

## THE MOBILIZATION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS - LESSONS LEARNED

CLAUDE HICKMAN - October 16, 2005

### Where We Are Today

I'm waiting at the LAX airport in Los Angeles for a student, Nick, and his girlfriend, Marissa. Arriving from Ohio, Nick steps into the terminal wearing baggy jeans, a punk band t-shirt, metal studded choker, plugs (the large tribal hoop earrings), his septum pierced, and bleached blonde spiked hair. It's LA so I thought, "Dude, he fits right in." His girlfriend looks like a character out of a Japanese animation cartoon, super cute with huge brown eyes; she's only five feet tall but has 6-inch platform "spice-girl" shoes.

Now, how do you mobilize Nick and Marissa? Somebody did. I was picking them up because they were coming to the US Center for World Missions to take the Perspectives course. They spent seven weeks learning about the world religions and visiting the temples in Los Angeles to learn how to share the gospel with people of other religions. Nick was the leader for the Navigators at the University of Cincinnati, where he disciplined five other students and lead evangelism projects in the inner city. They started a Perspectives course at their school, and Nick and Marissa are now married and finishing up seminary in order to be long term missionaries. Last time I saw them was at Urbana '03 where they had brought a dozen or so college students with them. Nick and Marissa capture a great picture of the emerging missionary candidates of this generation.

God has allowed us to have an enormous amount of contact with students over the past 7 years. 150,000 students, 1100 campus meetings later – I feel like we are finally learning some things about mobilization. Students are changing quickly and so are the influences in their lives, such as media, parents, peers, music. Their values, their language – everything is changing. Our bumper sticker "every tribe tongue and nation... or bust" was clever at the turn of the millennium, but recently freshman have looked at it with confused faces and ask, "what does... 'or bust' mean?" I've almost narrowed it down to which year that phrase must have completely vanished off the planet.

### Some Observations

#### Over-choice

"Overchoice" is a term that Alvin Toffler used, and Paul Borthwick applied to this generation of students in a similar article that he wrote few years ago. I couldn't agree more. Some students won't ever find their way to the right path God has for them, not because of disinterest or disobedience, but because of debilitation: the paralysis caused by too many options. The reason a lion tamer uses a stool, turned upside down is that the lion tries to focus on all four legs at once. Eventually, the lion will back itself into a corner because it assumes it's outnumbered by this wooden enemy. Many students enter an Urbana with 800 agencies all promising them the biggest and best opportunities, all doing meaningful work, all with a great brochure and a free Frisbee. They leave with a plastic bag-o-options feeling the same way. I assume most dump the whole bag in the trash at the O'Hare on their way home because they feel too overwhelmed to make a decision.

With the whole world before you and a passion to reach it, where do you dive in? The problem is not the number of agencies or opportunities – it really is in this generation's theology of God's will and sovereignty over their life. Many have an

understanding of God's will to be this magical ONE path. If you miss it – there's no second chance and you are forever doomed to regret the destiny you were meant to have. Choosing one path seems like leaving behind several other great options. That is why keeping your options open is such a high priority, and for a generation like that fitting yourself somewhere into God's global plans seems like an overwhelming task.

We have to help students in several ways. 1) By explaining to them that with the help of the Bible, prayer and godly counsel they can make decisions confidently that aren't going to thwart the will of God for their life. 2) By giving them some principles for what is central to the Christian's role in world missions, a compass instead of a map. Urbana can give them the maps, mobilizers need to give them the compass. I think the biblical theology of God's purpose for the nations and every believer's responsibility to live a strategic "world-Christian" lifestyle can be the magnetic north that this generation needs. Mobilization can include less of our five favorite mission-trip stories and more of God's one story. I suggest materials on [www.thetravelingteam.org](http://www.thetravelingteam.org) or Jeff Lewis' Bible study *God's Heart for the Nations*. When it comes to talking about finishing the Great Commission we have to talk in the realm of a "compass" kind of vision for this generation. A map will only take you places other people have already been and marked out - a compass will lead you to the end, but you may have to pioneer the path yourself. That is the kind of Pauline vision (Rom 15:20) it will require to raise a generation with a vision of finishing the evangelization of the world. 3) When it comes to short-term opportunities, agencies, churches, student ministries can assist students by offering fewer options and clear descriptions.

