



# FUNDING SPONTANEOUS EXPANSION

FOUR CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS  
OF THE COMPLEX NETWORK  
OF THE EARLY CHURCHES



A BILD ENCYCLICAL BY JEFF REED

Jeff Reed

President and CEO, BILD International

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“Aid has been, and continues to be, an unmitigated political, economic, and humanitarian disaster for most parts of the developing world.”<sup>1</sup> Dambisa Moyo

I first encountered the bankrupt nature of the world of Western relief and development in 1988 when I attended the Lake Wales Consultation in Wheaton, Illinois, with Dr. Ted Ward. Ted did his best to expose me to a broad range of experiences as I began testing the Church-Based Theological Education (C-BTE) paradigm on major elements of modern evangelicalism—Christian and theological education associations, mission think tanks, and relief and development consultations. These were his territory. And part of his "education of me" was to expose me to environments he knew would both motivate me and put my ideas to the test. From that consultation onward, I have wrestled with the complexity of the relief and development world. I left that consultation thinking that not a single agency really believed in networks of churches as God's distribution system to meet major relief and development needs around the world. Instead, the time there was spent discussing how relief and development agencies could add discipleship to their agenda, in the wake of their often-intense global relief efforts. But they possessed a narrow understanding of discipleship as an individualistic Western enterprise and had virtually no understanding of the centrality of networks of churches in God's plan. What do I mean by "networks of churches as God's distribution system"? That will be unfolded in this encyclical.

A recent experience confirms my first experience 24 years ago. I am involved in the Haiti Initiative based out of New York City, in which we have a partnership with a growing number of Haitian churches in the burroughs of New York City. I reluctantly agreed to be part of the Haiti

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<sup>1</sup> *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*, by Dambisa Moyo (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009). Of Dambisa Moyo, the enormously influential economist from Harvard, Niall Ferguson wrote in the Foreword, “Born and Educated in Zambia, Dambisa Moyo also brings to her subject a rare combination of academic expertise and ‘real world’ experience. Her training in economics took her from the World Bank to Harvard and on to Oxford, where she obtained her doctorate. Since leaving the academy, she has spent eight highly successful years at Goldman Sachs, most recently as Global Economist and Strategist. It is quite a CV.”

Initiative, which is made up of a coalition of eight ministry spheres and many more ministry partners—a majority are USA-based relief and development NGOs. The Antioch School has essentially become the pastoral training track for Haiti, because our partnership with Haitian churches in NYC preceded the coalition. I also agreed this summer to participate in a 2-day strategy session with key players in the coalition, only to discover that almost everyone in the room represented a Western aid organization, a Western system that is truly sinking, as the Western Church declines and the Global South Church emerges. A case can be made that Western NGOs have ruined Haiti, the former jewel of the Caribbean. Now, by some estimation, 75% of the population are dependent on Western aid.<sup>2</sup> In the two-day discussion, it was clear, whether USAID, Western NGOs, or a few new creative organizations, no one understood the power of complex networks of churches or even gave a token nod to the centrality of church networks in the unfolding plan of God. And again, by the end of the two days, I was unable to remain silent!

This disaster in helping disasters has been known for a long time. There has been a very significant intensification of global conversation in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The conversation has been shaped by the United Nations and its millennium development goals (MDG).<sup>3</sup> Five dominant positions are emerging,<sup>4</sup> filled with good research and ideas. Yet amidst all of these, a growing critique has emerged that concludes that the entire post-World War II international architecture must be radically rethought.

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<sup>2</sup> See *Haiti: The Tumultuous History—From Pearl of the Caribbean to Broken Nation*, Philippe Girard (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 2010, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> See [un.org/millenniumgoals](http://un.org/millenniumgoals).

<sup>4</sup> At least five major positions have emerged:

1. A populist solution—“Let’s End Poverty” (Bono, One.org). See *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time* (Penguin, 2005) and *Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet* (Penguin 2008) both by Jeffrey Sachs. Sachs is at Columbia University and has been a Special Advisory to the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan.
2. A global government solution—Oppression of the poor countries by the West, especially the USA; retool World Bank, IMF and follow through on UN’s Millennium goals. See *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, by Paul Collier (Oxford, 2007). Collier is professor of Economics at Oxford and former director of Development Research at the World Bank.
3. A business solution—Micro-business, micro-finance, entrepreneurship, and economic development. See *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty Through Profits* by C. K. Prahalad (Prentice Hall, 2010, 2012). Prahalad was at the University of Michigan as Professor of Strategy at the Ross School of Business.
4. A global networking solution—Megacommunities from the combined effort of government, business, and nonprofits. See *Megacommunities: How Leaders of Government, Business and Nonprofits Can Tackle Today’s Global Challenges Together*, by Mark Gerencser, Reginald Van Lee, Fernando Napolitano, and Christopher Kelly (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). This is a large-scale approach to creating social capital through large-scale community networks.
5. A deep culture solution—Deep elements of the culture must be changed or there will not be significant change. See *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the Western World*, by Gregory Clark (Princeton and Oxford, 2007).



Indeed, the entire international economic architecture established after World War II—the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and what is now called the World Trade Organization—is buckling under the weight of globalization, trade disputes, and the ambitions of rising economic powers in Asia and elsewhere, experts and policy makers said.<sup>5</sup>

Collier, in his brilliant work *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What To Do About It*, makes the following observations.

For forty years the development challenge has been a rich world of one billion people facing a poor world of five billion people... By 2015, however, it will be apparent that this way of conceptualizing development has become outdated... The real challenge of development is that there is a group of countries at the bottom that are falling behind, and often falling apart.<sup>6</sup>

The entire relief-development system, and it is a global system, of which Christian NGOs are deeply integrated at a paradigm level, is failing and needs to be radically rethought. Two books are key to this critique: Easterly's *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*<sup>7</sup> (the title tells the story) and Moyo's *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*. Listen to Moyo's critique.

But has more than US\$1 trillion in development assistance over the last several decades made African people better off? No. In fact, across the globe the recipients of aid are worse off; much worse off. Aid has helped make the poor poorer, and growth slower. Yet aid remains the centerpiece of today's development policy and one of the biggest ideas of our time.<sup>8</sup>

As Niall Ferguson of Harvard points out in his forward to her book,

Between 1970 and 1998, when aid flows to Africa were at their peak, the poverty rate rose from 11 per cent to a staggering 66 per cent.<sup>9</sup>

And Jan Egeland adds to the picture in his very insightful work, *A Billion Lives: An Eyewitness Report from the Frontiers of Humanity*.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup> From "3 Global Financial Institutions' Roles Questioned," by Steven R. Weisman, Published: May 23, 2007, *NY Times*.

<sup>6</sup> *Bottom of the Pyramid, op.cit.*

<sup>7</sup> *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*, by William Easterly (Penguin Press, 2006). Easterly is professor of Economics at New York University.

<sup>8</sup> *Dead Aid, op. cit.*, Introduction xix.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Jan Egeland, *A Billion Lives: An Eyewitness Report from the Frontiers of Humanity*, by Jan Egeland (Simon and Schuster, 2008), p. XII. Egeland is Director General of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and served as the UN Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and its Emergency Relief Development Coordinator.

A billion lives are still at stake at humanity's front lines. This is the number of fellow human beings without drinking water, daily food, or even a dollar a day to survive on.

Egeland also stated the following, from his vast global experience in relief-development. It serves this paper as sort of a base level acknowledgement of the power of a church-based complex network, which builds a church-based complex network of benefactor communities within every city, town, and village.

All over Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East, I could see how religious groups, women's groups, peasant groups, student groups, and trade unions stand up for human rights, for local development.<sup>11</sup>

There have also been two books written by Christian authors in the last three years: *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself* and *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help*.<sup>12</sup> These books are primarily written to churches to begin to free them from this massive Western aid system. While they are full of good insights, on the same trajectory of this paper, they have failed to grasp the "power of the paradigm" of the Western aid system and run the risk of simply rearranging the chairs on the Titanic.

