DISCIPLESHIP AND WORLD MISSION

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Any discipleship training course in the UK needs to take the issue of world mission really seriously, but not for the reason you first thought of.
Category: Observations

If you are designing a discipleship training course in the UK, you must take the issue of world mission seriously.

Well, I would say that, wouldn't I?

The first reason is that you can't separate God's disciple making at home from disciple making around the world. The *Great Commission* in Matthew 28: 19,20 makes the point that we need to make disciples in our home city, home nation and across the world. If you are trying to do one without the other, then you are missing the point. Equally, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence, that when people get involved in supporting and encouraging world mission, they and their churches benefit greatly.

Well, I would say that, wouldn't I?

However, the bit you may not expect me to say, is the really important one. We need the world church, more than it needs us, today.

- Most of us are unsure how to encourage discipleship in a multi-cultural, multi-faith world, but our brothers and sisters in Asia and Africa have been living with those realities for generations. We need to learn from them.
- We are facing increasing hostility to our faith from a secular establishment. Again, this is nothing new to Christians in many other parts of the world.
- Perhaps most importantly, the church in the UK is declining numerically and viewed from outside is deeply syncretistic. We have a massive amount to learn from Christians in growing churches who have learned how to be faithful Christians within a culture, while not being absorbed by the culture.

To put it bluntly, we need help and there are significant resources out there in the growing Church that could help us.

However, I see two problems.

- Firstly, I don't think we have realised our poverty. We say we are rich (where did I hear that before?) and feel that our stance towards Christians in other places must be one of giving, not of receiving. We need an attitude change.
- Secondly, there are very few structures that allow a flow of world Christians into the UK. Even if we were prepared to listen, it is hard for people to come here. Perhaps a large slice of the future of mission agencies lies in facilitating the flow of missionaries to the UK to help our disciple making activities.