

A Report of the Evangelical Missiological Society

By Michael Pocock, Vice President of Southwest Regional, EMS

The annual meeting of EMS meeting with ETS has just concluded in San Francisco. It was a tremendously stimulating time in addition to the usual benefits of renewed fellowship with other professors and mission thinkers. Every session of this meeting was germane to my own concerns as a professor of missions, well worth the investment of time and money to attend.

As was fitting on the 200th anniversary of William Carey's publication of his "Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen," Pres. Paul Beals drew lessons from Carey's life which should be pointed out to students on all our campuses in this bicentennial. (Or one could focus on him next year, the bicentennial of his departure to India and the start of the modern missionary movement.)

The participants had a fine opportunity to review the contribution of anthropology to the missionary effort both through a panel discussion and a presentation by Donald K. Smith. I was particularly impacted by the need to stay current in this field as the science is continually developing. Furthermore, of those who research and write in the field, missionary anthropologists are perhaps the best because they are exposed to their target culture for much longer periods than is typical of secular researchers and they normally can operate in the vernacular language. Anthropological insights can clearly assist us in understanding learning and decision making systems, and they can help us avoid merely surface changes which are not rooted in the cultural core of the world view held by the people.

For those who are still unfamiliar with the New Tribes Mission's great contribution to teaching the Bible through their "chronological approach" in "Building on Firm Foundations," Tom Steffens of Biola gave a very helpful review and critical analysis. (Write to New Tribes for further information on this system of teaching.)

John Kayser's (Prairie Bible Institute) presentation of carefully documented attrition factors and how they relate to missionary training needs serious consideration by both mission agencies and educators. In spite of a great deal of research there are still no foolproof tests for probable success in cross cultural work, but the worker who has learned how to learn will be most effective.

Once again, the tasks of inter-personal relationships, building trust and other skills were shown by Kayser to be developed best in an experiential context. Success in guided problem solving will give the confidence so frequently lacking among newer missionaries. Formal education is still necessary but, "The problem for missiological education is in the integration and implementation of both formal and non-formal education methodologies." Does that sound like more of us need to be taking our students into cross-cultural ministry situations which are carefully planned with a view to understanding the experience?

The Adopt-A-People Clearinghouse program headed by Frank Kaleb Jansen is moving ahead. They operate on the basis that there are now 6065 unreached peoples in the world, but *some* work has been started in 80% of those groups. The Adopt-A-People program has achieved 100 adoptions to date, and feel that things could be moving faster. Frank is looking ahead to what should be done *after* the goal of reaching every people has been realized. If the Lord does not return, next step will be the deeper diffusion of the Christian Gospel and teaching throughout all people groups. This may require a more holistic program than presently understood.

Briefly, the remainder of the program was just as stimulating as the foregoing. David Wells and Christy Wilson took a deep hard look at how growing pluralism may impact Christian missions. A general denigration of exclusivism could make us enemies to the culture at large in the days ahead.

Many of us who are teaching missions are already aware that a great deal of demographic information and mapping facilities are available to us in electronic data formulations. Global Mapping Inc. showed impressive services they can perform on behalf of missions teachers. They also explained a number of software packages which ought to be a part of our libraries or research facilities.

For those in the Southwest, prepare to attend the Southwest Regional meeting to be held in conjunction with the Regional ETS at Dallas Theological Seminary, March 5-6, 1993. Please note my annual report attached for details.

Also plan to attend the National Meeting of the EMS on Sept. 19-23, 1993 in Houston. We shall be meeting with the IFMA and the EFMA the 21-23, but

in order to get better fares and to take advantage of the International Society for Frontier Mission meeting the 19-20, we are starting a little earlier. This will enable professors to return for classes if you need to on Friday. I want to emphasize how important it is to interact with the mission executives who head up the organizations with which our graduates will work. This only happens once every three years. The other years we meet with ETS. Although the beginning of the school year is a difficult time, the opportunity will be worth the trouble. "Managing Diversity" will be the theme. In the Spring of 1992, the Southwest Regional scheduled a meeting, but due to a combination of the appointed venue becoming unavailable and some offers of papers being withdrawn, the event was canceled. A regional meeting is now scheduled to coincide with the regional ETS meeting, March 5-6, 1993 at Dallas Theological Seminary. The theme will be the teaching of spiritual warfare or power encounter courses in missions preparation. Papers will be welcome dealing with the following:

1. Documenting the need for such courses in missionary preparation.
2. The so-called "excluded middle" of the animistic world view. Are there any dangers that power encounter or deliverance ministries, (not necessarily synonymous) may adopt an animistic world view at the expense of truth?
3. Linking experience to cognitive input in spiritual warfare/power encounter courses. (Any room for internships here?)
4. Biblical analysis of practices such as "binding Satan" and the necessity or advisability of discovering demonic names or regional powers as a condition of successful missionary endeavor. ■

Offers of papers may be sent to Michael Pocock, Chairman, Department of World Missions, Dallas Theological Seminary, 3909 Swiss Ave, Dallas, TX 75204. Further details of the 1993 Spring Regional of the Southwest will be sent to all members in the Southwest in early January, 1993.