

LAY WOMEN, MISSION PRACTICES, AND THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT

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To many of us who are in love with mission, our ministry could be a jealous mistress who demands everything from us. Let me approximate this sense, this feeling, by paraphrasing a portion of a remarkable poem, "Power," by Adrienne Rich. In this poem, Rich talks about Marie Curie, who discovered radium. The discovery, as we all know it, is a team work with her husband.

Rich says Marie Curie must have known that she suffered from radiation sickness by years of purifying the element. But her quest for the discovery of radium has already affected her eye sight and her finger-ends until she could no longer hold a test-tube or any writing material in her hand.

Rich concludes her poem by saying that Marie Curie "*died a famous woman denying/ her wounds/ denying/ her wounds came from the same source as her power.*"

Engaging in Christian mission has its side of woundedness, too.

Grail pursuit & the unasked question

It is helpful to recall a medieval story about the grail quest. Written in the 12th century, this story is about a quest for the legendary grail, the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper. This story of the grail-quest is about chivalry and soldiery. At a deeper level, it is about a quest for inner healing, wholeness, and renewal. Parsifal is a legendary knight who set out on a quest for the grail. Raised as a protected child from the rest of the world by his mother, Parsifal knew nothing of the world of pain.

Making his way into the world of the knights by his chivalry and prowess, the young knight, by chance, came to the castle of the grail, and saw two things:

- A procession bearing the grail
- The rich king of the land wounded and in deep pain.

The young knight was so awed into silence by the procession that he forgot to do the one thing needed at the hour. He failed to ask the most necessary question that would have saved the Fisher King and the land of the grail. The one who was on the grail quest forgot to ask *that* question.

The unasked question was: ***What aileth thee, Fisher King?***

It was a failure to notice the wounds of the Fisher King, a failure to open up the possibility of healing the land, and the wounded Fisher King at the right time.

What ails you, Fishers of Men? What ails you Fishers of Women? What ails us, the company of missionaries, mission-thinkers, mission teachers, and mission practitioners ails mission at large.

Those in the church who are awed by the pageantry and the rituals of holiness, often fail to question the mission realities that surround them.

- Naming the realities
- Naming the issues
- Questioning the realities in which wounded persons and communities live out their everyday lives.
- Doing these under the guidance of mission theology.
- The spirit enables us to work the deep mystery that we hold within. The mystery of the Fisher King in the form of the crucified God. The mystery of Jesus the Christ who identifies himself with the victim.
 - The storytelling God who lifts up the Good Samaritan.
 - The invitation to notice the wounds of others in our journey.
 - It is not “they” with “their wounds” sitting there. *They are us, too.*
 - Experiencing mission as relationality and engaging in it.

EDINBURGH 1910

Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference was mainly on missionary enterprise. It had a specific goal. The goal was to strategize the evangelization of the two-thirds of the world.ⁱⁱ The conference focused on the “study of the missionary *problems*” (italics mine) of the times by “leaders in the missionary enterprise at home and abroad” in order to gain more clarity to fulfill the Great Commission.ⁱⁱⁱ The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 was **not** primarily a theological one. The representatives were all chosen and sent by mission agencies and individuals did not represent themselves.

In the midst of the high lights of the Edinburgh World Conference I, such as the ecumenical movement and Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, one could hear and feel the wounds of some of the representatives sitting there. No one present in

Edinburgh I officially represented any non-Western mission agency. The focus of mission then was on the *non-Christian* world.

A concern raised in the Edinburgh I itself, was the lack of parity relationship between the missionaries and the local workers, an important on-the-ground reality of the times. In fact, V.S. Azariah, later to become the first bishop of the Anglican Church in India, was present there. He was in Edinburgh conference as a delegate of the Church Mission Society of England (CMS). He raised the issue of parity and partnership between the Western missionaries and local workers in the conference.

He said, “Through all ages to come the Indian Church will rise up in gratitude to attest the heroism and self-denying labours of the missionary body. You have given your goods to feed the poor. You have given your bodies to be burned. We also ask for love. Give us FRIENDS (emphasis mine).”^{iv} A question of representation and equal footing in mission embodies the woundedness of Azariah.

