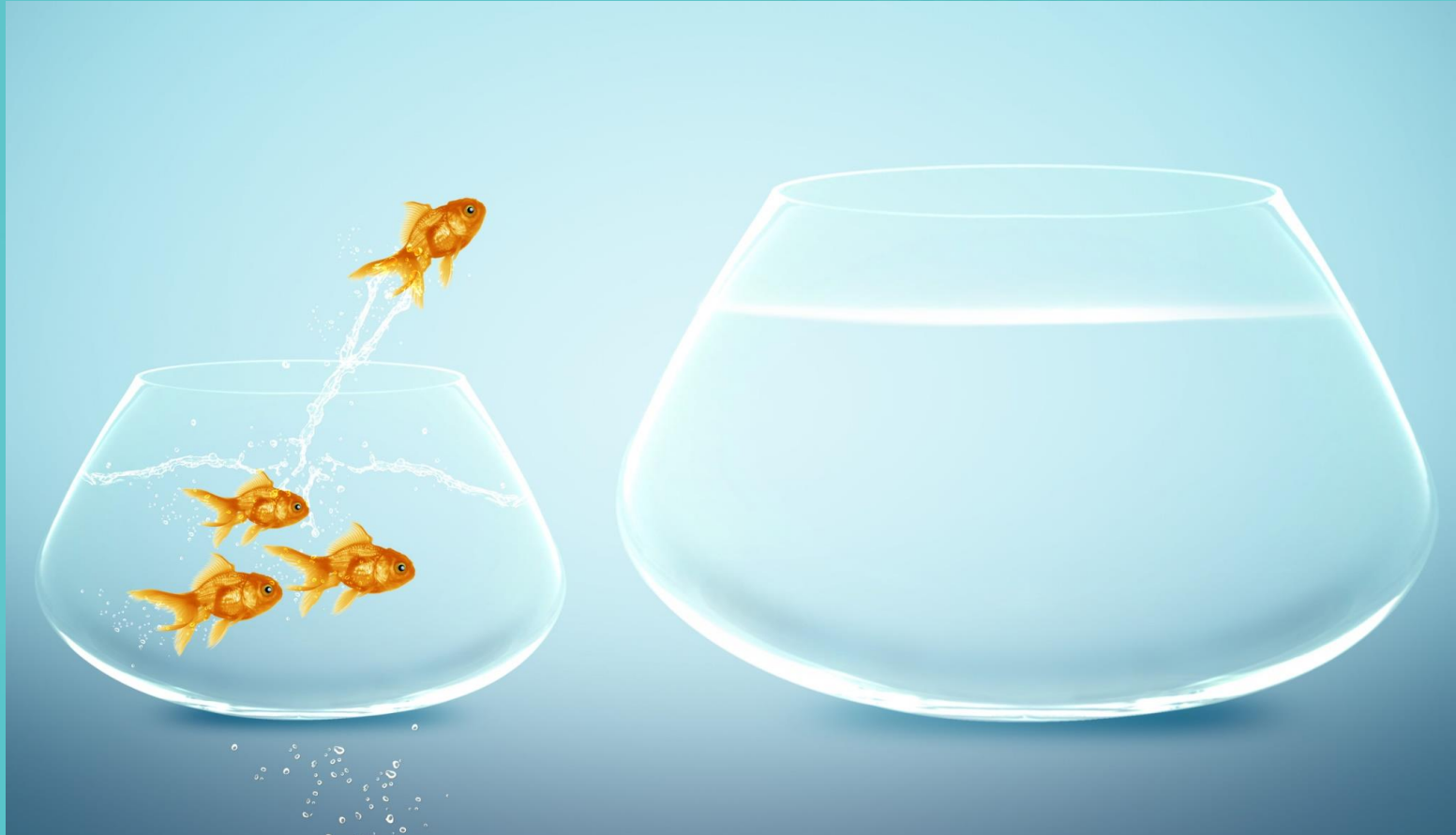
Everyone and everything under the Lordship of Christ  
(Rene Padilla)



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# OPPORTUNITIES



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# 1. *A deeper understanding and practice of mission*

## Exploration of discipleship

- Being disciples
- Making disciples

## How did the early church grow?

Behaving, belonging and believing

**We do not speak great things; we live them**  
(Cyprian 210-258)



## 2. *A richer, integrated understanding and practice of mission*

### Amazing opportunity for integrated leaning:

- Church & agency
- Local and cross-cultural
- Gathered and 'visible' church





### 3. *A humbler understanding and practice of mission*



Invitation to come  
as well as command  
to go

(Mark 3 verse 14;  
Acts 16 verse 9)



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## *Patient mission (Kreider)*

- Rooted in God's character
- Revealed through the incarnation
- Trusting in God, without manipulation, freedom to take risk
- Not in a hurry
- Unconventional, reconfiguring life around Jesus' teaching e.g. in areas wealth, power and sex
- Non-violent
- Gives religious freedom as there is no compulsion in patience
- Hopeful: God is at work, in his time



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## *Attitudes and expectations for cross-cultural workers:*

- We see the local church as the primary instrument of mission
- We ask of all mission workers, 'In what way is my ministry empowering the local church for its mission?'
- We commit to co-labouring with the local church in the burning edges of mission



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# *Roles for cross-cultural workers*

- Friendship
- Mentoring and discipleship
- Solidarity in suffering
- Demonstrate whole life discipleship
- Co-pioneering the burning, growing edges of the church's mission
- Be a prophetic voice
- Help develop contextualized local discipleship and theology
- Engage in intercession and spiritual warfare
- Work for unity and community between national believers



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