

AN UNEXPECTED NEW STRATEGY: USING NONRESIDENTIAL MISSIONS TO FINISH THE TASK

■ This excerpt from a forthcoming book shows that nothing can galvanize the frontier missions movement more than to have every unevangelized segment of humanity under the careful watch of nonresidential missionaries. Will these advocates change the course of mission history?

By V. David Garrison

Nonresidential Missions is one of the newest in a long history of innovative approaches to world evangelization. Casual hearers or readers upon first encountering the term assume they know its meaning and generally envision something akin to an itinerant missionary or even a missionary on furlough! Hopefully, this monograph will help to clarify and lend substance to a concept which first appeared in 1986.

In an age when the world's nearly 1.8 billion Christians have yet to surmount the challenge of 1.3 billion individuals who have yet to hear the gospel of Christ for the first time, non-residential missions holds particular promise. Perhaps the reason this staggering total of 1.3 billion unevangelized souls is so haunting is due to our own embarrassment of riches! A people which can place a vehicle on the moon and propel satellites beyond the solar system can certainly obey Christ's commission to share His message with every fellow human on earth. The resources are abundant and yet the task remains undone.

Herein lies the great promise of non-residential missions. By definition it utilizes every evangelization resource and method in existence and concentrates them directly on an unevangelized population target. The nonresidential missionary approach is new and consequently many will contend that the jury is still out as to whether it will prove up to the challenge of completing the task of world evangelization. This may be so, and yet early indications are that the "nonresidential missionary" is able to change an evangelistically stagnant situation with remarkable alacrity. The major reason for this rapid

progress to long intractable situations is that the resources already exist for evangelizing the world. The nonresidential missionary's arsenal, so to speak, is well-stocked. His is merely the task of redeploying these resources to their greatest strategic advantage. It is for this reason that the nonresidential missionary is never in competition with any other missionary approach; his approach both includes and presupposes these other ministries as the key resources for accomplishing his own objectives. Thus, the healthier and more diverse the world of Christian missionary resources becomes, the more vital the nonresidential missionary approach will be.

In efforts to explain the nonresidential missionary approach to candidates and constituents over the years, I have become aware of the great value of actual illustrations of nonresidential missionary work. It has been our consistent experience that the concept and vision of nonresidential missions is more *caught* than *taught*. Once a nonresidential missionary has caught the vision of reaching an unevangelized people or city by accessing all the vast resources of the Great Commission Christian world and weaving them into a comprehensive evangelization strategy, then all further instruction is relative; he is only limited by his own imagination. It is in hopes of kindling this type of evangelistically enterprising imagination that graphic "slices of life" from actual nonresidential missionary ministries are interspersed throughout this work.

Due to his use of a range of mission methods to reach an unevangelized target, the nonresidential missionary is

often confused with other missionary types. Like a multi-faceted stone or a kaleidoscopic image, the nonresidential missionary approach can not be completely understood by simply viewing it from one perspective or in an isolated situation. It must be examined in various contexts and under various lights to fully appreciate its diversity, flexibility and uniqueness.

Every illustration corresponds to an actual effort being used by a nonresidential missionary somewhere in the world to reach an unevangelized people with the Gospel. In every illustration, however, the names have been changed and locations obscured in order to avoid hindering these ministries which are currently in progress. The author hopes that readers will understand the sensitive nature of doing missionary work in places which, for a variety of reasons, do not allow overt and explicit evangelistic activity. Someday the stories will all be told in full. And that day will be one of great rejoicing.

The Latino-Berber Connection

On a busy sidestreet in the crowded Arab quarter of a city in the south of France, a young Latin American couple from Costa Rica, Rafael and Miriam Gaxiola, wait for their language tutors to assist them in the rigors of a North African Berber language called *jebala*. Soon they are joined by two North African companions and they set out through the busy streets of the city a few blocks north of the Basilique du Sacrecoeur. Rafael and Miriam are non-residential missionaries, their tutors are Berber Christians from North Africa. The younger of the two is named Emir,

a slender handsome man in his mid-twenties with Middle Eastern features but warm green eyes. The older man is named Majid. Majid is in his late forties as evidenced by his silvering black hair and creased forehead. Emir and Majid are from the Jebala people of North Africa's mountainous interior.

The Berbers of North Africa are the aboriginal inhabitants of the region. Since at least the 2nd millennium B.C. their ancestors have settled the lands stretching from modern day Libya to the Atlantic coast of Western Sahara. Over the centuries they have witnessed numerous visitations and conquests by outsiders. Seafaring Phoenicians, Imperial Romans, German Vandals, Byzantine Greeks and Bedouin Arabs each left their mark. Each eventually left, except for the Arabs. They remained to rule the nations of North Africa for more than a thousand years. To retain their culture against intolerant Arab domination, many Berbers were forced to retreat to the mountains. Here they eked out a difficult existence which has continued to the present. The Berbers call themselves "Imazighen" which means "free men".

