

ABUNDANT FRUIT

Fruitful methodologies

By James G. Smith, BBFI Associate Mission Director



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In the Baptist Bible Fellowship International, we specialize in cross-cultural church planting. We start with evangelism, then on to discipleship, which takes us to leadership development, at which point the church planting actually takes place. When it starts to work, church reproduction becomes the new goal and we start over. To do all that in a foreign language and culture means that before anything happens there needs to be fundraising, language proficiency, and cultural adaptation!

We wanted to know how our global partners in all parts of the world evaluate their own methodologies. We have some interesting conversations on this issue that we hope will encourage you to pray more effectively.

We are not looking for a scoreboard, comparing numbers or results, but rather a discussion about methods. In the business world, they talk about “Best Practices.” In Missiology, it has been called “Fruitful Practices.”

Let us make clear that we are not looking for short cuts. The work of the ministry in all of its components is too important to skip any of the essential steps. We are very grateful to the missionaries who took the time and made the effort to answer our questions and help us with the information on the next few pages.

We begin by emphasizing that

the basis of our cross-cultural church planting efforts is our dependence on the Holy Scriptures as the foundation of our belief system and our dependence on the Holy Spirit of God as our source of strength and divine guidance.

When we talk about fruit-bearing, we have entered into a very biblical theme. The individual Christian is instructed in scripture to bear fruit. I think we would all agree that fruit-bearing has two separate connotations in scripture. We exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. Fruits are results. The Christian, filled with the Spirit of God, will bear the fruit. That is, he will exhibit the results of the Holy Spirit in his life. Those results are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

Paul told the Philippians, in the context of his discussion of missionary offerings, that he wasn't looking for a gift. He was sure that their gifts were going to accrue eternal dividends and that the people who came to know the Lord as a result of his ministry were to be counted as fruit or profit to the account of those who gave and prayed. So that would be the fruit to which we refer in our discussion of abundant fruit-bearing.

After his initial meeting with the Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar, Jesus admonished His followers to lift up their eyes to see the fields ready for harvest. Probably what they saw as they

looked out across the agricultural fields, toward the city, was a large group of people who were coming to Jesus because of the witness of the “woman at the well.”

Jesus said in John 4:35-38:

“Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.”

There is a harvest of fruit that must be gathered. There are many people on their way to faith in the Savior all across the world because of the witness of the missionaries of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International. Every day, somewhere out there in the harvest, people are trusting in Christ while others are following in obedience and discipleship, and some are being trained for ministry. Through it all churches are being established.

We have some very thoughtful and gracious missionaries among us. We are happy to share this issue with you.

T BEARING

WHAT METHODS OR
ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS
HAVE PROVEN TO BE
FRUITFUL IN YOUR
CROSS-
CULTURAL
CHURCH
PLANTING?

Chris & Becky Taylor **BELGIUM**

We have seen steady attendance increases through big-day events at church with steady follow-up between events. We try to schedule a major event once a quarter, get current attenders to invite friends and family, and during preparation towards the next event follow up with earlier visitors. With this method we have seen our average attendance grow from 15 to 30 on Sundays and our big-event day attendance has grown from 45 to 70. We view this as steady growth which has resulted in a doubling of attendance.

Jordan & Nikki Nisly **PHILIPPINES**

As TEAM missionaries, we were largely utilizing methods and activities that had been developed over years of experience and passed on to us. It was an enlightening process to then work to apply those methods, often in crossing cultural, social, and financial boundaries within the larger Metro Manila area and to see what was most successful and fruitful for us in our church. What we found was that the activities and events that generated a very exciting and social atmosphere, those that cultivated a lot of personal relational time and those that developed a sense of community and belonging, seemed to be the most fruitful.

Clifford & Neoma McGhee **ECUADOR**

We used a program called *Poder Para Cambiar*. I am not sure where that title (Power to Change) came from, but for several weeks we trained the people that would man kiosks located near the central park of Sangolquí, the market, and one other highly congested area. With colorful kiosks, caps, t-shirts, and materials prepared, we manned our kiosks eight to ten hours a day (including Sunday) for two weeks straight. Using clipboards, tracts, and four prepared questions that would lead into a presentation of the gospel, we interviewed more than 4,000 people.