In this paper, we are building a model that benefits from the development conversation at all levels. However, we approach it from a radically different paradigm—a whole new approach. We will draw on many insights that have grown out of the intense decade-long conversations, and many of the large-scale experiments, such as the micro-business/micro-lending enterprise, and while building into our model, we will introduce you to what we are calling a second generation approach called BoP—Bottom of the Pyramid—investing. We will show how Egeland's call to local development will work itself out in the merging of the massive yet still emerging research on the global cities matrix and the complex networking research with the shadow city phenomenon, to form a new "Roman Road" strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We believe Christian relief-development NGOs must either be completely dismantled or radically retooled<sup>13</sup> to pave the way for a new church-based approach to complex networking, mapping their movements consistent with globalization in a post-modern technological society.

I know what some of you are thinking, either hearing this presentation for the first time or reading this article: "Jeff, I often agree with your critiques and appreciate your ministry, but why must you be so

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 233.

<sup>12</sup> *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Moody, 2009) and *Yourself*, and *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help*, by Robert Lupton (HarperOne, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> Steve Kemp was recently in a conversation with the president of a major Christian relief-development NGO and while he agreed with many of our "church-based" ideas, he essentially said that the major Christian NGOs are "too big to fail."

combative? Why must your critiques be so sweeping?" The reason centers on the reality that Western organizations, institutions, NGOs, and parachurch organizations are sort of a fraternity—making creative adjustments, yes, but failing to radically rethink their entire paradigm. And at times, if not able to absorb a radical new enterprise, they will go on the attack. It's just the way it is. Roland Allen was right when he stated that there are two systems in the world of Christendom today: the Western system, which is cumbersome and alien to the New Testament, and the simple "way of Christ and His Apostles."<sup>14</sup> I am by no means questioning the sincerity or the creativity of those involved in these Western enterprises.

This is the fifth in a series of six articles written under the branding of a modern-day encyclical, designed to circulate among church networks, around the world, who are involved with BILD.<sup>15</sup> These encyclicals are complements to *The Paradigm Papers*. Both sets contain a core collection of six papers, intended to carefully examine modern Western paradigms against the paradigm of the early churches and how they progressed the gospel. *The Encyclicals* have a narrower focus than *The Paradigm Papers*, specifically focusing on the vast new literature on the Greco-Roman social aspects of the early churches. A vast amount of literature brings the early churches into a clarity never before seen in the modern world, and it sheds a significant amount of light in this time of enormous transition, as Christianity shifts from the North to the South. This shift is so massive that it demands we revisit the Apostolic Age of the early churches, seeking to rediscover its secrets in developing a spontaneously expanding complex network that turned the entire world upside down.

I have chosen to focus on relief and development enterprises in this introduction, but the topic of this paper sweeps across all our Western institutions and their expensive habits. This paper, more than any of the others, has radical implications for how we spend our Western wealth. There is plenty of challenge here for all the Western Church.

- North American churches need to heed the call of this paper and radically restructure their budgets. They must stop spending their money primarily on themselves and their expensive "ministry paradigms." Instead, they must focus on participating in the progress of the gospel—locally, nationally, and globally.

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<sup>14</sup> Roland Allen.

<sup>15</sup> All of these encyclicals deal directly with the early churches and much of the confusion in our Western churches today, who have drifted a long way from the "way of Christ and His Apostles." The six main paradigm papers deal with creating radically new paradigms for theological education, missions, hermeneutics, theological encyclopedia, and Christian education. The encyclicals deal with the early churches as simple churches in a complex network, as kerygmatic communities. Then there are four corollary issues: from Jesus to the Gospels and the discipleship confusion; the role of women in the churches; money and the churches; and the final paper will be on counseling, shepherding, and the early churches. The listing of the two collections can be found in the appendix of this paper. One final note: The *BILD Leadership Series I and II* are designed to guide one in doing Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral work in the issues raised by *The Paradigm Papers* and *The Encyclicals*.

- North America ministry enterprises—educational institutions, para-church organizations, relief and development organizations, and mission agencies—all need to heed the call of this paper to radically rethink their expensive Western methods and systems in favor of the simple and inexpensive methods of the complex network of the early churches. The methods of the early churches are perfectly suited to help accelerate the spontaneous expansion of the Church in this amazing age of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- North American donors must understand the power of complex networks of churches and seek to align their giving with Global South church networks who are seeking to shed their Western addictions in favor of self-sustaining movements built around the “way of Christ and His Apostles.” Empowering a network of churches will yield high impact and lasting results from their giving.
- Global South churches need to revisit the network of the early churches in a very serious way, shedding the temptation to build expensive Western systems and to depend on the West to finance them. Instead, they must seek to build a completely new system based on four critical success factors that were evident in the complex network of the early churches.
- Global Pentecostals—the final challenge is for you: You are driving much of the progress of the gospel in the Global South.<sup>16</sup> Yet up to this date, I know of only a couple serious attempts to grapple with the way the early churches funded the spontaneous expansion of the gospel—the four critical success factors we will explore. Because of failing to carefully examine the New Testament in these areas, the door has been opened wide for a heresy of the worst kind—the “prosperity gospel.” This gospel replaces the true prosperity experienced in the early churches with a shallow, false prosperity, which is preached to people without hope at the “bottom of the pyramid” globally. That concept will be developed fully in the latter part of this paper.

Things are going to change. The West is in decline, as is the Western Church. Asia is rising, especially China and India. It is a new day. Our expensive institutions are on their last breath. *We* cannot afford them,

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<sup>16</sup> I am aware of at least four major books written in the last two years on global Pentecostalism. Their titles alone show the maturing of the movement. They are well worth reading for anyone desiring to understand and grow with the movement. Global Pentecostals are often closer to the “way of Christ and His Apostles” than evangelical churches, so it is valuable reading for evangelicals as well. The four include: *Beyond Pentecostalism: The Crises of Global Christianity and the Renewal of the Theological Agenda*, by Wolfgang Vondey (Eerdmans, 2010); *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing*, by Candy Gunther Brown (Oxford University Press, 2011); *Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy*, by James K. A. Smith (Eerdmans, 2010); *Studying Global Pentecostalism: Theories and Methods*, edited by Allan Anderson, Michael Bergunder, Andre Droogles and Cornelis Van Der Laan (University of California Press, 2010).

let alone the emerging churches of the Global South. And they are not effective. My prayer is that we can make the needed adjustments in order to use our wealth in effective ways to partner with this emerging church before it is too late and we have wasted our opportunity. That day is nearer than we think!

One final thought before examining the issues of this encyclical. This paper is not theory. It has grown out of careful biblical theology work and a sustained real time conversation over a 13-year period. It has been book ended by conversations with Tom McCallie of The Maclellan Foundation and numerous conversations in between when Tom helped me think through many issues of large-scale funding. I produced a comprehensive teaching series from these conversations, which led to rethinking the entire paradigm of money and the early churches, and a tool for developing benefactors in our churches called *Seek the Welfare of the City: Citizenship, Benefactors, and Money*.<sup>17</sup> In addition, this encyclical has grown out of the experience of our own church (as have all our resources), which is now a network of churches. I delivered a 3-part series on money and the early churches as the final issue we dealt with before restructuring our church into a network of churches.<sup>18</sup> In addition, we formed a benefactor team in our church six years ago, which has provided a wealth of experience on the issues of this paper.<sup>19</sup>

## **The Four Critical Success Factors**

In this article, I am proposing that there were four critical success factors that resulted in successfully funding the spontaneous expansion of the complex network of the early churches,<sup>20</sup> which literally expanded for 300 years until it reached a tipping point in the Roman Empire—quite a feat! Let me begin by stating my basic thesis and then listing the four factors.

### **Basic Thesis**

There were four critical factors to successfully funding the spontaneous expansion of the complex network of the early churches. They are key to similar success in every subsequent generation and vitally important to the successful progress of the

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<sup>17</sup> This tool is available through BILD International in a notebook that includes a workbook and 11 messages on DVD. It will soon be available as an interactive website designed to assist pastors, church planters, and apostolic team leaders in developing benefactor teams to resource their efforts in accelerating the progress of the gospel through their church networks, church plants, and mission enterprise partners.

<sup>18</sup> This series will be available soon to accompany the encyclical.

<sup>19</sup> Our benefactor team has anchored our church's response to the need presented to us by our global partners by giving over \$3 million dollars over the last 6 years, matching our general budget. This is from a relatively small number of givers, in a church of less than 400, who have all given sacrificially. These ideas work!