The Gaxiolas have come to love and admire the Berber commitment to freedom and self-expression. At the same time, they have seen how the Berbers' isolation in the mountains of North Africa has effectively shielded them from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Together with their Berber co-laborers, Rafael and Miriam are determined to break through this wall of isolation and communicate with the Berber people the story of Christ. Emir's pilgrimage bore a similarity to that of many Berbers from North Africa. When he was twenty years old, Emir went to France to live with his aunt and uncle and look for employment. The big European city was overwhelming for Emir. It was worlds apart from the arid hills of his homeland. It was a wicked place, as his mother had warned him. For most of a year Emir diligently worked at his uncle's cafe, sweeping the floor, bussing tables, washing dishes. But he was lonely and depressed. His older cousin detected the sadness in Emir and offered him a new experience, French wine. Within a few months, wine had become a part of his evening rituals and then it became a daily source of warmth and comfort. By the end of his first year

in France, Emir was addicted to alcohol. It was one day while he was in a wine-induced stupor that Emir stumbled upon two young women at a sidewalk cafe near his uncle's shop. Somewhere in the recesses of his mind, he knew it was impolite to address women in public, but he had long abandoned such inhibitions. He sat down at their table and began to flirt with them.

To his surprise, one of the young women boldly asked Emir if she could tell him something about her own life. Emir was surprised and quickly consented. She told him of how she had been lonely and depressed when she first went away from home to attend college and how she had initially rebelled from all that she had been taught was right, until one night a friend introduced her to Jesus Christ. Her friend had shared Christ's love with such sincerity that she was moved to tears and repentance. Then she told Emir how Christ could come into his life giving him the liberation from guilt and loneliness that he was seeking. She told him of the Holy Spirit's joy and peace and how it accompanied Christians at all times. Before Emir left the two young women, he accepted from them a small New Testament in the French language and a gospel tract with the address of a local Christian bookstore.

What Emir could not have known at the time was that the two women were part of a group of 40 college students from the United States and Canada who were spending their summer vacation reaching out to some of France's more than 2 million North African Muslims. Their invitation, organization and orientation had all been developed and guided by a nonresidential missionary couple: Rafael and Miriam Gaxiola. This team of young witnesses were an integral part of the Gaxiola's comprehensive effort to reach the Jebala Berbers of North Africa through Christian ministry to Berbers in Europe.

That night, Emir sat alone in his room reading pages from the gospel of John. For the first time in many nights he had no desire to drink. Shortly before midnight he fell asleep still wrestling with the words he had read: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; No one comes to the Father but by Me." Later that night he was visited in his sleep by a vision of Christ standing at

the foot of his bed. Immediately, Emir sat up in bed. As the vision faded, he understood it as a sign that Allah was revealing to him the truth about His Son. That same night, Emir invited Christ to enter his life, to forgive and cleanse him. Unexpectedly, his tears began to flow. Stepping from his bedroom window out onto the fire escape balcony, Emir looked up to the sky. Later, he shared in his testimony, "That night, for the first time in my life, I saw the stars."

The next morning, after finishing his duties at the restaurant, Emir set out to find the bookstore advertised in the gospel tract he had received. There he met Majid, the proprietor of the only Berber Christian bookstore in the city. The two men soon became friends. Majid introduced Emir to the Gaxiolas and warm fellowship ensued. From that time onward the four would meet together for prayer and Bible study. Afterwards they would linger together for hours sipping coffee and discussing plans for Berber evangelization.

Majid had also come to Christ indirectly through the efforts of a nonresidential ministry. Three years earlier, when he still lived in his home village of Kenrez in North Africa, Majid tuned in to the medium-wave radio broadcast of the story of Isa (Jesus) the Messiah. What caught Majid's immediate attention was the fact that the program was in his own *jebala* language and not the typical Arabic or European languages which dominated the airwaves. Majid listened carefully; at the end of the program it was announced that further broadcasts would continue the following evening at the same time. For several weeks he tuned in and listened closely until, at last, the message began to touch his heart. Quietly and alone Majid invited Christ into his life and accepted God's forgiveness through Him.

The program that so touched Majid had been produced by the joint efforts of several Christian agencies and individuals. It was almost derailed several times for lack of funds, but the tireless lobbying of the Gaxiolas would not let it die. Consequently, after three years of dreaming, planning and developing, the first broadcast was aired. Almost immediately there was response. Some of the new believers chose to quietly live out their faith in North Africa. Others,

like Majid, had attempted to share their new faith with their family and been forced to leave the village and flee to the city, and eventually to France where they were met by Rafael Gaxiola and helped to start a new life aimed at sharing their faith with the Berber people.

Rafael has traveled extensively in the interior of North Africa since beginning his nonresidential assignment four years ago. It is hard on his family for him to be away too much, so Rafael limits his travel to 2-3 weeks at a time and is only away from home about 2-3 months out of the year. More important than his personal travel to the country is his ability to travel the world through his telephone and computer telecommunications resources. This is Miriam's area of expertise.

Miriam's training in Costa Rica gave her the fundamentals of word processing, filing information in a computerized database and an introduction to the resources of an MCI telecommunications system. Over the past four years, however, she has honed and expanded her skills to include desktop publishing.

She now publishes a quarterly prayer letter called *The Jebala Journal* a bulletin of Jebala news, prayer needs, and ministry opportunities. Using a multi-lingual font package, she is able to print the bulletin in four languages: English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. She and Rafael hope they can someday create the type needed to print the bulletin in the *jebala* language as well.