In the meantime, Women’s missionary work by women for women was taking place simultaneously. By the year 1900, over forty women’s mission societies existed, with three million active women, in the midst of patriarchal resistances in some instances. Women “nickel and dimed their way” into the establishment of educational, medical, and other mission work.^v Side by side, existed the work of the local indigenous female workers including Bible Women. The “missiological approach” of these lay women from the West was primarily through “education and other means of social uplift.”^{vi}

This approach relates to an implicit gendered-comity arrangement that if women had to have separate mission societies and the autonomy to raise funds, within their denominations, their work would not interfere with that of their male missionaries in the

“field.” It was a public extension of the well-defined boundary of private sphere at home.^{vii}

Twenty two years before Edinburgh 1910, at the London Missionary Conference of 1888, American, British and Canadian women missionary leaders had organized the World’s Missionary Committee of Christian Women. This ecumenical gathering created a team for the united study of missions.^{viii} This is a key tool for mission formation through mission education. The publication of mission studies was carried on ecumenically till 1998 by the U.S. and Canadian churches. A Program Committee on Mission Education still exists in the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. as a network for sharing mission resources including web work. As for the United Methodist Women members, they continue to undertake three mission studies every year: a Spiritual Growth study, geographical study, and an issue-related study.

In 1910, there was another movement, much forgotten in patriarchal history, that took place in the U.S. It was the Jubilee of the Woman’s Missionary Movement. About forty women’s missionary societies celebrated their jubilee, since fifty five of a typical hundred denominational missionaries sent by Western mission agencies in 1910 were women.^{ix}

Western Women in Eastern Lands by Helen Barrett Montgomery was a key ecumenical study initiated at this Jubilee, and the methods of spreading the information was not through commissioned reports, but through “missionary teas,” “pageants,” kitchen table conversations, and “luncheons.” It took place in forty eight major cities.^x It is a de-centralized approach the nature of which is grassroots and its character participatory.

World War I broke out within four years of Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. A high point of Edinburgh I, the optimistic cry to “evangelize the world in this generation,” was tested against World War I, and the other Wars that followed. This rallying cry of the missionaries, mostly from the “sending” mission agencies of the West, had paradigm-changing encounters, in the ensuing decades.

Struggles for self-determinations by nations, societal upheavals, emergence of contextual theologies, and south-to-north mission engagements have re-mapped mission in the recent decades. In your packets, you will see a paper on “Faith in Jesus Christ Shaping the Mission of the Church: A Brief Survey of 20th Century World Mission” by Robert Harman, a retired colleague of mine. We have been using this as part of our mission study for 2008-2009 in the United States among the United Methodist Women.

CATEGORY OF MARGINALIZATION:

Because of the shifting and complex web of forces that constitute marginalization, a particular category of margin cannot be totalized. New margins have been created. Irruption of the poor into history, irruption of women, irruption of racial and ethnic minorities have brought in perspectives from new social locations.

Margins are in constant negotiation with the center, and other considerations. Center itself is not a fixed entity. It constantly changes, co-opts, and collaborates with dominant forces. Central-marginal oppositions is not a permanent structure, but a culturally produced one.^{xi} Julia Kristeva, a French theorist, has contributed much to the concept of the “Politics of Marginality.”

Nelle Morton, a theologian and author of *Journey is Home*, popularized the notion of persons “hearing each other into speech.” Interconnected realities of our times

demand interconnected, intercultural, integrated visions. It is time for all of us, not only to hear each other into speech, but also be able to see each other into a composite vision.

INTERCONNECTIVITY OF STORIES

In other words, interconnectivity of stories is a key need in mission theology, for a major postmodernist complaint is that “truth is made or constructed rather than discovered,” and truth is subject to revision. This can be addressed through the interconnectivity of stories, and see how stories of oppression and woundedness intersect with each other.

Interconnectivity and connecting across the interstices in God’s presence can explore the invisible threads of systemic and deep-rooted causes. David White, in his book, *Practicing Discernment with Youth*, says Christian mission needs to include “Ortho-opthamai,” “right seeing,” and responding to the structures of the world in faith.^{xii} Seeing the world accurately is to see it in all its complexity as well as interrelatedness of issues.