An interesting story that came out of that campaign was Carmela, an illiterate elderly woman who is really in love with our Savior. She attended all of the training sessions and eagerly went forth the first day. That evening at debriefing, Carmela was crying. We asked, "What is the problem, Carmela?" With tears streaming she cried, "I can lead them to Christ but I cannot write down their names!" We prayed for the solution and she came back the next day just beaming. She had recruited her neighbor, a recent convert, to accompany her and write down the results. Everyone was happy! That evening at debriefing, Carmela raised her hand and said, "Pastor, I have another problem!" "What problem might that be?" we asked. "All morning long my neighbor wrote as I led them to Christ. This afternoon she wanted to lead them to Christ!" Incidentally, through our literacy program, Carmela has learned to both read and write. Just about any day of the week you will find her at the La Victoria church praying, preparing Sunday school material, or whatever might be at hand.

Maudie Meek **COSTA RICA**

Since we first went to Chile 58 years ago, I'm sure some of the methods we used then would have to be changed. Our message does not change.

Our first church planted in Costa Rica was begun under a tent. Our ministry was training teachers, song leaders, preachers, preparing lessons, preparing music, sound systems, and light systems. Our first baptistry was a huge

plywood box using a long water hose to keep plenty of water in it as it leaked.

If I could say something to the young missionaries today it would be:

1. Never let your time with God diminish. Success will be according to your fellowship with God.
2. Learn the language regardless of how hard — learn the language.
3. Learn the culture. Do not think it is a waste of time to learn the culture. As you understand the language and culture you will be able to determine your methods.

Jim & Mary Blume **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

What works one time or in one place may not work in another time or place, even from one tour of duty to the next. But generally speaking the less I do for the nationals the better off they seem to be. The same Holy Spirit in me is also in them, so I let them go at it. If they make mistakes, we try to be there to help if they humble themselves later. We have tried all kinds of things with mixed results. One has to try to fit into their way of doing things and that can be frustrating to time-conscious Americans.



Steve & Marilyn Trask **BRAZIL**

Starting a church in a new neighborhood has been a fruitful method because the people are more open as they are starting a new phase of life. Also, the land is not as expensive. People in new neighborhoods seem to be more open to the gospel.

Bob & Dee Dodson **TANZANIA**

We have been in Tanzania since 1992. The first four months were taken up in Swahili language school. The rest of our two-year first term was trying to adapt to the culture and get accustomed to the language. We worked in the first church plant of our mission with fellow missionaries just one term ahead of us. We all were green. But we did not know it! The next term we were off on our own.

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe **AUSTRALIA**

The best way to get started is with activities that involve one-on-one relationships, such as: assisting with needs, meeting for a cuppa (cup of coffee) at the local coffee shops once a week, having pizza with the pastor.

The most effective outreach we have experienced thus far is for people to personally invite people in their circle of influence (99 percent of our church growth is a result of this method). It all goes back to building relationships. We just need Christians who are willing and committed to doing so.

Another outreach we are involved in is scripture in school. Hundreds of children are taught the Scriptures on a regular basis just in our one local public primary school. We are free to teach scripture (for now) but we are not free to proselytize or promote our church. Therefore it is a wonderful ministry but the results and impact are unknown. The kids do express their excitement when scripture time comes around and enjoy learning about God.

Also we are asked to give a Christmas or Easter message (brief) in the local public schools. This is for the whole student body, teachers, and parents that attend. The same rules apply, so unless we are approached outside of the school the results are unknown.

Brian & Rachael Weed **NICARAGUA**

For our ministry, the fruitful return on our time, finances, and sweat investment has been narrowed down to a few factors. Work ethic is important. As a missionary, no one is there to tell you, "Hey, get out of bed and get to work and, oh, by the way, here is your list of to dos for the day." So, work ethic is key. When other people haven't yet woken up or have already gone to bed, we need to be willing to work like a farmer in planting season. However, we don't do all the work by ourselves. We have found that it is better to train a force of nationals to evangelize, disciple, and church plant with us.