Using the MCI telecom system, Miriam sends news of urgent needs to her brother, Manuel, who is a pastor in Costa Rica. Manuel spreads news of prayer needs and opportunities for witness to a network of churches throughout the country. An even more diverse network is accessed when Miriam sends news bulletins to the COMIBAM (Congress of Ibero-American Evangelicals) office in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. From this evangelical communications hub, information on Jebala needs and opportunities immediately goes to 20 cooperating mission agencies. Through these channels, and others like them in the United States, Rafael and Miriam have been able to

organize annual student evangelism projects in France each summer which have resulted in nearly 100 conversions over the past three years. In North Africa itself, Rafael has been able to utilize his rapid communications system to place five Christian tentmakers from Costa Rica, Brazil and Argentina in occupations within the North African interior where they have daily contact with Jebala people. Miriam and Rafael hope to place dozens of Christian witnesses like these in North Africa among the Berbers over the next few years. Already the small team of witnesses which are there have led seven Jebala to Christ and are teaching these seven to share their faith with others.

Rafael and Miriam are only beginning to make a dent in the awesome challenge of Jebala evangelization, but they know that they are making a difference. Already they have had a young couple from Brazil who have come for two summers to the evangelism projects in France with plans to give their life to reaching the Jebala people.

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country) for purposes of concentrating on priorities of initial evangelization and eliminating gaps and inadvertent duplications with other agencies, who resides outside that segment or its country (because legal residence is prohibited or highly restricted) and who then networks with all other concerned Great Commission Christians both local and nonlocal, denominations, agencies and individuals, in order to do the following: (1) research and survey the situation of that single segment, becoming expert in the subject for purposes of evangelization and ministry, (2) learn and become fluent in that segment's main language, (3) draw up and help to see implemented a wide range of evangelizing ministry options directed towards that segment, (4) report regularly to a home office outlining progress with that segment, in order to monitor progress and provide assistance as needed, (5) relate throughout to the World Evangelization Database and other Great Commission resource networks, and (6) relate as part of a global team to other nonresidential missionaries each of whom has been

assigned to a different segment; with the overarching objective of seeing to it that through the whole vast network of Christian influences all persons in his population segment become evangelized (have the opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel) with at least a dozen converts made and a beachhead church (one or more local groups, or churches, or organized church fellowships) planted in that segment by A.D. 2000.

The final words in this rather thorough definition link the nonresidential mis-

sionary's task to the end of the millennium. This very deliberate association is more pragmatic than apocalyptic. The year 2000 represents an unprecedented focal date for hundreds of Christian denominations and mission agencies. For the nonresidential missionary, this global consensus provides him with the resource bank he needs to bring about the first stage of attaining his goal, i.e. that every person in the population segment might hear and be able to respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The year 2000 also represents the con-

WHAT IS A NONRESIDENTIAL MISSIONARY?

Is it possible to describe a nonresidential missionary in a single sentence? The following one-sentence paragraph attempts this very thing as it provides a concise working definition of the nonresidential missionary.

A nonresidential missionary is a full-time, professional career foreign missionary who is matched-up with a single unevangelized population segment (one city, or one people or one

creteness of the nonresidential missionary's task. His is not an unattainable or immeasurable goal. It is an accountable undertaking and one which demands that he make clearly defined steps toward its fulfillment.

Essential Characteristics and Functions

Out of this complex definition three essential characteristics emerge: 1) the nonresidential missionary operates fundamentally from a nonresidential base, 2) he networks with all other concerned Great Commission Christians, 3) he takes responsibility for the evangelization of a single predominantly unevangelized population segment.

The nonresidential missionary operates fundamentally from a nonresidential base. This means the missionary does not reside among the unevangelized segment he intends to evangelize. While it may be possible and even beneficial for the nonresidential missionary to locate among or near his population target for purposes of language acquisition and investigation, the real work begins after the nonresidential missionary withdraws to an unrestricted setting in a world-class or crossroads urban center. The primary reason for nonresidence is due to restrictions that would be placed on a missionary living and working residentially among the people. In many cases, where it may be possible for a clandestine or tentmaking missionary to reside among the people, restrictions prohibit him from implementing the range of evangelizing options necessary for reaching the entire targeted people.

Unlike an itinerant missionary or a gospel smuggler, the nonresidential missionary is not necessarily committed to living as close as possible to the borders of his target population. Instead, he is looking for a place of residence which will allow maximum networking capabilities with other Great Commission Christians. Some important factors to consider in this regard are: 1) free flow of information (computers, telephone, postal, etc.), 2) locations where a diaspora population of the target segment reside (refugees, migrant workers, etc.), 3) location along a key travel route in and out of the region (for airplanes, trains, etc.).

Rather than trying to make all of the primary contacts himself, the nonresidential missionary draws from the

hundreds of other Great Commission Christians, agencies, etc. to maximize evangelistic impact on his target segment. This underscores the second distinctive characteristic of a nonresidential missionary: networking with all concerned Great Commission Christian agencies and individuals. It is inconceivable for a nonresidential missionary to attempt either a "lone-ranger" approach to evangelizing his population target or even a "monodominational" approach. The challenges of presenting the Gospel to a highly restricted people are far too difficult to undertake without a full array of evangelizing resources. Even the largest American Protestant denomination, the Southern Baptists, with nearly 15 million constituents pales in comparison to the enormity of reaching 1.3 billion lost souls in the unevangelized world. By utilizing every possible Great Commission Christian contact, rather than a single, limited evangelistic contact, the nonresidential missionary is able to catalyze hundreds, and thousands of evangelizing agents in a concerted effort at reaching his target assignment.