Sir Jonathan Sachs quotes Rabbi Shimon said: When God was about to create Adam, the ministering angels split into contending groups. Some said, “Let him be created.’ Others said, ‘Let him not be created.’ That is why it is written, ‘Mercy and truth collided, righteousness and peace clashed.’” (Psalm 85:11). Mercy said, “Let him be created, he will do merciful deeds.” Truth said, “Let him not be created, for he will be full of falsehood.” Righteousness said, “Let him be created, for he will do righteous deeds.” Peace said, “Let him not be created, for he will never cease quarrelling.” What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He

took truth and threw it to the ground. The angels said, “Sovereign of the universe, why do you do this to your own seal, truth?” “Let truth arise from the ground.” Thus it is written, “Let truth spring up from the earth.” (Psalm 85:12). Sacks points us to the bold rabbinic interpretation, “God takes truth and throws it to the ground, meaning, “For life to be livable, truth on earth cannot be what it is in heaven.”^{xiii}

Truths have sprung from the ground and our eyes were *compelled* to see them.

Eugene Peterson who paraphrased the Bible in his *Message* translated John 1:14 as, “The word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood.”

- The Word has moved into indigenous neighborhood
- Womanist neighborhood
- Minjung neighborhood

- African neighborhood

- White neighborhood

- Feminist neighborhood

- Mujeristas neighborhood

- Asian neighborhood

- Latin American neighborhood

- European neighborhood

- Pacific Islanders’ neighborhood and other neighborhoods.

It took us twenty long centuries to figure out we have different neighborhoods, and the same Lord Jesus Christ who is embodied and contextualized in different ways in these diverse neighborhoods.

It took us almost twenty centuries to figure out that theology is not transferable, but theologies are context-specific. At the same time, methodologies of these contextual theologies have been confronting history which has been ridden with issues such as racial, ethnic, economic, and environmental injustices and exploitation such as colonialism and slavery. All these issues with all their contradictions.

It should not take time to realize that there is inter-connectivity among the various forms of suppressions of truth, various forms of oppressions and various degrees of woundedness. How does theological education make room for it?

Let me give an example. Is there a connection between violence in the bedroom and the violence against women in armed conflict and militarization? Are there connections between deep-rooted issues such as unequal distribution of resources, structural marginalization of peoples, and lack of equal access to political power? Isolated representations of these, without exploring the deeper connections among these continue to create a “culture of violence,” here and worldwide.

Seeing accurately means looking at the issues from the perspectives of those at the margins, the poor, the oppressed and the dispossessed, and also, seeing the interplay of power, influence, and dominance in perpetuating the systems of oppression. Seeing accurately, involves looking for transformative clues and working on those.

Not long ago, in the United Nations NGO community, a concept of “intersectionality” was popularized. Intersectionality is a strategy to locate multiple oppressions which intersect human lives such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, caste,

national identity, sexual orientation and other factors. "Intersectionality" explores how these multiple oppressions interact with and reinforce each other."^{xiv}

Interstitial mission theology:

I submit that the movement between gospel, identity, and mission calls for a creative theology of interstices. A mission theology which will be able to build bridges between and among different theologies arising from different neighborhoods and interconnectedness among issues.

Within interstice, there is less temptation to, in the words of David Bosch, to "incarcerate the Missio Dei," within one's own identity. Missio Dei works through identities, and also breaks through identities when the later become mere blocks. Missio Dei builds bridges. In Bosch's words, Missio Dei purifies the church and sets it under the cross.^{xv}

Both patriarchal tradition of sameness as well as identity-based differences posited on mere essentialism have a temptation to incarcerate the gospel. For me, a hermeneutics of interstices and a search for building solidarity along the interstices is a healing option for fragmentation and balkanization of identities.