Another problem for students does result from selfish or worldly motivations. I asked a campus director the other day why he thinks students do not go overseas; what are the main reasons? He gave me the one that comes up most with his group, "They want to build a resume." Most Christian college students have dreams of grandeur when they graduate to get that key internship that will launch them into the world of work. A summer helping the poor in Calcutta is not exactly what the engineer firm is looking for. For the student who feels the Lord has him here, it is important for the agencies to connect them with things on the field that will play into where they see the Lord leading them in the future. Most importantly, when it comes to the "magic path" of God's will, students need godly missions-minded mentors that can coach them through their decisions. My wife and I had dinner with Audra, a senior at OU who was approaching graduation and trying to decide between going to India or China. She had great reasons and experience with both, it really was a 50/50, but there were so many other people involved, parents, friends, mentors – that Audra was having a tough time really understanding where God was leading. So I helped Audra out. I brought two cards, one with India written on the back and one with China. I showed them to her, then "shuffled" them in my hands and held them out for her to choose. She was like, "Are you kidding?" Nope. She picked the card on the left and turned it over, and with a beam across her face she said, "China!" I pushed the cards aside and simply said, "Audra, which one did you want it to be?" Her eyes immediately teared up and she knew that China was what she had really wanted before she even chose. If students need "magic," sometimes it's good to show them how silly the magic can really be. I encouraged Audra that no matter which decision, she was not going to "miss" God's will for her life.

### **On-Ramps**

Jesus Christ motivated his followers to be involved in world evangelization through several means. Here are a few that we find in the gospels. Love (John 14:21), Hell (Luke 12:5, Matt. 13:41-42), Obedience (Matt. 28:18-20), Compassion (Matt. 9:36, Mark 1:41), Rewards (Luke 18:29-30), Purpose (Matt. 16:26-27), Glory (John 15:8, John

17:4), Speed His Coming (Matt 24:14). Why so many different motivations? There may have been even more that were not recorded. I think it is because we are all wired differently. There are several “on ramps” for the path of the World Christian. For some it’s just hearing the sheer statistics, for others it’s compassion. God’s glory is surely a worthy and desirable motivation. Glory is definitely the cool new mysterious buzz word for many of the more savvy Christian students today and many passionately argue for the pursuit of God’s glory among the nations – but would be hard pressed to explain what that means in their life.

I think it is OK to talk about superior motivations and lesser ones – as long as we recognize that we have a responsibility as mobilizers to allow others to enter at whatever “on ramp” that God has wired them for. If you notice, we will motivate to missions using the very motivation that motivates us – or more accurately – the one that currently motivates us. In reality it was probably a statistic or even the adventure of overseas that caught our attention at first. William Carey used to read about Captain Cook and imagine himself traveling like that. Does that mean he should have stayed at home until he had a superior motivation? As people who want to mobilize this generation we need to be holistic in our approach to motivating students in missions. Maybe watching a video on compassion, doing a Bible study on the reality of Hell, meeting internationals who are lost to develop compassion, seeing what else one could give his life for to compare purpose...these are just ideas at how we need to be looking at different people, designed differently and motivated differently. Working with students, I’ve personally made life purpose a central theme for the importance of knowing God’s purpose. The principle here is to affirm where people are in their view of missions and then from there to mature their view into more biblically grounded, God-centered perspectives.

### **Authenticity**

This generation can smell advertisements, hype or agendas quickly. They are not impressed by the best marketing or gimmicks. Mobilization must move away from the feeling of “selling” and more toward an attitude of “inviting.” We have to be authentic and invite others to the life we are currently living. They might idolize the worship band and speaker that bounce across the country in a tour bus and airplane, barely landing long enough to brush a few hands on their way out to their next gig – but they would trade all the superstars for a father. An authentic, transparent loving person whose life they can watch, learn from, enter into. They desire people close enough to rebuke them for error and hold them accountable to their convictions. Real is cool. You don’t need to get square-toed shoes and a Von Dutch hat. They are looking for mentors who are real. If you haven’t noticed, the reality television show is crushing everything else because we are sick of “actors.” This generation wants a spiritual mentor that gives them the freedom to be a person who is “in process.” Because the truth is, we are all “in process” and sharing our struggles in the World Christian journey is the greatest way to win the attention and respect from students. They recognize the courage it takes to be vulnerable and will run to those types of leaders.