By limiting the nonresidential missionary to a single unevangelized population segment, the task is kept both manageable and strategic. While some frontier missiologists give great attention to the unevangelized world, they fail to limit themselves to a single population target. Consequently, they are perceived as unfocused and over a period of years may actually contribute little to any individual population targeting coming closer to a saving knowledge of Christ. Their lack of focus allows them to conveniently slip from assignment to assignment whenever an obstacle arises. Accordingly they remain quite busy, but see little in the way of actual progress from their efforts.

Other quasi-nonresidential missionaries utilize the methods of a nonresidential missionary but target peoples which are largely evangelized already or even nominally Christian. Unevangelized population segments are those which have yet to receive an opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This should not be confused with a closed country, which may or may not be evangelized. Nor should it be equated with a population

segment which, though non-Christian, has numerous options for receiving the gospel within its own context. Just as every individual has the God-given right to hear and accept the Gospel, so too have they the right to reject it. The nonresidential ministry is built upon the premise that every person should at least have the opportunity to hear and respond.

Along with the three essential characteristics of nonresidential mode of operation, Great Commission Christian networking, and targeting a single unevangelized population segment, are four essential functions: 1) researching, 2) strategizing, 3) implementing, and 4) evaluating.

Research is the first stage. It prepares the way for all subsequent nonresidential mission work. There are two worlds which the nonresidential missionary must master: 1) the world of his targeted population segment, and 2) the world of evangelization resources. The ultimate goal is to bring these two worlds together in a dynamic interaction which will lead to the evangelization of the population target in a manner that will result in healthy, multiplying churches.

After investigating the two worlds, the nonresidential missionary begins developing a comprehensive strategy for the segment's evangelization. As much as possible, this strategy should utilize the entire spectrum of evangelizing options. Four fundamental categories of evangelization strategy have been identified: 1) Prayer, 2) Scripture, 3) Media Ministries, and 4) Christian Presence.

Each nonresidential missionary has felt strongly the need for a firm foundation of prayer as the basis for his ministry. The least evangelized countries, cities and peoples on earth have long been under the spiritual domination of Satan. Only prayer can break this oppressive control. As people begin to pray for these great unevangelized areas, nonresidential missionaries have learned that not only are new doors for witness opened among the population target, but God also works a miracle of grace in the hearts of those who pray. Christians who never before considered participating in missions begin discovering ways that they themselves could participate in reaching out to the ends of the earth.

There is no limit to the effectiveness of God's Word once it is available to an unevangelized people. Most of the world's unevangelized peoples have no recourse to Scripture for one of several reasons. Either it is out of print, no longer intelligible (due to linguistic changes), unavailable due to lack of distribution or has never been translated in the first place. A crucial part of the non-residential missionary's initial research is to determine the status of Scripture translation or accessibility and devise plans for making it available to the people. In many cases, the population target may not even have a literate language. In other words, though their mother tongue is widely spoken, it may not be written or read. This has never deterred Christian missionaries from pursuing a Bible translation. More languages throughout the world have been reduced to writing for the first time by a Bible translation than by any other means. Historically, many of these Bible-initiating efforts have spawned entire literary traditions. Beside this, there are today numerous ways to present the Bible to the people apart from the written page. Radio broadcasts, audio cassette ministries and even video formats such as the "Jesus Film" are all capable of delivering God's Word to a people who can understand the spoken though not the written message. However, each of these formats require a Bible translation to be completed before they can be implemented. Consequently, producing a Bible translation remains a top priority for a non-residential missionary's evangelization strategy.

The use of media ministries is a key way to project the Gospel into places where missionary residence is not allowed. Few societies today are without radio receivers and virtually all non-residential missionaries depend on radio broadcasts to transmit the Gospel into unevangelized hinterlands. Other means of media communication include correspondence evangelism, utilizing both personal correspondence and mass mailings into restricted settings. The re-

markably effective "Jesus Film" can now be delivered into highly restricted countries and reproduced through a number of formats ranging from 8 mm films to slides and videocassettes.

Every non-residential ministry, if it is to be effective, must identify opportunities for a witnessing Christian presence among the population target. Since traditional missionary presence is not formally allowed, the non-residential mission strategist must rely on other avenues of Christian presence. Once he opens the door to non-missionary possibilities, however, he finds a wide range of options. Diagram 1 shows the types of Christian presence and their lengths of service that a typical non-residential missionary would seek to place in his targeted area.

In this scheme, long-term workers, though fewer in number and more difficult to secure, provide the type of ongoing presence ministry required to maximize the evangelistic effectiveness of shorter-term personnel such as the

to the means by which supercomputers utilize multiple processors to dissect and process extremely complex problems. These multiple and parallel processors work side-by-side with the presupposition that dividing the task will not only ensure that it will be solved more quickly, but will also serve as a necessary hedge against the breakdown of individual components. The non-residential missionary must also build in a certain measure of redundancy to compensate for the inevitable short-comings which will come as a result of the difficulties of the task and inevitability of human frailties. By planning for occasional breakdowns with reliable back-up resources, the non-residential missionary never has his overarching strategy frustrated to the point of collapse.