Let me move from this scenario to the mainline church context: To me, the following are some of the factors that contribute to the crisis in the Global North

Christian mission in Crisis in the Global North: On-the-ground Realities

- 1) Crisis of confidence in the uniqueness and universal validity of the Gospel. It has spawned skepticism among mainline churches about evangelism and mission. The concept of evangelism has not been defined clearly in the post-modern world. Consequently, Christian signs and symbols do not make sense to the current generation. Through church's mission, we construct symbols, and frameworks. Mission engagement is always a creation and the final outcome is not completely known until it unfolds in that person.
- 2) A key question is "Is any thing unique about the Christian mission?" in the days when the Red Cross and other secular organizations are doing mission, and sometimes do it in a more effective way.
- 3) Dialogue not proclamation has become the urgent need. Dialogue is articulation of our faith in a friendly environment and active listening of the other's faith in a caring atmosphere. In dialogue it is easy to forget that you must deal not only with the other person's beliefs but also with our own. Sadly, some in the United Methodist Church do not know what they actually believe. Lesslie Newbigin, a missionary to India, once said, "Western Culture's paganism, having been born out of the

rejection of Christianity, is far more resistant to the gospel of the pre-Christian paganism with which cross-cultural mission been familiar with.”^{xvi} In other words, what is it to be engaged in mission in an emerging post-Christian context?

- 4) We are living in the midst of fragments. Church has become a minority community. We exist in a pluralistic world as a church. In order to strengthen our identity as a church and to witness as a Christian community, we need to focus on making the gospel relevant to the given context. In a pluralistic and multi-cultural community, people will look for ways to get along with their neighbors more than being part of a religious community. In other words, “neighborology” will supersede theology. “Neighborology” is word coined by Kosuke Koyama. Consequently, we need to give a compelling voice among many other voices.
- 5) Guilt, shame and repentance for colonialism, holocaust, cultural imperialism, war, economic might, etc., rob us of effective involvement. While “reparations” for certain collective and corporate actions were symbolically done, we in North America still struggle with the impact of slavery and racism etc., One can resonate with What Jonathan Sacks shared in the Lambeth Conference last year with the bishops, “The past could not be rewritten, but it could be redeemed.”
- 6) When the churches in the Global South are growing, we, in the North, are mostly settled for a Christianity without discipleship.
- 7) The Christian understanding of mission as local, global, ecumenical, contextual, and polyphonal is still a challenge to live out.
- 8) The rise of religious fundamentalisms around the world has created new challenges to work closely with our global partners in mission.
- 9) Lack of trust over institutions has negative impact upon material and human resources that sustained Christian mission for centuries. The participation of many missionaries in colonialism and have left a deep suspicion and negative impact on the mission movement in the West. Research by post-colonial Christians and others to unearth the positive forces of mission as liberation is yet to be fully explored.
- 10) We are moving from “silo” model of mission, building large structures, hospitals and educational institutions, into more of networking models of mission. Good practices need to be lifted up.
- 11) The changing face of the world, particularly immigration of people of other faiths in the US, and Europe, and the ever-moving refugees is a challenge & an opportunity.
- 12) Long-term missionaries is becoming an obsolete category of Christian workers. “Short-term” workers and supports are increasingly becoming the norm. What will be the impact of this phenomenon in the long run?
- 13) The Christian understanding of *witness* has been often reduced to listening and learning, and active presence and sharing is harder to practice.

- 14) Media's exposure of other faiths has made many within the church to value Christianity as one of the many ways to Truth. The uniqueness and universality of the Gospel has lost its edge.
- 15) The challenge of the Post-modern world is "No one has a corner on truth."
- 16) Today, two-thirds of all Christians are women, as a leading missiologist in the U.S., Dana Robert, points out. She says, "... statistically speaking, world Christianity is a woman's movement. ...When we ask the question of why the world church seems to be predominantly female, we are not just making a sociological observation. We are actually raising the profoundly important issue of gender-based approaches to mission."^{xvii} While such a feminization of Christianity is a reality, such a numerical growth is not reflected at the higher levels of leadership in the church and full-professorial status at the theological schools.
- 17) Further, worldwide the face of poverty is female, the face of migration is female, and the face of human trafficking is female. Every year, about 18,000-20,000 persons are trafficked into the U.S. alone every year. Worldwide, each year 600,000-800,000 people are trafficked across international borders. 70% of these are women. 50% are children under 18.
- 18) The ground reality is that while the face of Christianity today is a face of a Christian in the Global South. A couple of weeks ago in the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN, a woman said that the "face of HIV/AIDS is a black woman." The face of care-giver in the context of HIV/AIDS is also the face of a woman of color in the Global South. What does it mean for the Global North where pharmaceutical research and monopoly are concentrated?
- 19) In this context, a "theology of mission as encounter," is a key tool in mission formation. A professor of missiology in St. Paul's School of Theology, Rena Yocom, said recently in a conversation, "It is not good to have our spiritual growth on the back of the poor." She referred to the spirituality of the North American seminary students in the context of short mission trips to countries in the Global South. In other words, what is it to experience "mutuality in mission" in the meeting points and interstices?
- 20) Christian immigrants from the Global South bring to the Global North their spirituality and mission practices. The meeting of the Christianity of the Global North and the Christianities of the Global South in the Western countries is creating a new space for "mission formation." This is yet to be fully realized.