In mobilization, we must become the tour guides on the journey, not a bunch of travel agents – trying to sell students a ticket to a place that we have never been. If you no longer struggle with praying for the world daily – then at least talk about a time in your life when you did. Authentic mobilization involves less of the “you go” and more of the “come with me” in our communication and interaction with students.

### **Renewed Interest in Worship, Missions, and Theo-centrism**

As I said before, glory, missions and worship are the new product. Most students have never actually read “Let the Nations Be Glad” – but thank God for illegal

downloading of John Piper's sermons and the iPod craze, because the message has spread anyway. God-centered thinking is so refreshing to a generation that has watched their parents get so centered on themselves. It is completely hype-less. God-centered theology is providing the no-spin zone that young spiritual thinkers are craving – even when it conflicts with their own theology of salvation and man. Embracing the conflict seems to be worth it, especially when there is a bigger God to embrace. Maybe they are more experiential, wanting to experience worship, experience the world – but I'm not sure. There is a great need for more missions oriented worship music however.

Probably the most misunderstood and over-quoted phrase from John Piper, "Missions exists because worship doesn't," has been taken the wrong direction by some worship artists. For years it seems we have been singing about ourselves and now we are just saying that missions exists so that other nations can sing about themselves to. God-centered and missions-focused worship is starting to appear, however, it may just be the cool thing to throw in. I don't know for sure. Matt Redman seems to have focused some of his latest album on missions and Billy and Cindy Foote are giving a missions book away with every CD they sell. That's what I'm talking about. Since there are worship bands and worship events that are drawing such huge numbers, we should continue to pray that these venues are used to challenge students to their responsibility in the Great Commission, not just to sell t-shirts and CD's.

### **Students are Making Long-Term Commitments "Incrementally."**

I must give Dave Horne credit for this observation – or at least the concise description of it. In the past missions commitments were for a lifetime. "Who will come forward and commit their life to missions?" I'm not sure if many of us wouldn't be a little nervous about that also – but the important thing is that young people are making commitments of 10, 30, 40 years of service. They are making the "lifetime" commitments in the form of smaller incremental commitments back to back. A summer overseas may result into a few years of reaching out to internationals at their campus, or mobilizing others. After graduation, they may spend a year or two overseas with a student ministry, or go on staff with a ministry. Some begin to use their degree to immediately support missions work strongly, or to get experience so that they can use their career to gain access to a country in the future. Some enter seminary or some other formal training as preparation for a longer term ministry. Looking back and adding up the smaller segments of commitment we see that this generation is capable of being committed to a vision for a lifetime – but maybe not a venue.

There are several important observations we can make from this to learn from. First is that the World Christian life is a **process**. We must allow students to be "in process." We can give them biblical direction and signposts to help them stay on the path, but World Christians, like disciples, are made not born. Therefore, we must recognize and offer various points of entry as well as progressive steps to challenge and channel students into. Some students go overseas, for a summer or a year, and check it off of their spiritual to-do list for a lifetime, assuming they've done their duty – especially when their sending agency or ministry offers no next steps for them to take. This is why our goal in The Traveling Team has always been a holistic one - to raise up World-Christians who are praying, giving, going, welcoming internationals and mobilizing others. If a person only sees missions as going, they will not see the strategic lifestyle choices that can keep them involved and in the process during seasons they are not able to be overseas. This world-Christian vision is what I've appreciated so much from the U.S. Center and from tools like "Perspectives."

Secondly, this makes thorough **follow-up** essential to mobilization. We must take the responsibility for keeping students in the pipeline and in the process. The Traveling

Team places a high value on follow-up above all that we do. Each student that we meet with individually gets several follow-up emails from us personally, a follow-up email from our office once a month with a developing article, an email from each of the eight agencies that we partner with, and as we channel them toward our online follow-up tool, the 12 lessons on our website, they get responses back from each lesson by our staff. In one month that student may get eleven “touches” from us and a phone call; eleven reminders to keep in the process. It’s just like physics – it takes the greatest amount of energy to get an object moving from zero to one – but once it is rolling the process and inertia takes over. The job of mobilization is usually taking people, especially students, from zero to one. They have never considered their responsibility in the Great Commission, but with the help of the Bible, the Holy Spirit and an available, bold mobilizer – that student can begin to go from zero to one – but it will take consistent applied energy and follow-up to keep the process rolling.