James & Lori Bradley **MEXICO**

We shop in the small neighborhood stores as much as we can and talk with the local people as much as possible, so we can be known.

Lance & Leah Patterson **PHILIPPINES**

In general, food. In Kenya, whenever we dedicated a building or had a special occasion we could nearly double our attendance. If we roasted a goat or prepared a stew people would come. It was a great way to make new contacts to follow up on. The same works in the Philippines generally.

We have started a new work with an aboriginal tribe of people called the Aetas in the Philippines. They are very poor, but have a government-built elementary school. One of the courses is religious education, but they had no one to teach it. So we met with the tribal council and offered to teach at the school. They agreed. That was our inroad into the village.

From there we began to bring food, medicine, and Bibles for people in need, for which they seem to be very appreciative. We've brought them rice and sardines, medicine for various ailments, and have taken two into town to see a doctor. In return they have given us coconuts, avocados, bananas, clams, and crabs, and they are coming to a Bible study each week. If they memorize some scripture verses, we reward them with a Bible.



Jim & Mary Blume **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

One has to be somewhat adaptable to the culture. We are seeing some Biblically based customs among Christians who have stepped totally out of the ancestral worship. Our goal is to get them out of the old pagan ways and into a Bible-based culture. One does not have to wear a suit and tie to preach. But we do have to have church during times that people can get home by dark, since they have to walk.

James & Lori Bradley **MEXICO**

From the beginning, we wanted our church plant to be a Mexican church, but we are first a biblical church and so we try to only incorporate practices or traditions that are okay from a biblical perspective.

Bob & Dee Dodson **TANZANIA**

The best thing for us was to be left alone with the Tanzanian believers. We did Bible studies in their homes. We preached in villages. We taught Bible classes in the primary schools. It was all in Swahili. By visiting in the homes we learned more about what it took to be a Tanzanian.

We came away realizing no matter how much we wanted to, we would never be exactly like them. It helped. They knew it already.

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA

We had to get an understanding of the “no-worries-mate” mentality. Some have come over to start an “American church” and that has worked against us because the Aussies in general don’t have a positive view of Americans. They look at Americans as rich and arrogant, and unfortunately many Americans who have come over have proven them right. So we have taken some insight from the current churches here and have adapted our church to match in some degree our culture, where appropriate and biblical to do so.

Chris & Becky Taylor BELGIUM

We have come to see that things in another culture are not wrong, they are just different and they function for that culture. I think it’s important to remember not to compare the culture we serve in with the culture that we come from because we tend to view the familiar through rose-colored glasses.

Steve & Marilyn Trask BRAZIL

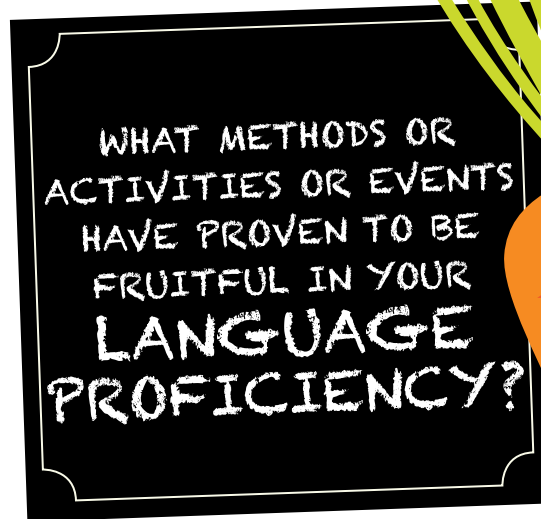
Brazilians by custom are open to Semana Santa (holy week) services so we have special Easter evangelistic services. Because family is also very important in the Latino culture, we have family related events – Mother’s Day, Family Day, Photo Day, Children’s Day. We are also aware of some anti-american sentiment and we are careful.