<sup>20</sup> The complex network of the early churches is a concept I developed in an earlier encyclical entitled *The Churches of the First Century: From Simple Churches to Complex Networks*. It is foundational to this encyclical, which builds on it, assuming an understanding of the concepts there in order to fully grasp the ideas of this encyclical.



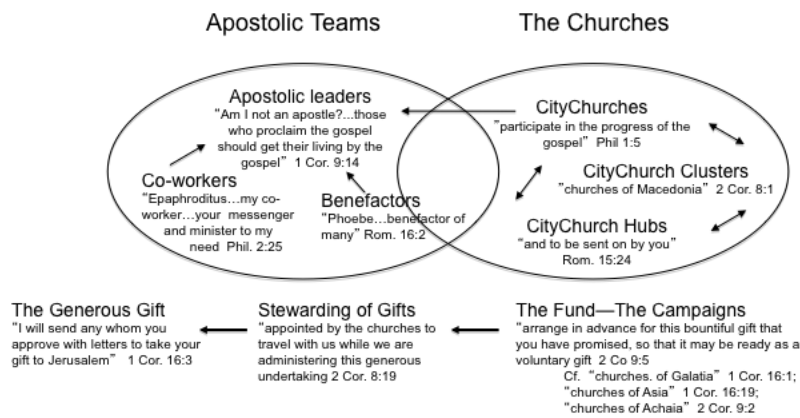
gospel in the emerging church of the Global South, early in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

#### 4 Critical Success Factors

1. **The Churches.** The churches participated in supporting those who had apostolic ministry among them. They were responsible stewards of the money they collected, ensuring it got where it needed to go. Strategic hub churches invested key resources into the next phases of the apostolic team's strategic initiatives. Clusters of churches collected funds in special collections designed to meet large needs in the network of churches; these funds were initiated by apostolic team leaders.
2. **The Benefactors.** Benefactors became strategic players in assisting apostolic leaders, using their homes, money, and influence freely. They became part of the team, taking care not to try to control the ministry through their gifts. The "board" of an enterprise did not place the benefactors over the apostolic leaders, but the key leadership was primarily made up of apostolic leaders and strategic CityChurch elders.
3. **The Collections.** Special collections were set up to meet strategic needs in the global, complex network of churches. These funds were initiated by and fit into the strategic expansion plan of the apostolic leaders. The leaders challenged the churches to rise to the need and worked directly with them to follow through with their generous commitments.
4. **The Enterprising Apostolic Team.** Apostolic leaders positioned themselves so they were neither controlled by the churches nor a burden to them. They developed tent-making enterprises that allowed them to make their own living as needed. However, they had the right to make their living by the gospel. In addition, they developed expertise in developing and strategically using benefactors and in challenging churches to complete large collections to benefit the expansion of the churches worldwide.

How did I come up with the thesis and four critical success factors? I merely went back to the complex network and followed the money. I have created a chart to help us visualize the flow of the money. In an earlier encyclical, *The Churches of the First Century: From Simple Churches to Complex Networks*, we established that the ministry structure contained two main elements: the churches and an apostolic network. Remember the sodality-modality discussion. There are basically two types of leaders: (1) modal leaders who have a local focus, leading and shepherding the churches and (2) sodal leaders, that have mostly a global focus, who establish the churches and network them together for the progress of the gospel. The chart below builds on the complex network chart of that encyclical, and stirs in the money.

## Funding the Spontaneous Expansion of the Early Churches



Before we begin walking through the ideas of the chart, let's look for a moment at how the critical success factors grow right out of the complex network of the early churches.

### Money and the Jerusalem Church

While in one sense this is an excursus to our thesis and four critical success factors, it lays a foundation for viewing the critical importance of money in the establishment and expansion of the church, as recorded in the book of Acts. In the core description of the new church birthed in Jerusalem, Acts 2:42–47, we see that the church had an immediate response to the arrival of the Spirit and the birth of the church—they opened their homes and gave of their possessions freely. The spirit of this new community is picked up in Acts 4:32–35:

<sup>32</sup> Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common.

<sup>33</sup> With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

<sup>34</sup> There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. <sup>35</sup> They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need."

Then we see the effect of this new life on Barnabas, a benefactor. It's an unusually specific scene, in which Barnabas sells a plot of land, Acts 4:36–37.

<sup>36</sup> There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means "son of

encouragement”).<sup>37</sup> He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.”

This is followed by a scene in Acts 5:1–11, in which Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives by also selling a piece of land but keeping part of the money back. We see some important elements that underlie the critical success factors we are about to observe in the early churches of Acts. We can see several things from this snapshot:

1. The church as a whole was one heart and soul around the purposes of God, and it clearly affected the pocketbooks of those who had land and possessions.
2. Those who fit the wealthy (benefactor) category were known to all. The selling of their land and possessions and their major donations were somewhat public, and placed without demands at the Apostles’ feet.
3. It cost the life of a couple who lied about their gift—trying to get glory for themselves and keep their money as well.

This makes perfect sense in the historical context.<sup>21</sup>

1. Benefactors were very public people.
2. Their gifts were known, and they received appropriate recognition for them.
3. The benefactors (wealthy) were acting in a selfless way that astounded everyone; something was really happening here. They were not giving safely or in a token manner.
4. But Ananias and Sapphira were acting as typical benefactors—wanting the praise but keeping their money as well.

Now let’s turn to the network of churches that unfolds in the book of Acts, with insights woven in from Paul’s letters to the churches.

## Money and the Early Churches

I am simply going to walk through the chart “Money and the Early Churches.” We can jump in anywhere, but I am going to follow the order listed in the 4 critical success factors listed above.

The Churches. We can see several things from the chart. The most basic can be seen in the church at Philippi. In a way, it had the model DNA that Paul wanted in all the churches, and that we should seek to have in our churches today. In Philippians 1:5ff we see Paul praise them for participating with him in the progress of the gospel from the first day until now. They did this by sending a financial gift to him on several occasions (Phil. 4:15–19); they sent Epaphroditus to assist him (Phil. 4:25–30); and they must have been behind in sending Euodia and Syntyche, two women who served Paul as coworkers (Phil. 4:3). In addition, church hubs supported Paul. We know this was the case with the church at Antioch, which was a sending base for his early missionary journeys. And we can

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<sup>21</sup> I have dealt extensively with the concept of benefactors in the course *Seek the Welfare of the City: Citizenship, Benefactors, and Money*. An excellent research piece that I used extensively is *Seek the Welfare of the City: Christians as Benefactors and Citizens* by Bruce W. Winter.

see Paul's additional expectation of the church at Rome. Paul expected to be sent on by them to Spain after he had visited them for a while (Romans 15:24). A careful examination of Romans 15 and 16 shows that Paul sent Phoebe ahead to raise money for his trip to Spain. In addition, clusters or networks of churches responded to special collections as needed—the big one was the collection for the Jewish churches. We will examine this collection in depth momentarily, but for now, we can see that the “churches of Galatia,” “the churches of Asia,” and “the churches of Achaia” were all involved. This leads to our first critical success factor: the churches shared in the funding.

The Benefactors. As mentioned earlier, I have done extensive work in *Seek the Welfare of the City* on the critical role of benefactors in the Greco-Roman world of Paul's day. Benefactors played a key role on Paul's team as well. There were 99 names mentioned that crossed tracks with Paul. Probably about 38 served on his team in one form or another. Approximately 1/3 were Paul and Timothy types, 1/3 were women co-workers, and 1/3 were benefactors. Phoebe was one of those benefactors. We read about her in Romans 16:1–2.

<sup>1</sup> I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, <sup>2</sup> so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well.

It is clear that Phoebe was a benefactor to Paul and to many others. She probably had a church in her home back in Cenchreae and must have been independently wealthy. Paul was sending her to Rome to prepare the way for his future trip. Because of the people he lists in Romans 16, it appears he expected her to raise money for his trip. She used her time, talents, and resources on Paul's team to further the progress of the mission. Benefactors were a vital part of Paul's team. While much more could be cited to establish this point, we can clearly see the emerging of the second critical success factor of funding the spontaneous expansion of the early churches: the benefactors.