The work of the non-residential missionary is not complete without careful monitoring and evaluation of the segment to determine to what extent the various methods are proving effective. Evangelistic effectiveness, i.e. the pro-

duction of viable self-sustaining and reproducing churches, of course, is the ultimate goal. To monitor effectiveness, the non-residential missionary is expected to continually examine the conditions of the target segment using a range of indicators to mea-

sure evangelization activity and the continual criterion of evangelism which results in churches as the measure of evangelistic effectiveness.

Because the non-residential missionary's task is a dynamic one, there is literally no end to the cycle of studying the situation and resources, devising and implementing new evangelization strategies, monitoring results and refining methods. At the end of each cycle is the beginning of a new, deeper and more extensive array of evangelization efforts.

What a non-residential missionary is not

Once when addressing a large group of missionaries and mission strategists on the subject of innovative approaches

Diagram 1

Christian Witnessing Presence			
Type	Short-term	Medium Length	Long-term
Mission related	English teachers	Exchange students	Tentmakers
Relief and development	Crisis surveys	2-yr relief workers	Agri. development
3rd world missionaries	Tourist evangelists	Itinerant evangelists	Immigrants
Indigenous	Lay volunteers	Church planters	Pastors
Total Number	100 Short-term	40 Medium-length	10 Long-term

tourist evangelists and itinerant evangelists which will average only two weeks each in the target area to the medium-length relief and development personnel which could stay for as long as two years.

Implementation of this strategy requires careful coordination of goals and action plans with dozens of other Christian agencies and individuals. The non-residential missionary has only the power of persuasion at this crucial juncture in his ministry. But he also has at his disposal literally hundreds of agencies and thousands of individuals from which to recruit. A key principle underlying his efforts at implementation is "multi-processing."

Multi-processing is a term borrowed from the world of computers and refers

to closed countries, I asked if there were any nonresidential missionaries in the room. One bright young fellow in the back eagerly raised his hand. I asked him what country or people he was targeting and he responded, "Mauritania." I was delighted to hear this and made certain to visit with him after my presentation. Upon further discussion with the young man, I was disappointed to learn that he was in fact a frustrated residential missionary who had convinced his mission board that he was called to evangelize Mauritania and then settled into the long and frustrating process of waiting for a visa to enter Mauritania. Unable to gain entry, he concluded, "I must be a nonresidential missionary."

I smiled, wished the Lord's blessings on him and we parted ways. Though I didn't say it at the time, my immediate thoughts were, "No my friend, you are not a nonresidential missionary. Furthermore, if you don't start producing some evangelistic results soon, I predict that you will soon become an unemployed missionary."

Differentiating the nonresidential missionary from other types of ministry is in no way intended to slight or discredit these other ministries. It must be noted, however, that a nonresidential missionary is a unique type of missionary which, though sharing a number of characteristics with other missionary types, must not be confused with them. Short-cuts to a complete nonresidential missionary ministry can have seriously debilitating consequences for its effectiveness.

A nonresidential missionary is not a tentmaker, though he may work with dozens or even hundreds of tentmakers to fulfill the scope of his ministry. He may even adopt a tentmaker mode of residence *temporarily* himself, in order to gain entry to better learn the language or negotiate some openings for ministry. The nonresidential missionary realizes, however, that a true tentmaker is committed to a full-time secular job which exists under the supervision of the government. Such posts are very important for the development of a comprehensive scheme of evangelization, but they are also quite limiting. A nonresidential missionary remains fundamentally nonresidential so that he is free to mobilize resources and coordinate dozens of projects which

a tentmaker's residential restrictions would not allow. At the same time, he is committed to creating scores of tentmaker openings and mobilizing an equal number of qualified tentmaker candidates to fill those openings.

A nonresidential missionary is not fundamentally a clandestine or illegal missionary. While the nonresidential missionary understands the important role which clandestine missionaries play and does not seek to discredit agencies or individuals which do see as their *raison d'être* the illicit importation and propagation of the gospel, nonresidential missionaries adopt as their contribution to the effort a different dimension of ministry. Nonresidential missionaries are committed to evangelism, discipleship and church planting and these commitments often place the nonresidential missionary at odds with the governments of countries in which their target populations reside. Because nonresidential missionaries reside outside their target areas, in free and open cities, they remain legal and in compliance with the laws of the land. Nonresidential missionaries function legally and openly from bases in world class cities. They are discrete, however, especially as they relate to those agencies and individuals which have adopted ministry roles which require a lower profile to maintain security.

A nonresidential missionary is not merely a researcher. For nonresidential missionaries research is extremely important as a tool to better understand and minister to the needs of their population target. But it is always a means to an end and never an end in itself. The goal remains firmly anchored in the Great Commission: "teaching them to observe whatsoever things I have commanded you; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

As can be seen both from the descriptive paragraphs and the corrective disclaimers, a nonresidential missionary is a person committed to the evangelization of an unreached people and committed to use every God-given means possible to achieve this goal.

MORE EXCERPTS FROM AN NRM'S LIFE & WORK

Third Generation Missions to the Burmese Border

In a modestly furnished ninth floor

flat in Hong Kong's New Territories a telephone rings. Though no one is home to answer it, an answering machine assumes responsibility for accepting the call: "You have reached the 'Apang Advocate'. We are away from the telephone right now. Please leave your name, number and a short message and we will get back with you (beep)..."