### **I’ll Go Anywhere As Long As You Go With Me.**

The importance of community among students is something that is radically changing the dynamics of short and long-term work in missions today. Television gives us a great insight into the shared values of a generation. These shows are not just entertainment; they tap into some of the core needs that our young adults have. Shows like 90210 in the 90’s and Friends and Seinfeld in the last decade basically demonstrated that we could go through anything in life, as long as there was a small community of relationships that we could experience life with. That community gives the social strength to make it through. I think that this generation is asking the question “Who is going?” way before they ask “Where are we going?” I’m not talking about peer-pressure and doing it because the cool people are doing it – it is a deeper need to have a “team.”

In many ways this is a great advantage to the missions work of the past where Mr. Solo went by himself to some country and came home depressed or faithless after a few years. The agencies that offer team approaches for the summer with trips that have great descriptions to them are seeing an increase in student participation. Though this may take more effort for the agency, the payoff will be great. We recently saw a group put together a one-year stint team to India for the first year in what they hope to be a long term work there. The team came together quickly as people knew from the beginning that they were not going alone; eventually they had to turn down almost as many students as they sent. In fact two of the married couples that were on that team have committed to lead up that work long term. Many students are deciding *this* summer what they are committed to *next* summer. This means we need to recruit them earlier, but also that we can use this momentum to equip students to recruit other students. One agency sent their short term students home with small cards with a picture of a pair of shoes on one side, which they gave to friends with the simple challenge, "Will you fill my shoes in China next year?"

The team approach is drawing students because they are taking one of the most important things they value with them – not MTV, not the X-box, but a community. Don’t underestimate this generation; they really will go anywhere as long as a team goes with them.

### **Some Advice**

#### **Challenge Students with a High Goal**

I remember hearing about a friend giving a passionate series of missions talks to over a thousand students at a Christian school and at the end of the week the chaplain stood up and said, "I don't apologize for the challenge I am about to make – but I think that every student here could give \$5 to missions." My friend tried not to audibly groan as he heard this. Is that the largest challenge that students are hearing when it comes to their personal involvement in reaching the unreached peoples? Most students are asking the question "What do I want to do in life?" And so they look at where their parents are encouraging them, where their friends are going, and what their heart is feeling, and then look at what they enjoy in life and boom, a major in college is born (the average college student will change their major 4 times). Very rarely does the Christian college student look up and pray, "God, in light of your word and your world, where is the most strategic place for me and please make it to the least reached." This just isn't what they are being challenged with. So as mobilizers, we need to bring the challenge to them and bring it big. We must come alongside them and say, "This is the biblical basis of missions, this is what the world looks like and who has no access to the gospel. You have all the power of the Godhead at your disposal, put your yes on the table and let's pray and see where the Lord puts it on the map. We must challenge them to lay down their Isaac (degree, family, suburbia, money, sports, etc.) and hear them pray, "God... unless you allow me to take it up again... I will not."

Students will follow the leader with the greatest call. Jesus was always raising the bar. When large crowds were following him, he assumed that they didn't really get it. "You have heard it said, 'Don't commit murder', but I say that anyone who has been angry has committed murder in his heart. You have heard it said, 'Don't commit adultery, but I say to you anyone who has looked lustfully at another woman has committed adultery in his heart.'" Jesus was always raising the standard and if people chose to leave, it didn't bother him. The group I'm speaking to tonight has made it clear that they are nervous about us coming in because they are afraid that it might offend or make their students feel uncomfortable to hear about their responsibility as Christians in God's mission. There are many churches and student ministries that are far too worried about the appearance of their success in having a big ministry to jeopardize that with a truthful, bold call to live a World-Christian lifestyle.