The Collection. I believe the collection itself is part of the model, in light of the strategic role it played as the “glue” of the apostolic network and because of the amount of space Paul gave to it in his writings. It clearly played a major role in his strategic plan of shaping the network, as he was laying foundations for the continued expansion of the gospel. We will look at this collection in more depth in a moment, but from the chart we can see that several clusters of churches were involved in the collection. Paul had been working on this collection for over two years. He encouraged the churches to set aside money weekly towards this collection. It was to be carefully stewarded as it was collected cluster by cluster, with representatives from each cluster traveling with the gift as it grew to ensure proper accountability (2 Cor. 8:19). It was for the churches of Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:3). This collection is an example of large resources collected from the churches and entrusted to another network of churches. So the

collection played a critical role in the complex network of the early churches, and thus is our third critical success factor.

The Enterprising Apostolic Team. Let's visit the chart one more time, this time focusing on the apostolic leaders. When I refer to leaders as apostolic, I am referring to the 5-fold gifted leaders described in Ephesians 4:11: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. These leaders existed to build up the church—to build on the foundation laid by Christ and His Apostles and to give shape to the spontaneous expansion by both planting and establishing churches. They did this by taking the gospel to new strategic cities, stabilizing the churches, and training leaders. They were supported by churches along the way but did not view themselves as having a job or a career or a profession, but rather a calling and a stewardship. Obviously, they could accomplish more if the churches supported them. But at times Paul saw it beneficial not to take support from churches so as not to give them opportunity to suspect his motives (1 Cor. 9:12). At other times there was not enough support from the churches, so Paul practiced his profession, that of leather making.<sup>22</sup> In fact, sometimes he teamed up with Aquilla and Priscilla in business together, and sometimes he even used it to support his men (Acts 18:1–4). You see, Paul was accountable—yes, as we see with the collections; but he was not in a job restricted by salaries and budgets; he had a calling. And whether he had an abundance or was in want, whether he was given gifts or not, he moved ahead. He built contingency plans, built a benefactor team, and practiced his trade as needed. This was a vital part of the funding of the complex network of the early churches, and thus gives validity to our 4<sup>th</sup> critical success factor: the enterprising apostolic team.

## The Collection

Let's take a close look at the collection. Paul gave it a lot of time in his writings. I believe it is critical because it involves large funds being collected from one network of churches to give to another or from clusters of churches to a network in another geographical or political situation, and it is full of principles. The bulk of the knowledge we have concerning the collection is in the Corinthian correspondence. Let me set the context a little. Paul communicated to all the churches in his network a desire to take up a large collection for the Jewish churches. He asked them all to make sacrificial commitments. It seems he had two purposes in mind. One was to remember the poor in Jerusalem, referring to the entire Jewish people. This was what James, Cephas, and John had asked him to do once he received their right hand of fellowship to progress the gospel among the Gentiles, by grace alone. Second, it seems he was also trying to seal the Jewish churches into the new Church—that the Church was made up equally of Jews and Gentiles. It was a token of love to the Jewish churches and, if accepted, to the Jewish nation, from whom had come their share in the spiritual blessings. Speaking to the church at Rome, Paul says in Romans 15:25–33

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<sup>22</sup> Ronald F. Hock, *Social Context of Paul's Ministry: Tent-Making and Apostleship* (Augsburg Fortress Publishing, 1980).

<sup>25</sup> At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem in a ministry to the saints; <sup>26</sup> for Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to share their resources with the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. <sup>27</sup> They were pleased to do this, and indeed they owe it to them; for if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material things. <sup>28</sup> So, when I have completed this, and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will set out by way of you to Spain; <sup>29</sup> and I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. <sup>30</sup> I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, <sup>31</sup> that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, <sup>32</sup> so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. <sup>33</sup> The God of peace be with all of you. Amen.

Now let's put the picture together:

- Paul was challenged by James and the Apostles in Jerusalem to “remember the poor.”
- Paul saw the essence of this collection as a way to do that—giving alms to his nation.
- Paul also saw it as a way to give proper honor to the nation of Israel.
- The rift was still there when he arrived with the gift in Jerusalem.
- Evidently, some of the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem favored a refusal of the gift.

This is very insightful, as we think about large stewardships of gifts, network to network, via apostolic team leadership. The bulk of the principles are in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, so I will list principles under each set of references and then draw conclusions about this critical success factor following the principles.

#### 2 Corinthians 8:1–7

- The collection was a “ministry to the saints” in Jerusalem.
- It is called a generous undertaking, which means that the request was for a generous gift, and the Macedonians were asked to give at great personal sacrifice.

#### 2 Corinthians 8:8–15

- This kind of large-scale sacrificial giving is rooted in the gospel—to our “indescribable gift” of salvation.
- The commitment of the Corinthians was a generous commitment, which was made the year before and now needed to be completed.
- It was fair to share their wealth with churches in other parts of the world. God requires much of those who have much.



2 Corinthians 8:16–24

- Paul was very concerned about them completing their commitment.
- He went overboard to establish strong lines of accountability, especially since the Corinthians were questioning him and his apostleship at every level.
- At the same time, he accepted no excuses for them not completing their commitment. He sent Titus and several messengers from the churches to hold them accountable to their commitment.
- They were to openly complete their commitment before these men, a commitment that was initially made in the open.

2 Corinthians 9:1–5

- Paul sent brethren to get the Corinthians ready—making all the collections before he arrived.
- If the Corinthians did not fulfill their commitment, it would humiliate Paul and his churches before the Jerusalem leaders and churches.
- Paul had asked them to “promise beforehand” (literally to announce beforehand) what they would give.
- If they did not collect the money before he got there, it would change the whole nature of the gift, since he would have to pressure them to complete it.

2 Corinthians 9:6–9

- Paul builds his challenge on a principle: If you give abundantly you will reap bountifully; if you hoard your money to be safe, you will get bad returns.
- He did not promise that if they gave abundantly they would get rich, but rather that they would always have enough to “share abundantly in every good work.”
- Paul challenged them not to hold to their commitments grudgingly—waiting until the last minute to let go of it, when the deadlines and pressure forced them to let go—but to give in advance to avoid last minute pressure.

2 Corinthians 9:10–15

- Paul saw God as actually giving them their resources in the first place, as well as being the one who would multiply them.
- Paul promised them that they would be “enriched in every way.” In other words, the returns on their giving would positively affect all aspects of their lives.
- Paul saw “the collection” as building a strong bond between the givers and the recipients, again going back to his big picture of the Jewish churches and the Gentile churches.

In essence, what were Paul’s reasons for the “generous undertaking” he called the churches to do? Paul was using this large, generous undertaking to unify the movement by attempting to build the Jewish and Gentile churches into one. In addition, it gave the churches a sense of identity with each other and real ownership in the movement. It set pace for how he talked with the churches and how he directed them financially in the progress of the gospel. In a very real sense, this is a model for us today, and it gives real shape to the third critical success factor.

#### The Collection as a Model for Today

1. Paul laid out a grand “financial” undertaking and challenged those around him to respond generously to it.
2. All the churches were challenged to respond.
3. Once they did, he held them accountable in a very public way: by his letters, sending his key guys to make sure the collection was ready when he came for it, and forming an envoy with church representatives to complete the collection and deliver it to Jerusalem.
4. You might say he put strong “biblical pressure” on them to follow through with their commitment.

This is how the early churches funded the spontaneous expansion of the church. The whole strategy is depicted in the chart “Funding the Spontaneous Expansion of the Church.” It is easy to see the four critical success factors. But the important thing is to recognize they make up one integrated system—one philosophy. All the ingredients must be there. We must take Roland Allen’s challenge seriously: “Anyone who fails to take the entire system of the way of Christ and His Apostles, leaving out one piece, has not practiced it at all.” In the remainder of this encyclical we will examine our Western paradigm seriously and think deeply about applying the practice of the early churches to our Global South opportunity today.

### Western Paradigm Paralysis

The sad thing is that our churches and denominations look nothing like this today. Instead we have large, cumbersome Western institutional models that look far more like corporate America than the network of the early churches. Our picture does not look at all like that of the Early Church. Our churches are not instructed well on giving. Our benefactors, in our churches, go untrained. Our “professional” pastors do not tent-make nor are they enterprising. And we are not involved in enterprises significant enough to require large, sacrificial gifts from our churches.