Brian & Rachael Weed NICARAGUA

We have learned to stay away from the temptation of North American clubs, ministries, etc. They can suck the ministry life out of you, as the enjoyment of “escaping” can become your consistent life before you know it. It would be easy to find yourself not ministering to the people that were once a part of your deputation videos and instead fellowship outside of the culture you were originally called to.

And he that reapeth receiveth wages,
and gathereth fruit unto life eternal:
**that both he that soweth and
he that reapeth may rejoice
TOGETHER.**

John 4:36



Bob & Dee Dodson TANZANIA

Learning the Swahili language was a priority. No lasting ministry will ever be accomplished without language skills. We found that showing them that we were trying, we were light years ahead of the guy with the tent traveling around preaching campaigns with an interpreter.

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA

Here, the people speak English, however, some words are different. Also words we find inappropriate in the States are acceptable here. It was difficult for a time not to take offence. So, we are having to look beyond the language and look at the heart of the person.

Chris & Becky Taylor BELGIUM

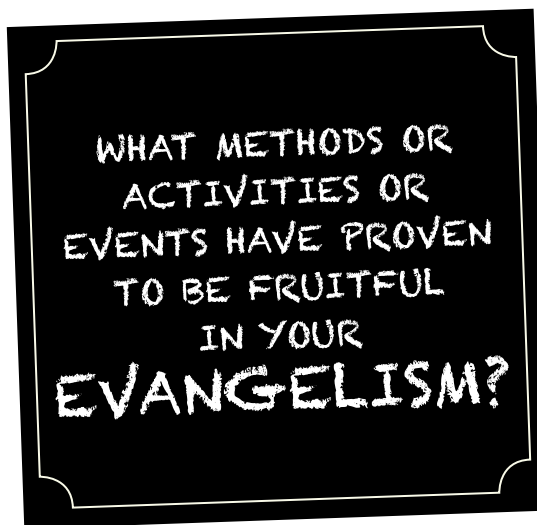
We have found that too many individuals who attempt to learn a language try to wait until they “know enough” to begin to speak or write. Reading will always come fastest amongst the Romanized languages. The key here is not to allow the fear of man to keep us immobilized in language learning and usage. We all make mistakes but we learn from them and move on.

Brian & Rachael Weed NICARAGUA
Sports Centers work well for us. We meet them head on and require them to attend church.

Randy & Sandy Roberts COSTA RICA
The three methods that have worked best for us in our ministry are: door-to-door evangelism, vacation Bible school, and special services, such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Labor Day (church picnic), and Friends Day.

Clifford & Neoma McGhee ECUADOR
One of our strategies has been to use evangelistic teams in the schools, public meeting places, and in the jungle villages. A team usually consists of about 12 people trained in puppets, mime, songs, games, but most importantly in using large, illustrated books to present the gospel. Many of the schools give us the entire student body for an hour so we use the above presentations for about 20 minutes to focus the crowd, then we tell the story from creation, fall, separation, and on to the crucifixion and resurrection. After the message, workers gather groups of those interested and for about 25 minutes clearly present the gospel. I think that our best year we personally presented the gospel to more than 3,000 people.

As a secondary blessing (leading people to Christ being primary), our five churches here in the valley and the church in Tena are well known by our communities.



Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA
Most Aussies are comfortable with their lives without Christ. Most are affluent and those that are not receive assistance from the government, so all their needs are taken care of apart from God. Church attendance is generally something you do when nothing else is happening on Sunday. Church worship is not top priority. So evangelism is even less of a priority. That responsibility is placed on the pastor and staff because they are "better equipped" to handle such matters. So we have tried different methods of outreach with a focus on fellowship to encourage building relationships so that we can get the opportunity to share Christ. Our church currently has a fellowship activity once a month. It may be a breakfast before church, family bowling, or a games night. We also set up a booth at every community event we can (school fetes, the local Rotary Club's fair, etc.).