Deep down, however, students want the truth. Even if it is harsh or if they disagree – they can handle that. Just be up-front with them. We must confront bad theology, issues about the state of man and the condition of the lost even if it's "harsh." Almost always, it is the students that I feel like I leaned into the hardest that God works in the most on the back end. Paul felt like this at times, "For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it – for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while – I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death" (2 Cor. 7:8-10).

### **Use the Bible**

I'm surprised that I would have to say this. But much of missions mobilization has been just recruiting. Many are recruiting to a trip, an agency, a project or agenda, but not to a biblical understanding of our role as God's vessel of blessing to the nations. Stories will entertain but they won't empower. Stories and videos and skits seem like more short term motivators verses long term motivators. They might engage a more immediate emotion and response, might sell some books afterward, or get a good offering, but not the heart of the giver. Not for the long term. I think a message that is saturated or at

least centered on the biblical role of the church in God's plan for the nations is the greatest way to raise up long-term missions vision that will last. Of course we use stories, illustrations, humor in communicating – but that is not the message. They help drive in the biblical message. First ask the question, "What do I want them to understand from the Bible?" Then let the stories and illustrations complement that message. Ultimately, the goal is that our audience would remember the words of God and not just our stories.

### **The Car**

Our basic ministry philosophy is that missions vision leads to growth in Christ-likeness and even local ministry. Have you ever seen that show on MTV – "Pimp my Ride"? It's basically the hip hop version of extreme makeover for cars. My wife and I watched an episode of it last week where they took this college student from LA and his little car and "pimped it out" (that's a good thing). This car had the dome light hanging on with some duct tape, a trash bag for a back window, no door panel on the inside left, one spare donut wheel and the dude's stereo was a little handheld boombox he kept in the passenger seat. We laughed so hard. But they took it to this LA car place where they trick out everything. They completely stripped out the inside and welded in professional racing seats, 18" chrome wheels, a flip down DVD player, CD player, a Playstation2 and (no kidding) they installed a fish tank with a live fish. One guy mentioned on the show that they literally put \$10,000 worth of stuff in this \$500 car. When he got his car back, it was completely rehailed. It was transformed.

There's my philosophy of ministry. What if I told you that we travel coast to coast in our van, tens of thousands of miles every year, but when you saw our vehicle it was an old, beat-up machine, with the muffler hanging off, green fluid leaking out of the bottom, one almost flat tire and smoke coming out from under the hood? What's wrong with that? This vehicle might be OK for pattering around the town, but it's not going to make it the long haul - unless you put some serious work into it. This car needs an overhaul. If you find yourself looking around at students or at your church and you wonder why they are still weak in Bible study, and content with their sin, and their lives look like this, wrecked and barely running. Maybe it's because they've never called to a big vision; never challenged to go the distance that the Great Commission calls us to. If all you're challenging them to is to live nice little Christian lives, and do nothing but putter around other Christians and to church and back once a week, any vessel will do. But when you begin to cast vision for the world, and the horizon that God's kingdom is headed toward and their role in it, then they will see their need to fix up the car. With the horizon in view, there comes motivation for growth. Without a Great Commission context, they will never see their need to fix up the vehicle. But it's only in the world sized vision, will people begin to prepare for the long haul. You never truly understand the beginning of anything until you understand the end. Many of us in ministry remember trying to get others interested in Bible study and evangelism through all kinds of methods. Looking back I feel like I was just pushing on the car instead of telling people the glory of what was beyond the horizon. Any other motivation for "fixing up the car" that is not for the purpose of bringing God glory on the earth may just lead to legalism, man-pleasing or selfish ambitions.

### **The Telescope**

Because of "overchoice," I've began to give students this advice, which is more of a principle based approach to finding direction from God on the journey He has for you. The process must follow these decision-steps in the succession they are laid out to

ensure meaningful Great Commission decisions and to protect us from selfish distortions. I just call it the telescope.

In this “telescope,” the first lens we look through is leading. This is the hardest to describe, but the most confirming in our spirit – because it comes from God. When I say leading I do not mean that you feel “called” to missions and some are not called. We missions mobilizers get on edge when you start using this kind of language, because we maintain that everyone is called to be on mission with God in reaching the nations. We are all commanded to go – leading just tells us where to stop. Two main “leading” demographics to begin with would be 1) a religion group or 2) an area of the world. Many times this decision lens of leading must be learned by experience. That is why every believer should determine to take at least one meaningful short-term mission trip in their life. Leading comes from experience because God clarifies in the midst of obedience, not beforehand.

