

In Others' Words

Editor's Note: In this department, we highlight resources outside of the IJFM: other journals, print resources, DVDs, websites, blogs, videos, etc. Standard disclaimers on content apply. Due to the length of many web addresses, we sometimes give just the title of the resource, the main web address, or a suggested search phrase.

Boko Haram Terror: Thousands Killed, Millions Flee

Boko Haram has recently expanded into Chad, killing eighteen and kidnapping nine women (“[Suspected Boko Haram Militants Kill 18 in Chadian Village](#)”). In the past nine years, more than 30,000 have been killed in Boko Haram’s relentless march to establish an Islamic caliphate made up of pieces torn from Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon. The violence and terrorism have forced more than 2.7 million people from their homes in a desperate flight for safety. See also the Council on Foreign Relations’ website for the background on “[Nigeria’s Battle with Boko Haram](#),” updated August 2018.

Boko Haram and Secularization: Is There a Connection?

Dave Datema, former General Director of Frontier Ventures, will be giving a talk entitled “Boko Haram as a Response to Secularization and the Implications for Mission Praxis,” at the upcoming Evangelical Missiological Society (EMS) meetings in Dallas, October 12–14. This year’s EMS theme is “[Mission and Evangelism in a Secularizing World](#).” The International Society for Frontier Missiology annual gathering, meeting jointly with the EMS, has chosen the theme “[Clarifying the Frontier Mission Task](#).” One new tool that should help clarify things is the brand new series of maps on [joshuaproject.org](#) showing where the largest “frontier” people groups are.

Nepal Reported to Have Fastest Annual Growth Rate of Christian Conversions in Asia

The *South China Morning Post* looks at the geopolitics surrounding Nepal, a country of concern to both India and China: “[How India and China Are Keeping the West Out in Nepal](#).” For China, Nepal represents the escape route for Tibetans fleeing Chinese rule. For India, Hindu conservatives are upset at the number converting to Christianity.

The Centre [*sic*] for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC), a US-based research group, lists Nepal as the Asian nation with the most accelerated rate of conversions. At 10.93%, it has the fastest average annual growth rate of Christian conversions in Asia. Currently comprising 3.8% of the Nepali population, the population of Christians is expected to double by 2020, which worries both India and China.

American Pastor Released from Prison to House Arrest in Turkey

On July 25, 2018, the Turkish government abruptly released Andrew Brunson, an American pastor who had been imprisoned in a Turkish prison for 22 months on false espionage charges. See the *Washington Post* August 15 article “[Why an American Pastor’s Imprisonment is at the Center of the US-Turkey Dispute](#).” *The New York Times* adds that more than 20 US (Turkish American) citizens and three Turkish American Embassy employees have also been detained in the past two years since the failed coup attempt.

Are Unreached People Groups Passé?

Don’t miss the article in *Missiology* (June 2018) by Lee and Park of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School entitled “[Beyond People Group Thinking: A Critical Reevaluation of Unreached People Groups](#).” The authors rehearse three (old) objections to unreached people group (UPG) thinking. The first objection is *theological*, and refers to what they claim is a dubious hermeneutic of “*panta ta ethne*.” The second is *cultural*, based on what they see as an outdated (and unbiblical) “essentialist” view of culture. The third is *strategic*, and is based on their reading of McGavran’s “homogenous unit principle” (HUP). Lee and Park reject the idea of mobilizing personnel and resources for the most unreached people groups. They reason that the emerging fellowships would be homogenous (not multicultural) and might perpetuate racism and division (instead of unity). These claims call for further interaction with the authors.

Further Reading for Different Takes on UPG Controversy

For different views on some of these same topics, we invite you to peruse this handful of articles. On hermeneutics and theology of *panta ta ethne*, see John Piper’s 1991 (but still relevant): “[Unreached Peoples: The Unique and Primary Goal of Missions](#).” You’ll find a lot of relevant articles in the *IJFM* archives. On culture, don’t miss Mark Pickett’s “[Ethnicity, Kinship, Religion, and Territory: Identifying Communities in South Asia](#),” which reflects an up-to-date and complex understanding of the overlapping boundaries of identity (*IJFM* 32:1). For more historical context and accuracy about UPGs and strategy, see “[The Legacy of Donald McGavran: A Forum](#)” in *IJFM* 31:2. In the same issue, you’ll find Harold Fickett’s piece on Winter’s Lausanne speech—a very [entertaining, but informative article](#) that puts Winter’s views on unreached peoples in context. Greg Parsons, former General Director of Frontier Ventures (the mission agency Winter founded) has written “[Will the Earth Hear His Voice? Is Ralph Winter’s Idea Still Valid?](#)” in *IJFM* 32:1. Lastly, see Dave Datema’s brief history of the development of the unreached people group concept in “[Defining Unreached: A Short History](#),” published in *IJFM* 33:2. **IJFM**