Two hours later, eighteen year old Jonathan Kowles places a long-distance telephone call from Singapore to the same Hong Kong telephone number. After the answering machine begins to recite its familiar litany, Jonathan places his portable "code-a-phone" over the telephone mouthpiece and enters a three-digit code. The Hong Kong answering machine responds to his command by playing back the three messages he has received that day.

The first call is from a local Chinese pastor: "I have some letters for the believers in Apang Province, do you know when the next courier will be going in? Please let me know." The second request is from an inquirer wishing to be added to the circulation list for the monthly "Apang Advocate" newsletter.

The third message is most unusual and immediately summons Jonathan's attention; the message is spoken in the rural Apang language. A young man's voice nervously reports: "My name is Liu-man. I just arrived in Hong Kong by fishing boat from the mainland. Pastor Wei said you could help me find some fellow Christians. I am staying in the Shang-ti Guest House in Ho Man Tin. Please come and see me."

Jonathan looks at his calendar watch, the conference he is attending on unevangelized peoples of Asia won't conclude for another couple of days. But it's 5 p.m. in Taipei, Taiwan where his nonresidential missionary parents are visiting Jonathan's grandparents. Jonathan picks up the phone again and dials the number by memory.

Jonathan's grandparents, Wilfred and Rebecca Kowles came to Asia as missionaries in 1926. They had only been married a year and had not yet seen their twenty-fifth birthday when they reached the Himalayan foothills along the border of what is now China and Burma. There they settled among a tribal people of nearly eight hundred thousand Tibeto-Burmese villagers who

called themselves the Apang.

Over the next twenty years, they began to make inroads into the evangelization of the Apang. Although most of their missionary colleagues fled the country during the Second World War, the Kowles remained. Sequestered in their mountain villages they felt sheltered from much of the chaos enveloping the rest of the world. The war years proved to be the most fruitful for the Apang work. During the eight years from 1940 to 1948, the Kowles saw nearly a thousand Apang come to know Christ. Kowles organized the new believers into churches and began training his first class of ten Apang pastors to lead the fledgling churches.

The year 1948 was a significant one from Wilfred and Rebeccah. It was the year that their son, Jonathan's father, Eugene, was born and it was the year that Maoist Communism first penetrated the villages of Apang Province. Foreigners increasingly came under scrutiny as agents of colonialism and imperialism. For the Kowles, this was a difficult period.

By 1949, most of China had fallen to the Communists. Although Apang Province held out for another two years, it was becoming more and more difficult for the Kowles to remain among the Apang. Finally, on Christmas eve 1949, Wilfred bade his wife and children good-bye. Placing them on a river boat that would take them to the coast, he remained behind to face whatever might unfold. Six months later he was arrested, interrogated and imprisoned. For four months, Kowles languished in an Apang prison not knowing if he would ever be released. Only after repeated protests and solicitations from his wife and the American ambassador in Hong Kong was Kowles finally released and ordered never again to set foot in China.

Wilfred and his family went through years of denial that their fruitful ministry in China was over. Throughout the remainder of the decade of the fifties they waited hopefully for China to reopen. With the advent of the Cultural Revolution in the mid-sixties, however, they realized that their hopes were unfounded. Wilfred and Rebecca settled into a less than satisfying

ministry to Chinese refugees in Hong Kong.

By the early seventies, Wilfred's son Jonathan had returned from America with his new bride, Julia. Jonathan joined his parents in their ministry, but soon found himself exploring the burgeoning network of underground ministry to the Chinese mainland. Wary of participating in what was explicitly

Every one that responded confessed that they had no work among his target population nor did they know of anyone else working with the group. Almost all of them, however, went on to say that they would pray for the trainee and speak to other agencies and individuals which might provide him with further information.

illegal activities, Jonathan nevertheless prayed for these Christian risk takers who were busily at work smuggling Christian Scriptures and literature into China wherever they could find an entry point.

By the decade of the eighties, China was again showing signs of opening up though with tight restrictions on foreign missionary presence. What China desired was Western business investment and access to global capitalist markets. This rush into the global marketplace meant China would have to acquire the emerging international language of trade: English. By 1983, an appeal for 14,000 English language teachers went out from the Chinese government. Suddenly, after decades of frustration, the Kowles family found itself with more opportunities for ministry and witness than they could possibly fulfill.

It was at this crucial juncture that Jonathan first picked up a copy of *Seven Hundred Plans to Evangelize the World* by Anglican missionary researcher Dr. David Barrett. In its chapters on the Nonresidential Missionary, Jonathan Kowles discovered what he was already on the threshold of becoming. Within months he had organized the Kowles and their own pool of Great Commission Christian resources into a computerized network aimed at reviving a ministry to the Apang

people. As a family-committee, they sat down and drew up detailed plans for reaching the Apang, beginning with a concerted global prayer effort.

Since adopting the nonresidential approach to reaching the Apang, the Kowles family has entered its third generation of missionary commitment to the Apang. After nearly three decades of stagnation, they are again seeing the gospel rekindled among the Apang. Before a fourth generation of Kowles has completed their service to Apang evangelization, they are hopeful that the task will be completed.

Passing on the Torch to a New Generation

Added to these experiences is the experience of stepping into a legacy of attempts to evangelize an unreached people. One non-

residential missionary trainee began his networking with other Great Commission Christian agencies by sending out over 200 letters to mission agencies targeting China. The trainee knew that his people group had never received the benefit of a Scripture translation; both Wycliffe and the United Bible Societies recorded no Scripture portions whatsoever.