Bob & Dee Dodson TANZANIA
Nothing is richer than leading a man, woman, boy, or girl to the Lord in his or her own language. What's as good but never mentioned is praying with them and knowing the Spirit is in your midst working. I am not talking some spooky crying or tongues — but when you feel in the inner man the Spirit change how you phrase a prayer of faith to fit the need of those in the room with you. In both cases, please know that our work is godly work. And God must work in and through us.

That is why we willingly submit to the embarrassing process of learning a new language, talking like children at first and slowly proceeding.

James & Lori Bradley MEXICO
We have taught and trained the people in our church to witness, provided them with materials, and encouraged them in evangelism. We praise God in church every time someone is led to the Lord during the week.

Jim & Mary Blume PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Balance and patience is the key. High-pressure salesmanship is a waste of time in our culture. In the oriental mindset, one will tell you whatever he thinks you wish to hear, just to be polite. Plus there is the communal mindset that keeps people from following the Lord unless the clan approves. If the clan disapproves, the social pressure can be unimaginable to a Westerner's mind. Tribal societies are very complex.

We have found that just plain preaching is the best method. Having a conversation with people, one on one, still works but it takes lots of time. I estimate that 40 to 50 percent of professions of faith are false. Folks just want to add another god to their list or get some material benefit from the white man. One has to be constantly repeating the basics of the gospel until they get a conviction of sin. We give out lots of tracts. People here will take them. They especially like the Chick booklet tracts. We talk to people in the everyday course of living. Meeting people at the stores and workshops is a good method. I use flashcard stories a lot in the villages.

We are allowed to teach religious instruction in the public schools, so we take advantage of that all we can to instill the Bible into the minds of young people. The most number of kids saved comes from the school classes, although we do not get very many church members from that ministry. Vacation Bible schools have been great evangelistic tools.

WHAT METHODS OR
ACTIVITIES OR
EVENTS HAVE PROVEN
TO BE FRUITFUL
IN YOUR
DISCIPLESHIP?

Bob & Dee Dodson TANZANIA

Whether personally walking with men and teaching as we do ministry or in a classroom situation the language is important. We must spend time with men and women for them to see Jesus in us and at work in us.

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA

We have a mid-week Bible study in which we take a book of the Bible and work through it verse by verse. Through this we encourage our people to share what they have learned with others. It has been encouraging to see them grow and be excited about God's word.

James & Lori Bradley MEXICO

We use a discipleship book for one-on-one discipleship outside of church services, at a time when it is convenient for them to participate.

Randy & Sandy Roberts COSTA RICA

We have four methods which have all shown good results:

1. Discipleship class
2. Small groups
3. Missions conference
4. Bible seminary

Jim & Mary Blume PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Discipleship can take ages, it seems. If a new convert can read then we try to get them into a basic course for new Christians. Many folks here are illiterate and so getting them to come to meetings is a big help. Youth camps work great here. We have bi-weekly youth get-togethers with those from nearby churches. Ladies' and men's retreats have been a very good means to get people under sound teaching. Special speakers also work well to get folks to come to meetings of all kinds. Folks will sit and listen for hours to a good story. Talking is still the main form of entertainment. I use a chalkboard a lot wherever I can set one up.

Steve & Marilyn Trask BRAZIL

We have had success in discipleship by having evening classes held for new converts in the church building or in a home.

WHAT METHODS OR
ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS
HAVE PROVEN TO BE
FRUITFUL IN YOUR
LEADERSHIP
DEVELOPMENT?

Bob & Dee Dodson TANZANIA

We have discovered that leadership comes at a cost. We have slowly seen that our leaders HAVE to make mistakes and pay for them before they will learn. Teachable moments come after the fact. If we coddle they never grow. Those that come through the process are well-equipped leaders.

We are training what few men we can get in pastoral classes. I believe that this WILL pan out in the long run. We now require the men to pay their way to and from the classes. They are in class for two weeks (away from home and ministry). But the progress is measurable. Later, some of these men will be teachers. Bible Training Centre for Pastors (BTCP) is a program EVERY mission field should look at and evaluate. It is as good as the content I got at BBC back in the day. If it is in your language consider using it!