Let’s now take a look at these “paradigm problems” from the big picture standpoint. I will do this by following the chart “Funding Spontaneous Expansion,” found on page 9. As you will see, most of our churches and pastors have “paradigm paralysis.”<sup>23</sup> They cannot see the fundamental

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<sup>23</sup> Joel Barker popularizes this concept of paradigm paralysis in his video series and in his book. See *The Business of Paradigm* by Joel Barker (ChartHouse International Learning Corp, 1989). Thomas Kuhn originally developed the concept in his now classic *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (University of Chicago Press, 1996).

differences that are right in front of them. There are several reasons for this. One, they actually cannot see the data. Their categories are so strong, rules of ministry so fixed, and their pathways of reflection so entrenched, that they cannot see the data. In some cases, they are too vested to consider radical change. It would cause too much emotional stress and run the risk of alienating their constituency, so they pass by the evidence. In some cases, for practical reasons, the sheer magnitude of the implications suppresses the evidence.

**The Churches.** Our churches, denominations, associations and independent churches—whether mainline, evangelical or Pentecostal—almost all have a central focus on themselves first. They guard the time of their pastors, viewing them as staff, almost completely controlling their job descriptions. They put priority of funds on their buildings and expensive programs. What is left goes to the progress of the gospel and doing good in the community—very different from what we see in the early churches.

**The Benefactors.** Benefactors are often not well established in the faith and rarely see themselves as vital players on an apostolic team that is having a transformational effect locally, nationally, or internationally. They see that their churches are not involved in anything transformational or global in effect—nothing big enough to demand their time, talents, or resources. Pastors do not see themselves as apostolic type leaders or on apostolic type teams themselves, so they do not see themselves as responsible to recruit and train benefactors to partner with them in larger missional enterprises. So benefactors are not about to sell a piece of land and lay it at the apostolic leaders' feet! Thus para-church groups come in and collect benefactors, such as Campus Crusade's "History's Handful," because the churches are not doing anything big enough to need or justify someone giving a million dollars.

**The Collections.** Our churches give a token amount to apostolic teams and complex church networks in various parts of the world. What church is going to collect \$10 million dollars to give to a para-church organization? Well thought out large-scale collections for missional purposes are not the norm in our churches. The idea of building a large fund to use to affect the progress of the gospel locally, nationally, and globally, which could be given in a lump sum or granted over a number of years, is almost unheard of at a local church level. We take token collections of \$100 here and \$5,000 there, when the capacity of our churches in the West is in the millions.

**Pastors, missionaries, and full-time Christian workers.** What started out in the early churches as a complex apostolic team that was driven by a call, to an enterprising lot, has developed today into a set of professions—pastors and missionaries as careers. The idea of the 5-fold gifts of Ephesians 4:11 as apostolic or missional in nature has been lost at a very significant level. The idea of these

leaders residing in a complex network of churches—large or small—and serving the progress of the gospel, based from those churches (with modality leadership: elders, deacons, and leading women shepherding the churches), is a foreign concept to Western churches.

### Guidelines for Radical Paradigm Shifts

I call these radical paradigm shifts because they are just that—radical. Anything short of this is merely putting new wine in old wineskins.

1. North American churches need to radically rethink their financial priorities, setting goals of 60–70% of their resources going into the progress of the gospel and passionately participating in church-planting networks of churches locally, nationally, and globally. They need to reinvent their “pastoral job descriptions” and build benefactor teams and accompanying ministry funds. And they must develop a “collections mindset,” challenging their people to give large gifts to movements of churches in other parts of the world.

Imagine the amount of missional resources available for high impact ministry locally, nationally, and internationally if we completely refocused our resources. Currently, over 12 billion a year (\$1 billion a month)<sup>24</sup> goes out of our churches, in a token fashion, supporting the Western missionary and relief development enterprise. If we were following “the way of Christ and His Apostles,” it would be several hundred billion new dollars. One estimate is that giving would total \$168 billion a year if Christians all gave 10% annually.<sup>25</sup> If the \$168 billion<sup>26</sup> was matched annually by benefactor funds in churches, that would be \$336 billion a year. I believe that the benchmark of our budgets should be 60–70% going to the progress of the gospel, not on our “church staff and programs.” That would add up to almost \$20 billion a month into the progress of the gospel. So even if we just left relief and development organizations, Western missionaries, and short-term missions alone, just not add any more to them until they retooled paradigmatically, we would have unbelievable monies accelerating complex church networks worldwide.

2. North American ministry enterprises need to restructure their ministry to partner with apostolic teams and complex church

<sup>24</sup> I estimate the following: \$4 billion for mission agencies and their career missionaries, \$6 billion for relief development organizations, and \$2.5 billion for short-term mission projects from churches annually. See *Ibid Toxic Charity*.

<sup>25</sup> Stearns estimates evangelicals give only 2.5% of their income (2005 estimates). Around the same time, an organization called NewTithing, divided Christians into middle and super rich, who gave ½ and 1% of their income respectively. See *The Hole in Our Gospel: The Answer That Changed My Life and Might Just Change the World*, by Richard Stearns (HarperOne, 2009).

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*.

networks, building strategic partnerships in a way that they can actually become tools of these complex church networks and dissolve into their vision. The complex church networks should be their distribution system, not their own in-country staff. This applies to educational institutions, mission agencies, para-church organizations, and relief and development NGOs.

The problem is not the existence of sodality leadership ministries—apostolic enterprises—but that they are designed and organized in a Western corporate paradigm, rather than in “the way of Christ and His Apostles.” The problem is not that organizations exist among apostolic type leaders, but that many are “para-church.” They do not understand the churches. They are also corporate in their structure and individualistic in their understanding of discipleship. They need to reinvent themselves into apostolic teams or as benefactor or co-worker teams in partnership with key national apostolic leaders. I mentioned earlier the idea of complex apostolic networks as distribution systems. What exactly do I mean? If a complex network of churches becomes established and then mature, they automatically serve as benefactor communities “seeking the welfare of the city” in every village, town, and city of their particular part of the world. This means they are everywhere—tools of all “co-worker” enterprises: relief-development, education, business start-ups, etc. This ultimately means that a complex network of churches is “God’s distribution system,” which can deliver all sorts of transformational “services.”

3. North American donors need to become significant partners with apostolic teams and complex church networks, giving special attention to the Global South and North American urban centers at this very strategic point in history. They must focus their resources into these partnerships, both giving and BoP investing.

*BoP investing* is an extremely important area of development. The first generation—primarily micro-business and micro lending—has had promising but limited success. Both private equity and venture capital went into most of these situations to the bottom 4 billion with a Western capitalistic predator-like approach. Today, a whole new generation of mutual beneficial investing approaches are emerging from the lessons of that first generation; they are called BoP investing.<sup>27</sup> BoP Investing, with its enlightened understanding and softened capitalistic approach, has far more effective methods and motives. While major gifts and grants are needed, the

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| <sup>27</sup> *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid, op.cit.*

long-term, sustainable results will come from significant entrepreneurial partnerships between established benefactors of the West and emerging benefactors of the Global South. Together they can create significant wealth for complex apostolic networks, as they build complex church networks that will ultimately impact every village, town, and city within their God-given sphere of ministry.

4. Global South churches need to break their dependency on Western ministry paradigms and Western money. Instead, they must build strong apostolic teams and well established complex church networks with aggressive strategies for the progress of the gospel. They must develop their own capacity to fund the spontaneous expansion of their network, training their people in the four critical success factors of the early churches.

This is a huge area of conversation and demands a paper of its own. But let me just hit the highlights here. Over the last 15 years, it has been increasingly discovered that this dependency is pervasive in the churches of the Global South. Pastors feel like they are not legitimate if they are not supported fulltime for ministry; they do not understand biblical tent making. Church members fail to develop consistent giving habits, nor do they view themselves as emerging benefactors. Even the young, emerging upper middle class, who make three times what the pastors make, on the average, justify their poor giving habits in order to keep the pastors humble and serving for the right reasons. Network leaders fail to develop “high-end” benefactor teams to help fund and accelerate their missional enterprises. The churches are not taught to support the progress of the apostolic teams nor to take sacrificial collections for complex church networks emerging in other parts of the world. They exhibit almost a complete lack of understanding of the four critical success factors.

