



Marketplace Moments

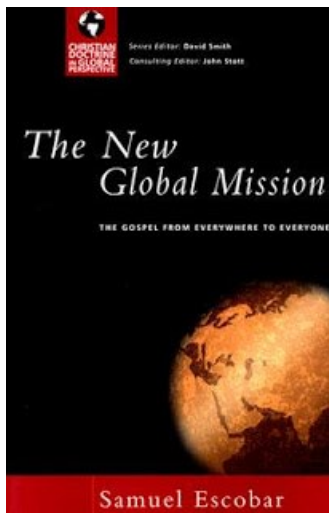
Bibliophoria

The New Global Mission

In the new globalized world, the face of mission has also been changing significantly. A veteran of the Evangelical missions movement for the past 30 years, Dr. Samuel Escobar, a leading Latin American theologian is one of the key authors of the Lausanne Covenant in 1974. Being involved extensively in missiological education and research, and himself being involved in projects, his forward thinking and ability to see missions holistically, have bridged the gap of the new and old missional strategies.

"Awareness of the urgency of questions about missionary presence and style has motivated some of the most creative missiological thinking of recent decades. For those whose missiological reflection starts with commitment to the authority of God's Word, the contemporary missionary situation demands an understanding of the Bible that takes into account its cultural setting."

"The new global dimension of Christianity has brought a new sensitivity to the fact that the text of Scripture can be understood adequately only within its own context, and that the understanding and application of its eternal message demands aware-



ness of our own cultural context."

"Within the reality of a new global church, a fresh reading of Scripture is possible through the shared work of Christians from different parts of the world. The new perspective requires a firm commitment to the missionary imperatives that are both part of the very structure of our faith and, at the same time, a serious work of biblical scholarship and interpretation."

Escobar brings great insights as he critiques the 19th and 20th century missiological movements with clarity of "mud and glory", as well as points a way forward in a post-Christian & postmodern world. He emphasized the continued need to understand the roles of the Trinity as well as the text and context of the world through new eyes.

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Of the Heart and Mind

Race Together

A most recent campaign by Starbucks on opening race relation and inequality discussion became a fiasco on social media and back-fired on the company. The campaign was to have Starbucks employees write "Race Together" on the coffee cups to invite customers to openly discuss the issue. CEO of Starbucks; Charles Schlutz commented to shareholders, ""All I am asking of you is to understand what we're trying to do, to understand our intentions. We strongly believe that our best days are ahead of us."

In one of the web-post by a Social Media Marketing Manager, Tai Tran proposed 3 reasons why Starbucks failed in this marketing campaign.

- 1) Poor Brand Alignment. Starbucks as a brand has never been associated with racial diversity. Instead, it has been known for premium pricing and even gentrification in some cities. A campaign on race relations and income disparity was quite ironic for a brand such as Starbucks.
- 2) Authenticity Deficit. As a nationwide marketing initiative on race and diversity, Starbucks failed to recognize that their partners, Starbucks version of employees, were not trained to facilitate these types of conversations with customers. The overall campaign put partners and customers in an awkward position. #RaceTogether

forced an artificial agenda from corporate Starbucks rather than letting conversations sprout organically. The lack of authenticity caused many customers to feel that Starbucks was misinformed while attempting to cash in on a recent trend.

- 3) Poor Reaction. Starbucks customers began flooding social media with their frustrations about the campaign. Starbucks' response? Not much. Some customers attempted to tweet to Corey duBrowa's Twitter handle to no avail. Shortly, on the same day of #RaceTogether launch, duBrowa's Twitter was deactivated. This further fueled customers' anger with Starbucks-their lack of responsibility and responsiveness. DuBrowa's Twitter handle has since been reactivated.

This has a great lesson for us from the church and in the workplace. In our efforts to be salt and light in the world for Christ, we need to ask what kind of 'brand alignment' of ourselves as well as the church do we bring to the world. How we are viewed, what we are known for has everything got to do with how non-believers perceive what the church is about. The typical caricature of churches in Singapore is converting people and building larger churches. Christians are deemed to be middle and upper class living in relative comfort.