This leading is only the first lens and we get clearer direction from the next lens. What is strategic? The strategic lens is what ensures that we are not “building on another man’s foundation” and that we are “finishing the race and completing the task” of reaching the unreached peoples of the world. The strategic lens asks the question, “Where in the area or religion group (first lens) is the most strategic place I can be used.” Where is the greatest need for the gospel or greatest opportunity for its spreading? You might feel the Lord “leading” you to Fiji – “Yep, I can see myself there.” But that might not be the most strategic in reaching the unreached. I may want to work among Muslims but just because there are Muslims in Kansas doesn’t mean that is the most strategic place to reach them or that it will impact the unreached peoples of the Muslim world. Leading is gained mainly by experience, where “strategic” may be gained by education.

The next lens I call “gifting.” This is the question of, “Can God use my talents, career, degree, or skills to serve in this strategic area where I feel Him leading me?” Right here is where most Christians and students will error, because they want to flip the telescope. They want to look through the lenses backward. I remember Steve Hawthorne relating a long conversation he had with a young lady about how she could use her Spanish among unreached peoples. After Steve had exhausted all of his knowledge of possible unreached people groups in South America, etc., he finally responded to her saying, “Why don’t you stop telling God what you want to do for Him – and begin by asking God what He wants you to do.” You can’t look through the telescope backwards or you get a very small, narrow, limited view of how God may want to use you. He may want to use your talents, He may not. It is not a bad question to ask – we just need to

ask it third and not first. Finally, would be the agency lens. What mission agency or sending entity can train and send me to this area, whether using my degree or not. Again we can be tempted to look through the telescope backward if we only know of one mission sending agency, which many only do. It is a good idea to get familiar with several other agencies that work there just so you can allow God to lead you based on choice and not default.

### **World Christian Goal**

Missions mobilization in the past has been about going, now it is about a bigger goal – every Christian a World Christian. Every Christian saying, “I’ll do whatever it takes for my life to contribute to the great commission.” What is the goal of mobilization? I have been asking this question a lot lately. Most of us are familiar with the end goal: reaching every tongue, tribe, and nation. But how do we get there from here? As mobilizers, what is it that we want students to do? Cross an ocean? Reach out to internationals? Pray for the world? These all are great things, however, we do not want

to mobilize students to a single activity. If we do, they go back to life as usual once the activity is completed. Instead, we should mobilize them to a change in perspective. So that no matter where they are or what they are doing, they are now World Christians. When they come home from the summer missions trip they know they are not done. It's not a geographical issue, but a heart issue. A World Christian understands that God's heart is for the world and no matter where they find themselves on the planet they are furthering His kingdom. The vision that they took hold of has now taken hold of them. Because it is the World Christians who will make a difference in reaching every tongue, tribe, and nation we as mobilizers must see it as our goal to raise them up.

So how do you raise up World Christians? There are three things needed in order to do this. They must be given motivation, information, and a lot of attention.

**Motivation.** Millions of Christian students pass casually through four of the most important years of their life. Many of whom are involved in college ministries, and yet the uttermost remains the uttermost. Why? "Without vision the people perish" (Prov. 29:18). We must understand that very few students have been introduced to the fact that 3 billion souls are without Christ. Even fewer students realize that their lives can be used to impact the eternal destiny of these people. Everything in our culture says, "Get what you can, then can what you get." "Look out for number one!" Students lack vision and they need people to speak it into their lives. We need to be people who can motivate students by sounding the trumpet that life is about more than just themselves. Whether it is through a speaker at a campus meeting or conference, through a discipler or friends, the student is exposed to God's heart for the world. Motivation is always the first step of mobilization.