After an appropriate period of time, the trainee began receiving responses from the various agencies he had written. Every one that responded confessed that they had no work among his target population nor did they know of anyone else working with the group. Almost all of them, however, went on to say that they would pray for the trainee and speak to other agencies and individuals which might provide him with further information. Within a few weeks a second wave of letters began arriving to the trainee. These were the fruits of his networking, yet came from individuals he had never met nor written. Most of them were simple words of encouragement and promises to pray for his efforts.

One letter was different. It came from England from an elderly retired missionary named Wilfred Stott. The letter was untyped, hand-written in an old man's shaky scrawl. "Dear brother," it began, "I was a missionary to the people you are now trying to

reach. Before the Communist revolution 40 years ago, I was sent by my mission board to evangelize this people. I am now 82 years old." As the trainee read the letter he felt his heart beat more rapidly. Then he read the words, "I have been praying for these people all these years that God would raise up new laborers for the harvest. You see, when I was younger I led some of them to Christ and planted churches among them. I never knew if anyone would ever be able to follow-up on my work."

The letter continued, "Before I was expelled from the country, I translated the Gospel of Mark into their language. I know that God had a purpose in my preserving this little translation all these years. When I left the country I was body searched nine times, but miraculously the book was never discovered! I'm sad to say that for the past 40 years no one would take my translation and publish it. I spoke to Bible Societies and mission agencies and no one saw any possibilities of completing the translation. And so, for forty years it has sat in my desk drawer. But now I am sending it to you. God bless you, my brother."

The legacy of transmitting the faith from one generation to another, continued for that same trainee two years later. After successfully placing some Christian tentmakers among his population target he learned from them the story of a young man that they had witnessed to who was struggling with accepting the Christian faith. As one of the tentmakers later related the story, "Liu was always asking us questions about the Bible, Jesus, prayer and the Christian faith. He was like a sponge wanting to know more and more and yet he couldn't make a commitment to believe."

The Christians didn't push Liu to make a decision. Instead, they urged him to pray to God and ask God to reveal Himself to Liu. Soon came the time for the annual spring holiday, Liu decided to return to his village for a week and ask his parents for their advice. Liu's parents had grown up under the atheistic ideology of Communism and strongly advised Liu to forget the superstitious Christian faith. It could only bring him trouble. Later that week, Liu accompanied his parents to their ancestral cemetery. The school holiday, commemorated throughout much of Asia, was a time

for sweeping the graves of the ancestors. As the tentmakers later related the story to the nonresidential missionary, "It was there that God chose to reveal Himself to Liu. As Liu pulled the weeds away from the tombstone of his grandfather. He was stunned to see the image of a cross and a Christian benediction engraved on the marker. His grandfather had been a believer!"

The nonresidential missionary blinked back the tears as he heard the story. In his mind's eye he saw another face, that of old Wilfred Stott and wondered if it had been that old missionary who had presented the gospel message to the now deceased grandfather. The tentmaker concluded, "Now Liu has firmly decided that he will be baptized, too."

BUT DOES IT REALLY WORK?

Before and After Among the Xiao

In August 1987, a overseas mission board from the United States deployed its first nonresidential missionary to the Xiao people. His research revealed them to be one of the least evangelized peoples on earth. Sixteen million strong and living in a remote province of Asia. The Xiao live under a highly restrictive Communist government which has allowed no missionaries for most of this century. The Xiao comprise one of the largest unevangelized peoples in Asia and the largest language community in the world with no Christian Scripture whatsoever in their own language. Upon further investigation, the nonresidential missionary discovered that of the more than 80 mission agencies with work of some kind in or around the country wherein the Xiao reside, none have any work among the Xiao. The Xiao have no missionaries, no Bible, no Christian institutions such as hospitals, clinics or schools, no Gospel radio broadcasts, and no known organized efforts to pray for their salvation. In short, at the time that a nonresidential missionary was assigned to them, in terms of evangelization, the Xiao stood at ground zero.

Using the prayer program of his denomination, within a year, the nonresidential missionary had more than 500 churches committed to faithful prayer for Xiao evangelization.

In May of 1989, the Xiao were featured in a worldwide denomination-

al day of prayer and fasting for world evangelization, thus receiving the prayers of tens of thousands of faithful Christians from around the world.

Stimulated by a brochure on the Xiao developed by the nonresidential missionary, the Xiao have also been adopted for prayer by other Great Commission Christians such as Youth With A Mission, Christian Communications Ltd., and the Lausanne II Congress on Evangelism at Manila.

Recognizing the Xiao region of China as one of the poorest in Asia, a California Christian men's organization has contacted and contracted with the provincial government where the Xiao live to build a hospital in the province. One of the fundamental assurances from the government has been that this hospital could have a Christian identity and Christian witness. California Baptist men are currently raising \$3 million toward this project.

Two medical nurses serving in a Christian mission of a neighboring country have established a relationship with a nursing school in the capital city of the Xiao province where they have been able to share both medical skills and a Christian witness.

When the nonresidential missionary made it known to other Christian agencies that the Xiao were the largest people in the world with no Scripture, Wycliffe Translators stepped forward with a commitment to begin a translation. The International Bible Society pledged to publish the translation when it is completed and several other agencies agreed to help deliver the Bible to the Xiao people.