That does not align with the one whom we proclaim to be Lord and Saviour, whose life is marked by love, compassion and sacrifice. James 1:27 writes, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." We suffer from poor brand alignment.

Like many Starbucks employees, believers are asked to share the gospel with non-believers. It is not uncommon to hear from some believers about 'evangelism fatigue'. Many believers feel awkward and forced to share Christ but do it because it is 'our responsibility'. Today, people are interested not merely in words that we say. Much more, they are keen to see this 'authenticity' factor. Do Christians walk the talk? The lives that we live, the values with which we live by are strong testimonies of the Christ we preach. We suffer from an authenticity deficit.

It is also observed that many believers when stumped with bigger and more profound questions about their faith respond with a

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Open Eyes in a Darkened Room

Hector and the search for Happiness.

Hector (Simon Pegg) is a quirky psychiatrist who has become increasingly tired of his humdrum life. As he tells his girlfriend, Clara (Rosamund Pike), he feels like a fraud: he hasn't really tasted life, and yet he's offering advice to patients who are just not getting any happier. So Hector decides to break out of his deluded and routine driven life.

Armed with buckets of courage and child-like curiosity, he embarks on a global quest in hopes of uncovering the elusive secret formula for true happiness. And so begins a larger than life adventure with riotously funny results. Based on the world-wide best-selling novel of the same name, *Hector and the Search for Happiness* is a rich, exhilarating, and hilarious tale from director Peter Chelsom, starring Simon Pegg, Toni Collette, Rosamund Pike, Stellan Skarsgard, Jean Reno and Christopher Plummer. (From Rotten Tomatoes)

The pursuit of happiness is something that is fundamentally human. Hector carries a journal in which he scribble sketches and write short phrases of reflection after each encounter. For a comedy, I can tolerate the stereotypes portrayed in the movie though I believe that greater sensitivity to other cultures can provide a richer experience to this deep longing to be happy. Some has called this movie the *Eat, Pray, Love's* guy edition.

This is a great film to help

people discuss and explore the topic of happiness. Is there a difference between happiness and joy which the bible speaks of? How often do we truly witness or experience deep joy?

The movie provides many snippets of what brings happiness. These catch phrases seems to ring true and provide us food for thoughts. A few examples from the movie; "Making comparisons can spoil your happiness", "Many people only see happiness in their future", "Happiness is doing a job you love", "Happiness is caring about the happiness of those you love", "Happiness is a certain way of seeing things"

The bible presents us a very different perspective. 'Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.' (James 1:2-4)

In our pleasure seeking culture, why do we even entertain the thought that trials can be considered pure joy? I also often wondered, how a person can detach himself from the pain of trials and turn joyful? Is there something deeper that we are missing here? Some commentators says that happiness is fleeting and dependent on things outside of ourselves, while joy is drawn from deep within from



character that is not dependent on external circumstances.

I believe we cannot have joy without being happy. The source of this joy must emerge from a deep and intimate relationship with Christ. Maturity and completeness are the results of perseverance, a very rare quality in these days of instant gratification and microwave culture. It is also unlike Chinese philosophies where one can see beyond the world's joy and sorrows (看破红尘) and coming to terms with it. Rather it is the real experience of joy and happiness that our faith and hope in Jesus brings to us.

Psalms 84:1-4: How lovely is your dwelling place, LORD Almighty!
² My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.
³ Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young—a place near your altar, LORD Almighty, my King and my God.
⁴ Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.

Pursue joy in the Lord, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Kingdom Building at the Workplace

Coming Events

For more information check our web-site.

29th April – Discipleship @ the Workplace
Dr. Jerry White



wide opened mouth without words. Many are happy to sit from Sunday to Sunday to simply listen and by the time they are outside the gates of the church have forgotten about what we have learnt, much less attempting to live it out during the rest of the week.

We have been encouraged and warned by Paul in his writing to young Timothy, " ² Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. ⁵ But you be watchful in all things,

endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." (2 Timothy 4:2-5) We need to be mindful of false doctrines such as the Prosperity Gospel or Positivity Gospel that now plague the global church.

We need as Peter wrote, "¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." (1 Peter 3:15,16) We suffer from bad responses.

May God have mercy on us.

Timothy Liu