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA

We start off small, asking individuals to participate in the service in some small way (set-up, tear-down, praying, announcements, etc.). Once they have shown willingness to get involved, then we move on to developing them in the areas of leadership by giving them greater responsibilities and the resources to carry out those responsibilities (Bible study leader, children's church teacher, etc).

Steve & Marilyn Trask **BRAZIL**

We have our Bible institute students or graduates brought into the new church plant and help them until the new church plant can take them on part-time or full-time.

James & Lori Bradley **MEXICO**

We have taught several Bible institute level classes which have elevated the skills and knowledge of our leaders.

Randy & Sandy Roberts **COSTA RICA**

We have used three methods of leadership development that I feel have been successful.

1. Mentoring one-on-one

Sharing life and ministry with specific men, one at a time.

2. Pastoral Ministry

As God calls men into the ministry, I give them a specific ministry in which to work. We meet as a group every month to

give an account of our various ministries and how to improve. We have divided up the ministries like this: Finances, Evangelism, Visitation, Discipleship, Special Days and Events, Sunday School and Children's Ministries. Every four months they rotate ministries. This gives each one very practical ministry experience. Each one is placed on the preaching schedule as well. After each one preaches, he spends personal time with me and we go over the message. At the end of the monthly meeting, all the pastors critique each other.

3. Bible Seminary

Jim & Mary Blume **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

Leadership development takes much wisdom, because naturally strong leaders are not always the most spiritually minded guys. In this society, boys are very undisciplined. So, one has to have a good balanced hand of training to keep

them from "losing face," but yet keep on after failures. We lose about 70 percent of our disciples, mostly to the temptations of youth. So, we have found that admitting mostly married men to Bible school is a big help. Smaller classes seem to work best because one can have more personal input with each student. Sticking with the fundamentals has been good for us. Degrees and diplomas seem to only swell most men's heads with pride. Some of our best soul winners and church planters are men with no "higher" education. That is not to say we have no well-educated leaders but they are few. In the past, we have had good success with night classes at the church open to everybody. Some very good lay preachers have come from that ministry. One man has started several churches as a result of that program. Villages love to have fellowship meetings in which people will come from far and wide, pagans and Christians alike.

WHAT METHODS OR
ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS
DID NOT
PRODUCE THE
DESIRED
FRUIT?
WHY DO YOU THINK
THAT HAPPENED?

James & Lori Bradley **MEXICO**

We had some youth coming to our monthly youth events and once had a special speaker. After this, most of them never came back. I had told the man that we only give a 10 to 15-minute devotional for these kids who do not attend church. He preached a 45-minute sermon and lost their attention. Lesson learned: special speakers are sometimes only special to themselves.

Bob & Dee Dodson **TANZANIA**


One easy answer is the Jesus film. In Kenya they found out about ten years ago when the totals from all the Jesus film campaigns were in they had led more than the population of the country to Jesus. We had over 1,500 converts in a campaign we did several years ago. I know of one man who is in church today as a result of that campaign.

Also, bringing in evangelism groups from the states did not work. They used the gospel cube, or tracts, or some other method. They just could not reach the

heart. Boots on the ground long term still works better.

In East Africa there is a cottage industry in bringing people from the States to teach nationals, pastors, ladies, teens etc. My personal investigation has found the industry to be very management top heavy. It costs a lot of money. Our American microwave discipleship or evangelism breeds East African businessmen. We line their pockets. We feel good when we leave. But after the jetway pulls away from the plane, they are already calling another dupe in the States inviting him to come.

A while back an ambassador from a northern European country came out in the news and told the Tanzanians that this country loves seminars. After the seminar the Tanzanians go back to whatever practice they had before. They all attended and they answered correctly. They also ate well at all the meals freely offered. I have counseled Peace Corp people who spent a year or two on a project in a village, with water, cooking,



WHAT METHODS OR ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS HAVE PROVEN TO BE FRUITFUL IN YOUR CHURCH PLANTING?