Because there is only one school in the world which teaches the Xiao language, the nonresidential missionary traveled to the school and established a friendly relationship with the school's administration securing an invitation for two Wycliffe translators with Ph.Ds in linguistics to enroll in the school and begin a translation of the Bible into the Xiao language.

Realizing that many of the remote Xiao villages would never be open to Western Christian presence, the nonresidential missionary developed a cooperative interdenominational project team uniting his own denominational agency, Far East Broadcasting Company and Christian Communications Ltd. to begin gospel radio broadcasting in the Xiao

language. Making this goal a reality has required extensive networking including Western funding and the use of Third World Christians to record the testimonies of local Xiao believers since there are no Xiao speakers living anywhere outside of the country.

A further important step occurred when the nonresidential missionary was able to network with South Korean Christians who have agreed to manufacture and deliver "portable missionaries" or radio receivers that have been pre-set to receive the Gospel broadcast when it is transmitted.

In May 1990, the first Xiao radio broadcasts went on the air. They reach the Xiao people five times a week for thirty minutes of explaining the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the language of the people. The broadcasts are timed to reach the people when they arrive home in the evenings from their day in the rice fields. These are the only radio broadcasts of any type in the language of the Xiao people.

As a result of our nonresidential missionary's lobbying efforts on behalf of the Xiao people, Campus Crusade for Christ's highly successful Jesus Film Project has agreed to move the Xiao translation of the Jesus Film to the status of #1 priority for Asia. With the help of the Jesus Film, many of the Xiao who are unable to read will be able to see and hear the life of Jesus portrayed in their own language before their very eyes.

Responding to a local request for English teachers, the nonresidential missionary has generated an English Language Institute project whereby three teams comprising 20-30 Christians will spend their summer living among the Xiao teaching English and sharing a witness face to face with the people.

Utilizing his mission board's intermediate term missions program, the nonresidential missionary has placed three seminary-trained young women each with 2 years of overseas cross-cultural missionary experience, in teaching assignments among the Xiao, sharing their faith in an appropriate manner with a goal of seeing indigenous Christian communities emerge.

Within three months they have led their first Xiao to Christ. By the end of the first year among the Xiao, the number of converts has risen to three. Each of the young missionary-educators

report their amazement with how hungry the people are to hear the gospel message.

In addition to these individual converts to Christ, the nonresidential missionary's contributions in terms of prayer, Scripture translation and Gospel radio broadcasting has created a "climate of evangelization" in which the Xiao are learning about the Gospel of Jesus Christ through a range of mediums for the first time.

As a result of many factors, including the work of the nonresidential missionary, recent political upheavals in the country, and most importantly the providence of God, changes are coming to the Xiao people.

In November 1989, roughly two years after the beginning of the nonresidential ministry to the Xiao, the senior pastor in the only open church in the capital city of the Xiao province reported that a great turning of the people is underway. Already across the province, 3000 people have been baptized into the church this year and scores more await baptism. This is more than four times the total number of baptisms from the previous year!

By June of 1990, the same senior pastor reported that God is working a remarkable work among the Xiao. They have become the fastest growing sector of the church in this multi-ethnic province. Their numbers have swollen from less than 13,000 to more than 30,000 over the past few years. The senior pastor knows nothing of the nonresidential missionary effort to reach his people, he is simply grateful that God has chosen to pour out his blessings on the Xiao people.

Prior to this nonresidential missionary's efforts, the Xiao were an unevangelized and largely unknown people for the outside Christian world. Today, they are the prayer focus of hundreds of churches and thousands of Christians around the world. And as a direct result of nonresidential missionary efforts, more than a dozen evangelical Christian agencies now have evangelistic ministries aimed at reaching the Xiao.

CONCLUSION

Hopefully, you now have a better understanding of nonresidential missions—its context, characteristics

and objectives. Due to the flexibility and scope of the nonresidential method, new developments in the program are unfolding every few weeks. Because nonresidential missionary practitioners wish to remain innovative and pragmatic, they have adopted a descriptive rather than prescriptive posture as they apply this concept to diverse settings the world over and continually monitor the effort to improve its effectiveness. With each passing month, it becomes more and more difficult to compile a survey of what even one nonresidential missionary has accomplished, much less a comprehensive overview of the work as it unfolds around the world.

One thing is clear: the nonresidential missionary approach is making a difference. Millions of persons who would otherwise be condemned to continue to wait for the Gospel message have received it through nonresidential missionary methods. Millions more have yet to have their chance. Since the concept was first launched in 1986, the number of nonresidential missionaries has increased steadily to the number at the time of this writing (July 1990) of nearly one hundred nonresidential missionaries living and or working in thirty countries from the Muslims of North Africa to the Indonesian archipelago projecting a Christian witness to nearly 200 million of the world's least evangelized cities and peoples. Despite the growing number of agencies and individuals committed to nonresidential missions, it is still true that only about one percent of the world's unevangelized peoples are currently engaged by nonresidential missionaries. ■

V. David Garrison has served as a foreign missionary in Hong Kong. He is currently director of nonresidential missions for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He, with his wife Sonia and son Jeremiah, lives in Richmond, Virginia, USA. Look for Garrison's new book Missions Beyond Boundaries late in 1990. Author's address: c/o Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230, USA.

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