5. Global Pentecostals—if they are to continue to play the point role in global missions today—need to develop strong complex apostolic teams and mature their complex church networks, moving their churches away from the lure of a false prosperity gospel and building solid funding strategies around the four critical success factors seen in the early churches.

Global Pentecostalism drives the progress of the gospel in the Global South today—no question. They understand complex apostolic networks, even the idea of “the way of Christ and His Apostles,” better than most evangelicals. And, as demonstrated in the recent litany of books on global Pentecostalism, they are maturing as a movement. But two areas seem consistently lacking in their movements:



developing solid apostolic teams and developing a mature understanding of funding the spontaneous expansion of the church, consistent with the model of the early churches. The theology of a prosperity gospel has replaced the biblical concept of prospering the churches. It gives an allusion of riches available to the poor, but without any real hope. It leaves the church open to articulate “charlatans” who gather large crowds and rake in the money. This leaves both the grassroots churches and their families to continue to wallow in hopelessness, when God’s design is that they become true benefactor communities within their communities, “seeking the welfare” of their cities.

### **Big Picture Ideas/Strategies/Enterprises for Funding the Spontaneous Expansion of Churches**

The following is a big picture of ideas, strategies, and enterprises designed to provide sort of a map for Global South and North American urban center apostolic teams leading complex church networks, as they build partnerships with Western church denominations and associations, ministry enterprises, and benefactors—both major donors and foundations. I am building all of the ideas under what I call a Global Cities/Shadow Cities strategy, undergirded by strategic collections and BoP investing, which is mutually beneficial.

This is a really “big idea.” I remember when Joel Barker, in his original video on paradigms, explained that the key to Ray Krock purchasing the MacDonald franchise in just a few hours was that he understood it to be a really “big idea.” That big idea ultimately produced a “franchise paradigm” that radically changed the global business community. This is just such a “big idea.”

**The big idea:** Global Cities/Shadow Cities Strategy + Strategic Collections and BoP Investing will make a world-class theological education affordable to the “bottom of the pyramid” for 40 million Global South leaders.

### **Explaining the elements of the big idea**

**Global Cities.** I have been studying this very important area of research since 2004 when I came across a collection of studies in *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, a five-article collection entitled “Global Cities?”<sup>28</sup> It is still commanding

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<sup>28</sup> “Global Cities?” including “The Global City: Introducing a Concept” by Saskia Sassen; “The World Urban Hierarchy: Implications for Cities, Top to Bottom” by David Smith; “Our Urban Future: Making a Home for Homo Urbanus” by Anna Kjunulo Tibaijuka, Jos Maseland, and Jay Moor”; “Moving Towards Inclusive Cities” by Blair Ruble, Joseph Tulchin, and Lisa Hanley; and “Urban Planning on a Larger Scale: Reimagining the City” by Bruce Mau, in *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Winter / Spring, 2005 Volume XI, Issue 2.

the attention of international affairs-type journals, as seen in the collection of eight articles in the *Journal of International Affairs*, summer, 2012, under the collection title “The Future of the City,” seven feature articles on the city and four essays.<sup>29</sup> The entire global conversation and research has been shaped by a very impressive body of work by Saskia Sassen,<sup>30</sup> the most paradigmatic and impressive of her works is *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*, in which she argues that we are in the midst of a global paradigm shift the size of the pre-modern to modern shift from Medieval states to nation states, the shift now being from nation states to city states.

Then four years ago, while researching the early church encyclical,<sup>31</sup> I discovered the connection between the emerging science of complex networking and the global city research project. And it all began to converge, especially with Barabási’s work *Linked*,<sup>32</sup> particularly because Barabási made the connection between the global networking of the Apostle Paul and the new science of complex networking. The *simple church to complex networking* concept became clear to me at that time, along with the vision of creating a process of mapping church-planting movements against the backdrop of the global cities matrix, which was a subset of the new science of complex networking. Once I understood the connection, the global cities research unlocked the new “Roman Road” of globalization. I became even further convinced in January of 2012, in conversation with Randy Kennedy of The Maclellan

<sup>29</sup> “The Future of the City,” including an eight-collection set: “The Growing Economic Power of Cities” by Andrés Cadena, Richard Dobbs and Jaana Remes; “‘Green’ as Spectacle in China” by Xuefei; “Religious Fundamentalisms in the City: Reflections on the Arab Spring” by Nezar AlSayyad and Mejjan Massoumi; “Governing the Twenty-First-Century City” by Ester R. Fuchs; “The Paris Banlieue: Peripheries of Inequity” by Marc Angélil and Cary Sires; “Planning for Success: Singapore, the Model City-State?” by Joan Henderson; “Urban Capabilities: An Essay on Our Challenges and Differences” by Saskia Sassen; “Urban America: U.S. Cities in the Global Era” by Richard C. Longworth; seven features: “The Invention and Reinvention of the City” by Rem Koolhaas; “A Singapore in Central America?” by Octavio Sánchez Barrientos; “Millennium Cities” by Jeffrey Sachs; “Between Equity and Impatient Capital: Making Indian Cities” by Rahul Mehrotra; “Finding Solutions for Urban Imbalances” by Ricky Burdett; “Building ‘Citizen Culture’ in Bogotá” by Antanas Mockus; and “Overcoming the Sustainability Challenge” by Guruduth Banavar; and four essays: an Andrew Wellington Cordier Essay “Refurbishment as a Sustainable Urban-Design Strategy” by Zachary Craun; a Global Public Policy Network Essay, “Cairo 2050: Urban Dream of Modernist Delusion?” by Nada Tarbush; two review essays, “Two Tales of a City” by Ethan Wagner and “The Urban Battleground: Explaining Conflict in Global Cities” by Samantha Hammer; and an excellent further reading section; all in *Journal of International Affairs* (Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs), Spring/Summer 2012, Volume 65, Number 2.

<sup>30</sup> Saskia Sassen is the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology at Columbia University and Co-Chair Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University. She has three major projects that comprise her 20 years of research: *The Mobility of Labor and Capital* (Cambridge University Press 1988), *The Global City* (Princeton University Press 1991; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 2001), and *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press 2006).

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. “The Early Churches”

<sup>32</sup> *Linked: The New Science of Networks*, by Albert-László Barabási (Perseus Publishing, Cambridge)

Foundation. After sharing with him about our complex network, church-planting mapping system against the backdrop of the global cities research, he asked me if I had examined McKinsey's<sup>33</sup> research on the global cities of the world and if it was all connected. I went back to the McKinsey project and examined it more carefully. I was stunned at the volume of research. As we talked about these ideas—the expansion of our portfolio system into a cloud-based system and integrating it with church-planting ministries through mapping their movements, based on the global cities matrix—Randy came up with the idea of a small technology summit this last summer, which Maclellan funded, to create possible synergy with other ministries. This led to several conversations, including one with GMI (Global Mapping International) on strategic mission research and mapping, to consider inputting their enormous body of research into this new global cities matrix. If you follow my 8-year journey and trace the research, you will understand this element of the big idea.

An entire structural road map to globalization is emerging through the science of complex networking. One of its main areas of research is the global cities matrix. If fully understood, it provides church-planting movements the ability to think strategically and map their movements with this new “Roman Road” guide for modern day church-planting strategies. You can see mapping of the key 600 cities by looking up the global cities entry in Wikipedia.<sup>34</sup> This is an incredibly important idea and strategic tool. Remember, the first element of the “Pauline Cycle”<sup>35</sup> in shaping church-planting movements is to evangelize strategic cities. This entire global city and complex network mapping of church-planting movements will all be built into our new cloud computer system—allowing you to map your movement.<sup>36</sup>

**Shadow Cities.** In the context of understanding global cities research and the science of complex networking, an additional piece of this unfolding puzzle came to my attention, about two years ago through a TED<sup>37</sup> talk, “Shadow Cities.” The talk is based on Robert Neuwirth's work, *Shadow Cities: A Billion*

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<sup>33</sup> *McKinsey Quarterly* is the premier consulting and research on emerging global markets and is very useful. Their project on the global cities is Global Digital Diaries Project.

<sup>34</sup> “Global City” in *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*.

<sup>35</sup> See “Global Church-Based Theological Education: Introductory Seminar” by BILD International.

