Mission-Church Relations: Four Stages of Development

Stage One: Pioneer (First contact with people)
Requires gift of leadership, along with other gifts.
No Believers—missionary must lead and do much of the work himself.

Stage Two: Parent (training/mentoring)
Requires gift of teaching.
The young church has a growing child’s relationship to the mission. But the “parent” must avoid “paternalism.”

Stage Three: Partner (relate as equals)
Requires changes from parent-child relation to adult-adult relation.
Difficult for both to change, but essential to the church’s becoming a mature “adult.”

Stage Four: Participant
A fully mature church assumes leadership.
As long as the mission remains, it should use its gifts to strengthen the church to meet the original objectives of Matt 28:19-20. Meanwhile the mission should be involved in Stage One elsewhere.

Three Eras of the Modern Missions Movement

First Era (1792–1910)
- Denominational agencies
- European dominance
- Geographic strategy

Second Era (1865–1980)
- “Faith” mission agencies
- American dominance
- Geographic strategy

Third (Final) Era (1934–?)
- “Specialized” mission agencies
- Non-Western dominance
- Non-geographic strategy based on people groups

1792 William Carey’s Book Published
1793 Baptist Mission Society founded
1806 Haystack Prayer Meeting
1865 Hudson Taylor founds China Inland Mission
1865 Edinburgh 1910
Focused specifically on what it would take to finish the job in what in those days were called “the unoccupied fields.”
1890 Edinburgh ’80 and COWE in Pattaya, Thailand were held focusing on unreached people groups
1934 Cam Townsend emphasized linguistic groups.
Donald McGavran emphasized ethnic groups
1980 Lausanne Congress 1974 on World Evangelization
2000 GCOWE II 1995
An explosion of awareness among the worldwide church to reach the unreached people groups