

## **Our Passion**

by Randy G. Mitchell

### **History**

In 2010 a momentous gathering occurred in Tokyo, Japan. Close to 1000 delegates representing 73 countries gathered to discuss progress in the world missions. It was this Tokyo 2010 consultation and the subsequent Tokyo Declaration that gave rise to the establishment of the Global Great Commission Network (CGGN). The objective was to establish a means of taking Tokyo 2010 forward, seeing the consultation more than a one-time event and the declaration more than mere aspirations.

### **Why another global network**

The GGCN is a means to encourage connectedness, communication, and collaboration around the one great purpose—the discipling of people from every *ethne*. Just as wine, new or old, needs a wine skin, ideas, and ideals need a container for distribution, some structure to carry their cause. The GGCN exists to champion the redemptive cause of Christ and the means by which His church participates—making disciples.

The Tokyo Declaration states, "*God has entrusted this generation with more opportunities and resources to complete the task than any previous one. We have more mission-minded churches, more sending structures and bases, more missionaries, more material resources, more funding, more and better technology, more information and data, a deeper understanding of the task, and a clearer focus of our responsibility than previous generations.*" God requires this generation to match the present reality with a willingness to humbly collaborate, even sacrificially, as together we rely on the Holy Spirit to lead and guide and bless our efforts as we participate with God in His redemptive mission. We must recognize and come to value the power of synergy. This will only happen when "I" becomes "we."

### **Grass-roots movement**

The diversity of the global Church necessitates that the GGCN be a grassroots, all-inclusive movement. We want to be as accessible to as many as possible. We exist to make resources broadly available for the making of disciples and cultivating discipleship movements. Resources are digital, versatile, free of charge, and broadly available. Ideas, tools, and strategies are to be shared network wide. We desire to simply facilitate the flow of information from member to member, ministry to ministry.

The Tokyo Declaration acknowledges that, "*Missions is no longer the predominant domain of Western Christianity.*" Traditional mission agencies and networks that defined our past are either undergoing major transformations or are becoming obsolete. "*The preponderance of mission activity today is being engaged by Majority World Christians outside of the West. Christ's ambassadors are coming from everywhere around the world and going to anywhere and everywhere in the world. We rejoice that today's mission force is global in composition, bearing a diversity of thought, practice and resources that enriches and energizes Christ's global Cause as never before.*"

The changes that occur in our world require the establishment of new structures to address these realities. We are a global Church, and a global mission force. As we ponder the immensity and diversity of the global Church we quickly recognize our need for virtual space to connect. Although we value face-to-face interaction, we acknowledge that if we are to connect, communicate, and collaborate in a significant way we must leverage technology to do so.

### **Inclusive**

We conclude that, "*The present day mission task is so large and complex that no one church, agency, national missions movement, or regional mission block can take it on alone or independently.*" It is imperative that we commit ourselves to intentionally forming strategic relationships, not only with those to whom we are similar, but with those who represent the diverse activities associated with mission. We exist to encourage these relationships and to foster them whenever possible.

### **Unity, not homogeneity**

We are not pursuing homogeneity. It is actually our differences that represent our greatest strength. However, we are bound together by a common faith and a shared vision of seeing Christ made known among all nations. Each diverse ministry contributes unique qualities to the betterment of the whole. We are individual, heterogeneous, yet united in purpose. We envision this network to be a place where relationships, alliances, and working partnerships are valued. We see the members of the network communicating with one another by sharing information, ideas, etc.

As a network we need to rely on the input and expertise of people with disparate views and backgrounds to create cross-fertilization that sparks insight and innovation. Together we have better ideas, because ideas become better when we collaborate together. Never in the history of man has it been more imperative that we recognize the different but important parts of the global Body of Christ and humbly submit our best ideas to be improved by others. We exist to ensure connectedness even as we celebrate our differences.