UNITED METHODIST SEMINARY TASK FORCE^{xviii}

In the midst of these on-the-ground mission realities, the theological schools carry on their tasks. I would like to share the insights from what is known as the Seminary Task Force, a coordinated effort of the General Board of Global Ministries and the United Methodist Professors of Mission established in 2005 in the U.S. The basic query has been “Where does mission as a field of theology and practice of ministry lie?”

The rationale was a felt need. That mission as a field of theology and practice of ministry was slipping away from the core curriculum of the United Methodist Seminaries. We have 13 United Methodist Seminaries. Hence the goal of the Seminary Task Force on Mission was to research the status of education for mission in seminaries, and to make specific recommendation toward its furtherance for pastors in training.

- Assess the teaching of mission theology and history in the seminaries and Course of Study.
- Propose ways to integrate mission studies with pastoral/church leadership education.
- Recommend ways for seminaries and other intellectual centers of the church to interface with the General Board of Global Ministries, and
- Consider diverse ways for identifying the financial and human resources needed to facilitate a revitalized focus on theological education for mission.

The key findings were released and shared in a conference of United Methodist professors last August (2008) in Atlanta, Georgia.

- Every United Methodist seminary and every Course of Study should promote the regular teaching of missiology/mission studies. The fact is that there are only 4 full time faculty members in the 13 United Methodist Seminaries to teach mission

- . Only one is a female, Dana Robert. If we count the faculty who teach in non-Methodist schools, it will be about 15 faculty. When fulltime professorship is not possible, the Task Force recommended that one faculty member at each seminary be designated to take primary responsibility for the teaching of the mission course.
- Agreeing that contexts for pastoral education differ widely, and the required mission course in Seminaries and the Course of Study the only beginning of a lifelong process of mission formation, the Task Force has recommended certain Core Competencies:
 - Core Competencies in mission should include the following:
 1. Mission Formation, equipment of pastoral leaders with basic building blocks for a mission theology,
 2. encouragement of pastoral leaders to equip the laity for mission, including the support for volunteers in mission, mission education, ecumenical cooperation, long term mission partnerships,
 3. communication with the pastoral leaders that all forms of ministry in the 21st century involves cross-cultural awareness and contextual sensitivity to religious and ethnic diversity, and special vocational call to cross-cultural mission.

In the context of the core competencies, the Seminary Task Force has recommended the following:

- Biblical foundations for mission

- Theologies of mission including the relationship between missiology and ecclesiology
- Historical patterns of mission, including the global shift of Christian population to Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- The dynamics of culture, including the evolving cross-cultural, global, and multi-faith contexts for mission.
- Varying forms and models of mission, including examples of denominational ministries
- Practices of mission today

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A suggestion that emerged from this Task Force was to establish a new task force on funding theological education for mission, to see how a seminary might have a fully-endowed chair in missiology. This is a suggestion for 2009-2012.

In the midst of these challenges in the theological schools, the lay women organized for mission in the United Methodist Church have been carrying on mission. Let us see the changing faces of mission in this DVD which pictures what is taking place in mission. It is a dvd without words. Only images.

STRATEGIES:

I submit:

mission as multi-directional. But it takes risk-taking leadership to engage in Global South mission with Global North.

