

# Preface

Most missionaries would testify to the importance of some aspect of Biblical teaching in providing a motivation for their involvement in mission. Even if they subsequently serve in supportive roles, they still use the Bible for personal edification, guidance and a search for greater understanding of the ways of God. At the popular level, many consider this to be sufficient in itself to do mission.

At the beginning of my involvement with world mission I fitted into the above category. I was motivated by my reading of scripture and the supposed urgency of the task. The insistent clamour that the prolonged study of the Bible, in order to prepare for mission, was short-sighted in the light of eschatological realities was still a part of the mission context in some quarters. The pragmatic aspects of mission overrode any consideration of the need for biblical reflection. At this stage I had no theological foundation for ministry. Exposure to the many aspects of mission in South America, in the early eighties, opened up a variety of differing experiences among the various Christian communities that I encountered. There seemed to be a welcome exuberance that was manifested in rapid church growth, but I also noticed that the place of the Bible was not as prominent as it could have been for distinctively Christian communities. This gave cause for reflection.

After a period of theological study in Britain my family joined OMF International (UK) to work in the Philippines. The nine years that we served in the Philippines were fascinating as the country changed under the influences of globalisation and the more democratic structures after the end of the Marcos political era. The ministry there involved various aspects of theological education. Immersion in another context and culture is a great privilege but it often seemed that in the Philippines there was an over reliance on imported methods of doing theology and mission and not enough biblical reflection from within on the Filipino context, although there are some notable exceptions.

When we returned to the UK in 1998 in order to take up a leadership role with OMF I needed to gain a wider understanding of what was happening in East Asia rather than just the Philippines. I also wanted to delve into the history of our own mission and learn from it. Here was an opportunity to gain an historical perspective on the use of the Bible in mission through one specific missionary and to see to what extent the Bible functioned as a motivator within one particular mission. At a time when many other methodologies were proposed for mission, it seemed important to analyse the place and role of the Bible in the development of mission historically in order to try and better understand the present.

During the writing of this dissertation I have been greatly helped by the advice and observations of many people. I would particularly like to express my thanks to Prof. Dr. Jan Jongeneel of the University of Utrecht, for acting as my supervisor for the writing of this dissertation. He has provided a firm guiding hand in giving overall direction and avenues of study. It was a great privilege to meet him in his home in the Netherlands and also to host his visit to the UK where he joined a missiological forum. Dr. Brian Stanley of the Henry Martyn Centre for the study of mission and world Christianity in Cambridge has been my UK-based supervisor. He has continually provided encouragement and informed insights that have helped to steer me in the right direction. The visits to Westminster College for lunch and prolonged discussions were always stimulating and eagerly

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