We cannot stop there. Without **information**, motivation has a tendency to be just a good talk from a speaker with a neat personality. If all we give the students is motivation without information, we run the risk of creating "zeal without knowledge"(Prov. 19:2). I myself am a product of a good speaker that left me with no tools. If only he had given me a small amount of follow up, it would have saved years of struggle! As I travel from campus to campus, I see this same problem recurring. If we can follow students up with information regarding mission agencies, prayer resources, magazines, definitions for terms like "welcomer," "goer" or "mobilizer," etc., then they will be equipped to start taking steps. The information is already out there, let's put it in their hands.

Even after information is given, we still may see very few World Christians raised up. There are plenty of case studies of students who have motivation and information yet they still do nothing. Why is this? Because everything around them is pulling for their passion, time, and resources. I am amazed, personally, at how much I can forget in just one night of sleep. Students are no different. They desperately need personal **attention**. The best person to give personal attention is the one discipling them. Unfortunately, many students are not being disciplined so it falls on us as mobilizers to provide some of the needed attention through establishing relationships and various channels of communication. As difficult as it is to pull this task off, there will never be a substitute for providing attention to college students after the motivation and information has been delivered.

So what is the goal? Ultimately, the goal is to see the Lord praised in every nation. However, to get there we need to raise up and equip World Christians through motivation, information, and attention. If that goal is met effectively, we will see a mighty movement of ready laborers to finish the Great Commission in our generation.

### **Not Roles but Habits**

Quickly, I want to mention that The Traveling Team has chosen to use the term World Christian Habits when talking about praying, sending, going, mobilizing and

welcoming internationals. This is also very intentional. The alternative, which is to refer to these as “roles,” has been the traditional view but carries several obvious drawbacks. The main drawback is that students and others begin to select certain roles and feel the freedom to dismiss others. It is foolish to think, “My role is just praying. I don’t give. I don’t go – I just pray.” Or what about the missionary that goes but says, “My role is going. I don’t pray. I don’t welcome internationals.” I think that the use of the concept of habits is helpful here. We are all called to be world-Christians, active in all five habits, majoring in some and minoring in others. There are some seasons in our life when we will major praying, mobilizing, sending and minor in other habits. There are other seasons where we major in praying or even going, but will need to remain active in the other habits. They are not “roles” that are permanent, but habits that should probably be re-evaluated throughout our lives.

### **Authentic Mobilization**

Finally we come back to the issue mentioned above, being authentic. Becoming a tour guide verses a travel agent is essential in gaining students hearts to share the cause of missions. My mobilization hero is Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz. Her sheer determination to take the journey herself was what inspired hesitant onlookers to join with her in the journey. Her obedience had a wind-shear to it, an inertia that pulled others onto the path with her. Her attitude seemed to be, “I don’t know about you but I’m going to see the wizard – you can sit here or you can come with me.” Some of them tried to turn back on the way because of fear but she was there, with attention, and follow up to keep them in the process. Her journey involved helping people through their fears and obstacles, oiling the tin man, released the scare crow. Along the way she had to use some tough love and challenge people to a high challenge; punching the lion in the face. Painful are the wounds of the mobilizer – but they will love you for it in the end. John Piper says the “Quickest way to the heart is through a wound.” Finally a mobilizer like Dorothy must be on the journey themselves. Are you personally traveling the road you are inviting others to? Are you living a World Christian lifestyle today or living out of what you did or accomplished 10 years ago? The authentic missions mobilizer will say to others as Jesus did, “Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

### **Action**

Some good actions steps may be to simply step back and ask the question, “What are we trying to do?” If a student did everything you told them, would it produce a life long laborer, a holistic world-Christian, with a conviction from Scripture for the evangelization of the world and their responsibility in that. If that is the end goal, all our opportunities of going should be geared for that through meaningful pre-field and on-field training and debriefing that includes next steps in their world-Christian journey. Materials, follow-up and the pipeline we are inviting students into can all be connected to the “north star” vision that is driving our efforts: the goal of seeing every tribe, tongue and nation come to know and worship Jesus. The specifics are just the maps. I would love to give you five ways to do it, but that is where we get lazy sometimes. There is no magic formula that can guarantee another student movement or revival. A new generation needs the freedom to draw their own map out as they go, but the compass reminds us of what is unchanging, and what the final destination of God’s glory will be one day. Help a student catch that vision, keep it and obey it and God can use them to change the world.

*Please do not use or reprint without permission.*