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe **AUSTRALIA**

Church planting is a long-term process. Because of a lack of desire among Aussies to attend church and even a lesser desire to get involved in the ministry, a church plant will take many years to reach its full potential. Some of this is dependent upon the area in which the church is planted. I have found that the areas with a higher concentration of immigrants

solar, grinding meal, etc. They left the country. Some time later they returned and found all their work for naught. Maybe we can learn from this.

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe **AUSTRALIA**

One of the common methods to introduce your church to your community is through letterboxing. We are allowed here to distribute flyers in mailboxes. This past year we were changing the times of our service and thought we would give this a try. We spent a lot of money on printing and distribution and had no results whatsoever. We have had little results from door knocking. In fact, most are offended when bothered. As a culture, Aussies are just not interested in spiritual things unless something drastic happens in their lives.

have a tendency to grow much quicker than those predominantly Australian. There seems to be a higher respect for religion in other cultures than in Australia. So church planting requires patience and much prayer.

James & Lori Bradley **MEXICO**

We planted our church where there was no gospel presence. We started with English classes to show we are there to help. We had a Kids' Club to help parents with their children.

Brian & Rachael Weed **NICARAGUA**

Church reproduction is a team sport. It is necessary to have a team of nationals that are on board with the idea and are willing to work. The nationals that we have been called to work with are just as called of God as we are. So, yes, they can evangelize, disciple, lead, and pastor with or without me.

Jim & Mary Blume **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

Church planting works differently in every location. Since we live in a gold town there are people from many different tribal groups. We have as many as a dozen different language groups

represented in our church. Many of the men who were won to the Lord in forestry plantations later came to Bible school and then took the gospel back to their villages. It is very difficult to get into a village without someone to invite you in for a visit. I have started a couple of village churches with a handful of believers who had been won to the Lord in our town church. But it took several years to grow to the point they could call a pastor. I found that if we had a national pastor from the very start the church would grow stronger in the same amount of time.

For us it has been best to let a national start the church and we missionaries stay as far in the background as possible. We want them to depend on the Lord and not the American dollar.

Steve & Marilyn Trask

BRAZIL

We have had success by starting in the home of a solid church family who has moved to another area of the city, or another village, or new state.

Lance & Leah Patterson **PHILIPPINES**

We wanted to provide Bibles for everyone, but I didn't want people to take a gift for granted, so we purchased the Bibles for 600 shillings each, and sold them for 100. The word got out and we had people coming wanting to buy ten Bibles. I would only allow one each, but they would buy them and then sell them for a profit and never come back. So we quit doing that.

Chris & Becky Taylor **BELGIUM**

Holding events that specifically correlated with Catholic holidays did not produce any results as most individuals went out of country for their long weekends or holiday weeks. Discover the religious days and holidays of the new culture and avoid them in the activity

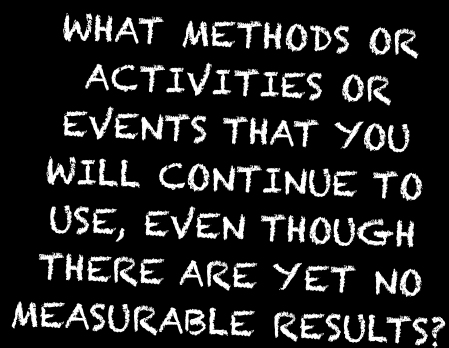
department if outreach is the goal of the activity. If "in-reach" is the goal, then by all means use those days for that purpose.

Steve & Marilyn Trask **BRAZIL**

Giving away chocolate candy on Easter didn't work. Giving away awards for the one who brought the most visitors only caused problems.

Brian & Rachael Weed **NICARAGUA**

Mass evangelism is typically a fail in Nicaragua. Yep, we have spoken to 3,000 teens in a day, and yep, 500 "accepted Christ." Where are they on Sunday morning? Not at church! So, we have gone back to the one-on-one evangelism as this produces the fruit.



WHAT METHODS OR
ACTIVITIES OR
EVENTS THAT YOU
WILL CONTINUE TO
USE, EVEN THOUGH
THERE ARE YET NO
MEASURABLE RESULTS?