Missioners from the Global South to engage mission with the Global North has begun. At the end of an ecumenical Bible Women's training in Angola, the General Secretary of the Angolan Council of Christian Churches took the women leadership to the house of the then U.S. ambassador to Angola, Cynthia Efir. The ambassador offered to help the Angolan church leadership with small grants of monies for literacy, development and peace work. Then she commented on the growth of the Angolan churches and said, "I say to the Angolan churches, 'Once missionaries came to Angola. But now your churches are growing. Grow fast, Grow fast. And be our missionaries.'"

I submit:

Mission is creating safe space

As a response to the tragedy of September 11, the Patriot Act (HR 3162) was signed into law “to deter and punish terrorist acts in the U.S. and around the world, and to enhance law enforcement investigatory tools. While those who commit terrorist acts must be brought to justice, the balance between security and civil rights has been at stake because of the arrest of the innocent immigrants.

In “Little Pakistan” in Brooklyn, New York, out of more than 120,000 Pakistanis, 15,000 fled to Canada, Europe, and Pakistan, due to massive arrests in that area. According to a story in the Washington Post (May 29, 2003), federal agents stopped and detained hundreds of Pakistanis in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. The Department of Homeland Security also required that every male Pakistani visa holder age sixteen and above register with the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Some 13,000 of those who voluntarily registered were placed into deportation proceedings because of irregularities in their immigration status. Such irregularities would have required basic legal corrections before September 11. While the Special Registration has ended, some people are still under threat of deportation. Detainees have suffered 24 hours of illumination of cells, lack of proper medical care, racial slurs by guards. In many instances, neither the detainees nor their families have been notified of their status or their rights. People who come under racial profiling in this are South Asian men, especially Arab and Muslim men. Most of them are guilty until proven innocent.

But a woman responded to Patriot Act by co-founding a committee on the Bill of Rights Defense Committee. Nancy Talanian came up with the idea of establishing “civil liberty zones” in communities across the United States. A national grassroots movement to protect innocent people who come under racial profiling was started by a woman, Nancy Talanian.

Faith-based grassroots men and women have engaged in creating these safe spaces, creating a climate for communication for civil rights.

I submit

Mission needs to be an enabler of “inter-regionality”

Riad Jarjour, the President of the Middle East Regional Association of the World Association of Christian Communication reported,

“One can observe the growth of different types of religious ‘fundamentalisms’ in the Middle East, many of which promote use of violence to address grievances-mething which no religion justifies. This violence causes Western nations to have an adverse reaction to Islam, particularly to Muslims who live in Western countries. Moreover, this type of fundamentalism gives rise and promotes an ever-increasing and militant interpretation of both Western and Eastern Christian fundamentalism. In this context, the American/Western war against terrorism has not succeeded in curbing this latter type of fundamentalism. On the contrary, this war appears as if it is responding to terrorism by counter-terrorism tactics-both of which are unacceptable and must be condemned.xix The notion of inter-regionality, or inter-regional sensitivity is vital for the promotion of peace and curbing religious fundamentalisms.

I submit:

Education on Fear-Based Vision versus Shalom Based Vision is a key need.

Moving the faith community from a fear-based vision of security to the vision of shalom proclaimed in the Bible is an on going task. Bryan Massingdale, a Franciscan theologian, presents the competing claims of two visions. He says,

The first is rooted in a world of fear, seeks security in military power directed to the end of defending economic privilege for a few. The other, rooted in a world view of blessing, sees security lying in the effort of assuring that the blessings of creation are enjoyed by all. How do we respond to these visions?^{xx}

Lifting up the alternative vision of shalom in the Bible and asking the difficult question why we cannot think about things that make for peace and work for just peace is one side of the story of making a difference. The other side is helping handle grief on the part of the victims and grieving communities. Jesus weeping over Jerusalem is only a partial picture. Jesus simultaneously asking why Jerusalem cannot think about things that make for peace constitutes the whole. The pastoral and the activist can be the twin strategies of the faith communities. They should not be polarized.