<sup>36</sup> The capacity to map our church-planting movements (from the new complex networking science) against the matrix of the global cities research, including the new emerging research on global slums, will all be built into our new BILD Cloud-Based Computer System.

<sup>37</sup> TED, found at TED.com, stands for technology, education and design, and is an extensive series of short talks by dozens of authors and industry leaders on a variety of important cultural concepts. It has now spread to global conferences and become part of new educational systems aimed at making world-class education available to all.

*Squatters, A New Urban World*,<sup>38</sup> which again ties in with global cities research. So another piece of the big idea began to fall into place. Neuwirth lived in four global slums for over a two-year period: Rio, Nairobi, Mumbai, and Jakarta. He completely reshapes the idea of the global slum, not as a place of despair, but as a place of opportunity, as viewed by those who have migrated to these slums. He refers to them as shadow cities or shanty towns. What is startling is his observation of their future strategic nature. He points out that one billion of the six billion people today live in slums; by 2030 two billion of seven billion will live in slums; and by 2050 three billion of the world's nine billion will live in slums.<sup>39</sup> He also observes that these slums are based on a household social structure, which explains why grassroots church-planting movements thrive in these global slums. They are shadow cities because they grow up around strategic global cities and, in a sense, will cast a larger and larger shadow over them in the future that will ultimately transform the cities by midcentury. Sassen, in her previously mentioned book *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*,<sup>40</sup> argues that eventually they will change everything—even the concept of property rights and the authority structures of these global cities.

This is an enormous opportunity for the progress of the gospel and for strategic church planting. Sassen is now also launching out into global slums research as a vital part of her global cities research.<sup>41</sup> Many think that we need to strategically target the city influencers, since people will not listen to the poor (I am not denying it should be part of our strategy), but reality is that the wealthy are not often open to the gospel. Nevertheless, the poor, as they develop, will be the future, turning cities upside down as we saw in the early churches.

**Church Benefactor Funds.** As mentioned before, this idea came to fruition in my understanding six or seven years ago but finds a very powerful home in this emerging “big idea.” Developing benefactors is a critical success factor for church-planting movements successfully funding spontaneous expansion. The structure of the idea is to work with a team of

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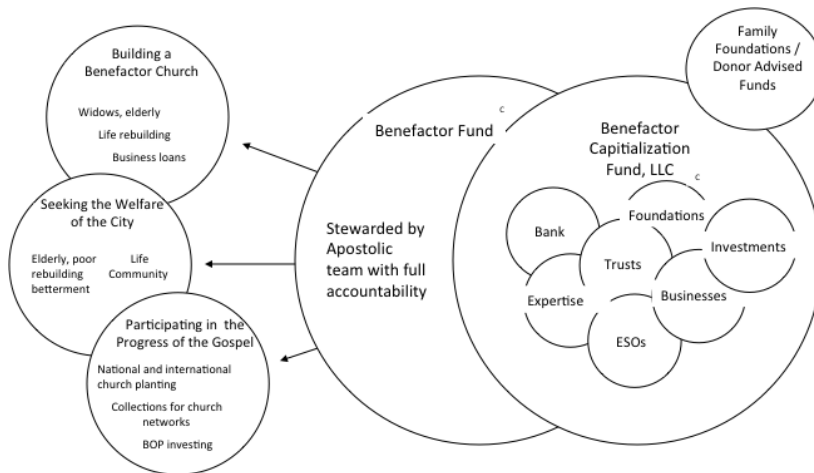
<sup>38</sup> Robert Neuwirth, *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters, a New Urban World* (Routledge, 2004).

<sup>39</sup> These numbers are general but very helpful, and generally backed up by the Millennium Goals of the United Nations.

<sup>40</sup> *Territory, op.cit.*

<sup>41</sup> See “The Global City and the Global Slum” by Saskia Sassen (Forbes, 3/22/2011), which is part of an ongoing Forbes magazine series “Megacities: Opportunities at Urban Edges,” which includes MeXvi: Enabling Families to Have a Home (3/31/2011); “Grassroots Distribution for Favela Fashion Business” (3/31/2011), “Rebuilding Communities. Restoring Lives” (3/24/2011), “Leocadia Cruzgrew: Preserving Traditions, Building a Business and Empowering Women” (3/20/2011).

benefactors, inside a local church or network of churches. Sodal church leaders must invite them to become part of their team, training them and imparting the vision to them of progressing the gospel locally, nationally, or internationally.<sup>42</sup> A benefactor fund can have many purposes as illustrated in the following diagram.



I am convinced that any church, large or small, that gets this idea and restructures around the sodality/modality balance of early church leadership<sup>43</sup> will be able to match their general budget within two years through the development of a benefactor team. It is key that a benefactor fund be separate from the general giving of a church (alongside but for different purposes). The benefactor team must be committed to the entire vision of the leadership team and resource center church/network of churches; it should be led by apostolic (sodal) leaders; the fund should be fully accountable to key modal leaders for the use of the money; but it should be under the discretion of the sodal leaders. It can include all sorts of investing, capitalization initiatives, can partner with family foundation funds, and can be used to aid local churches becoming benefactor communities to their cities, towns or villages, as well as meeting special needs within the local churches, such as life rebuilding needs, caring for widows, and even assisting young entrepreneurs. And the team can provide a base for larger collections related to participating in the progress of the gospel. This may include major collections and grants to networks of churches worldwide, the support of an apostolic team based in a key resource center church, or a wide variety of BoP investing opportunities, in light of the

<sup>42</sup> We began such a fund in our own church in 2006.

<sup>43</sup> See our *Leaders and the Early Church* course, in BILD's *Leadership I Series*.

unparalleled opportunity of our time with the spontaneous expansion of the gospel in the Global South. This leads us to a fourth major element in funding spontaneous expansion—BoP investing.

**BoP Investing.** The final piece of this big idea began to fall into place this spring. When it was becoming clear that we were reaching a tipping point in India, and in the Global South for that matter, and when I realized, as stated above, that I was going to need to raise \$2.5 billion dollars for all the BILD Institute and Antioch School sponsorships to train 40 million leaders across our complex church network partners of the Global South, it began to scare everyone—ourselves, our foundation partners, and our international partners. We all knew the paradigm of leadership development based on the “way of Christ and His Apostles” was working; we had proved it was scalable; and we all agreed the need was enormous.

As I put the need in front of several benefactor-type advisors, a question began to emerge. First it came through Chuck Stetson.<sup>44</sup> When I put the \$2.5 billion need in front of him he said, “I can help you with that but you need to answer a key question: ‘Do you want to raise it or earn it?’” He sent me back to Tom McCallie and told me to have Tom introduce me to several micro-business/micro lending groups who are dealing with these issues. Tom, as always, agreed to help me meet the right players over the next six months. First we went right downstairs to meet with Andy Perez of Audience Point, who gave us an hour of his time. He asked the same question but from a different vantage point: “Hmm . . . \$2.5 billion is a lot of money. You have to decide if you are a profit or nonprofit in regards to this \$2.5 billion. Will your 1 million ‘degree’ students/leaders in India pay for a degree if they are bi-vocational leaders, if they are not going to get a job on the other side of the degree work, even if it is affordable and if they desperately need it to be successful?”

This opened up the entire issue. It actually returned me to the four critical success factors of funding the spontaneous expansion of the church. If 80% of the Indian pastors/church planters—and pastors all across the Global South—are by necessity “bi-vocational,” they are not going to pay the price of degree-level preparation, since they are not going to get a “job.” Then we must change their thinking because tent-making is a biblical ideal. So we will build tent-making training and opportunities into their degree, as well as prepare

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<sup>44</sup> Chuck was a benefactor partner of the late Charles Colson, a private equity pioneer with his own firm in New York City’s upper East Side, and an amazing entrepreneur, producing such projects as the first textbook in the last thirty years on the Bible, *The Bible and Its Influence* and a documentary, “The Better Hour: The Legacy of William Wilberforce.”