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA

Being involved in community events (school projects and fetes, Rotary fairs, community fetes, etc.), inviting people over for dinners or parties/celebrations, signage, offering assistance to those in need, church fellowship activities – each of these build relationships and through these relationships seeds can be planted even though we may not see the result until we get to heaven.

Jim & Mary Blume PAPUA NEW GUINEA

One of the methods I will continue to use that seems on the surface to have no measurable results is the distribution of tracts – because that is sowing the seed of the Word. One plants and another waters. I will also continue to be active with children’s ministries, because, again, one is sowing the seed that may take years to bear fruit, but it will in time.

Bob & Dee Dodson TANZANIA


I would use Bible Training Centre for Pastors (BTCP) sooner!

Dwayne & Valerie Keefe AUSTRALIA

Team missions. Because Australia is a difficult field it is easy to get discouraged. Also, because of the apathy of Christians, most of the work and responsibility of the church is placed on our shoulders and it can be easy to burn out. It would be great to have another couple to come alongside to assist with the workload and to be able to encourage one another. When one falls another can lift him up the Scriptures tell us. Also, it would enable furloughs to be more frequent and productive knowing you have someone that is familiar with your ministry looking after it in your absence. To have someone to come alongside to assist with the day-to-day ministry would be a tremendous blessing.

Brian & Rachael Weed NICARAGUA

Raise more funds as growing a ministry in a third-world environment is crazy expensive.



IF YOU WERE
TO START OVER,
WHAT WOULD
YOU DO
DIFFERENTLY?

James & Lori Bradley MEXICO

I would teach and organize weekly visitation sooner. Our church does well in giving to missions as we taught the Great Commission early on. But we still struggle with people wanting to come with us to make visits.

Jim & Mary Blume PAPUA NEW GUINEA

If I were to start over I would probably be a little more forceful in raising financial support and a little more diplomatic about a few things. But more or less I would do it the same way, because I was taught the Bible way to start with.

Steve & Marilyn Trask BRAZIL

If we were to start over, I would like to have a team effort. That is not possible if there are no missionary candidates!

MEASURING THE HARVEST

By James G. Smith

In this “Global Partners” we wanted to open a discussion on methodologies that might be helpful for each of our ministries. When we talk about fruitful practices, we acknowledge that the Lord of the harvest is the one who produces the fruit. We think that all of our global partners are in agreement with the concept that we are laborers and co-laborers, but the results, the fruit, the harvest ... that is on Him!

If some practices are working somewhere in the harvest, maybe those practices or strategies could work in our assigned area as well. If possible, we would like to avoid the comparisons that take place when we talk about our diverse ministries. We have some hard-working missionaries, totally committed to the task, who do not enjoy the same results that others do. I hope we are able to see that.

At some point in our evaluation of fruit, let's not forget that a consideration

of the soil must be given. Jesus clearly told us that not all soil would be the same. If we have a family who firmly believes it is God's will for them to be in a difficult part of the harvest, they should receive our encouragement, not our mockery or censure.

So we continually strive for more effective methods because we really do want God to be glorified. We understand that effectiveness cannot be the single measure by which we judge a ministry successful or worthy of support.

As we ponder the effectiveness of our methods, let's be cautious and gracious. Effectiveness is not easily measured from afar. There is so much more to missionary ministry than the scorecard at the end of a Sunday, a financial report at the end of the quarter, or the next furlough video presentation.

The BBFI pastors who make up the committees examine the candidates and approve those who meet the

qualifications. They are then sent by their churches to raise the funds necessary to live and serve in their particular city and country. The churches of the BBFI have the distinction of choosing which missionaries they want to support financially and prayerfully.

Armed with a clear sense of direction from the Lord, the backing of his or her sending church, and the prayerful and financial support of his or her supporting churches, the missionary then gets down to the business of crossing cultures and overcoming linguistic and cultural boundaries with the purpose of establishing and building local churches.

Let's work together as partners in the task of fulfilling the Great Commission. Let's keep our eyes on the prize at the finish line – when people from every tribe and nation and tongue will gather around the throne and together glorify the Lamb of God!