I submit:

Salvation is for the perpetrator and the victim

There are deep and systemic evils. As we recall, Nelson Mandela sought freedom for himself and his people first. Then, in what he termed as the “long and lonely years,” he evolved into a more integrated approach. Mandela said,

My hunger for the freedom of my own people became a hunger for all people. I know as well as, I knew anything that the oppressor must be liberated just as surely as the oppressed. A man who takes away (another) man’s freedom

is a prisoner of hatred, and is locked behind the bars of prejudice...Both are robbed of their humanity. When I walked out of prison, that was my mission: to liberate the oppressed and the oppressor both.^{xxi}

A similar vision is lifted by Mitri Raheb, a Lutheran minister in Bethlehem. He is a tireless prophet of hope in the Middle East spells out the dynamics of hope in terms of neighborliness. He says,

What is the benefit if Israel wins the moral and financial support of the American Jewish community and the Christian right, yet loses its Palestinian Neighbors? What is the benefit if the Palestinians win the sympathy and support of most of the Arab and Islamic countries and lose their Israeli neighbors?^{xxii}

Kosuke Koyama, a theologian, would have summarized it in just one phrase, “neighborology.” Christian communities have produced much by way of theology. But what is needed, according to Koyama, is “neighborology.”

Locating signs and initiatives of God and working with God is still God’s strategy for us. Seeking to be faithful Christians, calls for interdependency on each other’s religious tradition, in order to address justice issues and live a peaceful co-existence.

If you see two sides,
Create a third.
If you see many sides,
Form a circle.
If you see many circles,

Begin to dance.^{xxiii}

ⁱ Adrienne Rich in her poem, “Power,” in *The Dream of a Common Language: Poems 1974-1977/ Twenty-One Love Poems* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1978), 3.

ⁱⁱ Roger E. Hedlund in his book, *Roots of the Great Debate in Mission: Mission in Historical and Theological Perspective* (Bangalore, India: Theological Book Trust, 1993), 23.

ⁱⁱⁱ W.H.T. Gairdner’s reference from his “‘Edinburgh 1910’: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference” quoted by Hedlund, 22.

^{iv} V.S. Azariah’s “The problem of co-operation between foreign and native workers” quoted in *Roots of the Great Debate in Mission* by Roger E. Hedlund (Bangalore, India: Theological Book Trust), 48.

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- ^v Dana L Robert in her *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*. (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1997. Reprint. 1998), 129.
- ^{vi} Dana Robert in *American Women in Mission*, 130.
- ^{vii} See Patricia Hill's chapter on "A Congenial Object" in her book, *The World Their Household: The American Woman's Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1885).
- ^{viii} Dana Robert, 257.
- ^{ix} Dana Robert 256.
- ^x Dana Robert, 256.
- ^{xi} Julia Kristeva, a French psychoanalyst and feminist, is an exponent of this "Politics of Marginality." See Toril Moi's *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (UK, Methuen: London, 1985), 166.
- ^{xii} David White in his book, *Practicing Discernment: A Transformative Approach* (Cleveland, Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 2005), 122.
- ^{xiii} Jonathan Sacks in *The Divinity of Difference: How to Avoid Clash of Civilization* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 64.
- ^{xiv} "How Women are Using the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance to Advance Women's Human Rights." The International Coalition for Economic Justice (New Jersey: Rutgers State University, 2002), 8.
- ^{xv} David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 512.
- ^{xvi} Lesslie Newbigin in his book, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1986), 20.
- ^{xvii} Dana Robert's "Women in World Mission: Controversies and Challenges from a North American Perspective" in *International Review of Mission. Women and Mission*. (Geneva: WCC Publications, vol. 95, no. 568, 2004), 61.
- ^{xviii} The following insights are taken from the findings of the *Seminary Task Force Report: 2008*.
- ^{xix} On October 5, 2006 at the Board of Directors' meeting of the World Association of Christian Communication in Toronto, Canada.
- ^{xx} Bryan Messingdale in his "From Homeland to Biblical Security" in *Origins* (February 20, 2003), 601.
- ^{xxi} Long Walk to Freedom Nelson Mandela. Boston: Back Bay Boston, 1995.
- ^{xxii} Taken from Mitri Raheb's book, Bethlehem Besieged: Stories of Hope in Times of Trouble (Fortress Press, 2004)
- ^{xxiii} Mark Gerzon in his Leading Through Conflict (Harvard Business School Press: Boston, MA), 223.