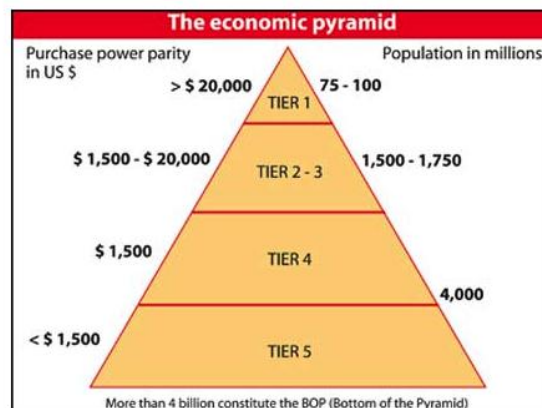


them to help their people prosper, which will bring resources into their ministries.

Tom then introduced me to the Chalmers Center for Economic Development, a very innovative group that has been critiquing relief and development through their very influential book *When Helping Hurts*.<sup>45</sup> When I was introduced to the book and asked to critique it by a foundation, I suggested the ideas were very good, but paradigmatically, they were still trying to use traditional NGOs as their delivery system. Chalmers was the first group Tom introduced me to, and it turns out they have built a wonderful training system for developing micro-business and training in starting small businesses. I met with several other groups across the country, which drove me to understand the cutting edge conversation that is undergirding these new enterprises. Eventually, after many discussions with global south leaders who believe that micro-businesses don't work, I discovered an emerging investment strategy—BoP investing.

*BoP investing* is a concept for investing in the “bottom of the Pyramid”—the four billion of the six billion in the world who are outside the Western marketing system and live on \$2 or less per day. The original idea and research on the BoP idea (also referred to as the base of the pyramid) is based on the work of C. K. Prahalad in his work *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Eradicating Poverty Through Profits*.<sup>46</sup>

### Bottom of the Pyramid



**“More than 4 billion people live at the BOP on less than \$2 a day”**

<sup>45</sup> *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor . . . and Yourself* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, (Moody Publishers, 2012).

<sup>46</sup> *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid, op.cit.*

BoP investing represents a second generation investment strategy, built upon the successes and failures of the first generation of microbusiness/microloan-type investing. The BoP investing strategies conversation is led by Ted London of the William Davidson Institute and Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and Stuart Hart, Johnson School of Management, Cornell University. Their book, *Next Generation Business Strategies for the Base of the Pyramid: New Approaches for Building Mutual Value*,<sup>47</sup> brings the entire conversation with its emerging strategies and potential to transform the lives and cities at the bottom of the pyramid. The strategies range from microbusiness to private equity/venture capital levels, designed in partnership with shared mutual benefit and solid processes from designing to piloting to scaling. Guiding principles for startup BoP ventures provide the heart of the idea. The potential of this BoP investing is unlimited in its potential. Recently, McKinsey estimated that the market size of the bottom of the pyramid is \$39 trillion dollars. Imagine if Global South church networks were leading the way by transforming the global cities/shadow cities of the Global South.

In addition, right at this time Tom McCallie sent me a short email, introducing me to the website EPIC2020<sup>48</sup>. It confirmed that we are twenty years ahead of the game with our system and accreditation, that our system is scalable to four million in the Antioch School, and that makes the entire system—BILD Institute (40 million) and the Antioch School (4 million)—affordable to the bottom of the pyramid. Now all the pieces were in place. So I set out to make a master plan that would lead to making the training of the 4 million/40 million affordable—thus the proposal: A World-Class Theological Education with the Bottom of the Pyramid.

**The big idea:** Global cities/shadow cities strategy + strategic grants/collections and BoP Investing will make a world-class theological education affordable to the “bottom of the pyramid” for 40 million Global South leaders

### **A Proposal: A World-Class Theological Education with the Bottom of the Pyramid.**

I began this whole encyclical with a statement regarding the bankrupt nature of the Western world of relief and development. I am not calling into question people’s motives. One cannot help but share in the passion of World Vision’s president Richard Stearns in his book *The Hole in Our Gospel*.<sup>49</sup> I agree with his analysis that the US church is the

<sup>47</sup> *Next Generation Business Strategies for the Base of the Pyramid: New Approaches for Building Mutual Value* by Ted London and Stuart Hart (FT Press, 2011).

<sup>48</sup> See EPIC2020.org website.

<sup>49</sup> *The Hole in Our Gospel*, by Richard Stearns (Thomas Nelson, 2009).

wealthiest church in history, and we are giving only a very small fraction of our income. But even if the 10 billion we are spending through our mission agencies and relief and development organizations becomes 50 billion or 100 billion or 1 trillion, if we are spending it wrong and creating all sorts of dependency problems in the Global South, we will still get the same results. God's plan for the inauguration and growth of His kingdom is the Church—more specifically, complex networks of churches continuing to grow and spontaneously multiply, city by city, town by town, village by village. These complex networks of churches, led by apostolic teams, are God's distribution system. As these networks of churches mature, they naturally seek the welfare of their cities, towns and villages—they serve as citizens and leaders. And they are the benefactor communities we can partner with whenever relief/development needs surface in an acute way, or for longer term development plans. Networks of churches in one part of the world need to assist networks of churches in other parts of the world. And specifically, apostolic teams (apostolic leaders, coworkers and benefactors) need to work and strategize, team to team, to discern the work of the Spirit and the needs of church networks.

We have developed a strategy for developing leaders and prospering churches that, though specific to the task God has given us, demonstrates the core elements of a paradigmatic framework.

Goal: By fall of 2016, reduce Antioch School degrees in the Global South/Shadow Cities to an affordable rate in the range of \$200 / \$300 / \$400 per degree, exponentially expanding to 4 million Antioch School leaders and 40 million grassroots BILD Institute leaders.<sup>50</sup>

Pathway: (India model, but applies to all partners)

1. Competency cohorts: Train 1,500 leaders in approximately 75-100 “competency cohorts” from the fall of 2012 to the fall of 2016. Western foundations, churches, and donors sponsor these cohorts over the 4 years. Then it goes to scale. \$10 million investment over 4 years includes training and assessment at all levels, a cloud-based multi-language system, handhelds, video conferencing systems, translation, publishing teams, etc. After the 4 years, we can take the system to scale at an affordable rate.
2. Tent-making benefactor training: Build this into the ministry practicum of the Antioch School degree training: developing tent-making skills, training benefactors, and small business development. This includes specific training on over 20 tent-making businesses that can be started, with funding assistance available.
3. Partner+ Churches: Build a partnership with 12 charter churches, and another 44 soon after that, who will sponsor a

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<sup>50</sup> We are not guaranteeing the ability to scale the degrees at that price by fall of 2016, but the numbers are well tested. A lot depends on gathering partners—foundations, major donors and what we call Partner+ churches. However, the model has been carefully developed, and many players are coming to the table sharing and matching our vision and enthusiasm.

- cohort at \$20,000+ per year for four years. In turn, work with them to develop a benefactor team and fund in their church for participation with BILD (among others) in BoP investing, ranging from supporting a tent-making business for Antioch School pastors and church planters, small business startups for people in their churches, to venture capital/private equity investments for larger partnering “benefactor to benefactor” initiatives.
4. BoP Investing: Bring many partners to the table who will form “network to network” partnerships—working within the sphere of those partnerships: micro-lending partners, economic development centers and partners, organizations devoted to particular relief and or development enterprises or products. But the base will be Partner+ churches with benefactor teams and the benefactor teams of our complex church network partners.
  5. Collections: We are committed to sharing large-scale special needs with our Partner+ churches and their networks, as well as partner ministries, foundations, and major donors, that special collections can be taken, which are well organized and often spanning a few weeks to months if not years in their undertaking, to meet special needs as they arise.<sup>51</sup>

There you have it—a radical critique by way of an early church, biblical theological journey through the funding of the spontaneous expansion of the early churches. It’s also a journey exploring powerful and creative new initiatives to help empower the progress of the gospel in the Global South as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century. All of this is at the very time we see the decline of the Western church. But it’s also an unparalleled time in history with the potential partnership between a Western remnant of wealthy churches and benefactors—the wealthiest in history—and emerging Global South churches. It is an unparalleled opportunity of global impact and an unparalleled opportunity to maximize our stewardship, no matter how great or how small, in a way that can turn the “entire world upside down,” just as the early churches did in the first three generations.

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<sup>51</sup> See our prospectus “The BILD Institute and the Antioch School: A World-Class Theological Education with the Bottom of the Pyramid.”