

Toward a Spirit-Led Orthopathy of Mission: Simultaneous Vectors

The logo for the Evangelical Missiological Society (ems) is located in the top right corner. It consists of the lowercase letters "ems" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font, enclosed within a dark blue circle.

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Vol 1:2 2021

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INTRODUCTION

A biblical orthodoxy and orthopraxy of mission considers the correct teaching and practice of evangelistic mission to provide access to the gospel for all nations. In keeping with right teaching and practice, this article endeavors to highlight a biblical orthopathy (right concern) of mission which considers the Spirit's guidance amidst the missionary task. The Holy Spirit's guidance in mission benefits current missiologies focused on unreached people groups. Luke's consistent inclusion of the term Holy Spirit in the narrative of the early church places a heightened value on an orthopathy of mission which focuses on obedience to the guidance of the Spirit in fulfilling the Great Commission.

MISSION AND UPG MISSIOLOGY

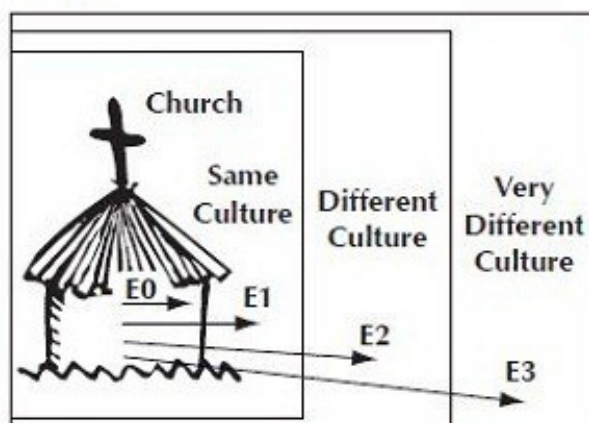
Mission flows from God and is rooted in his nature of saving and sending (Van Rhee 2014, 14). He invites those in his fallen creation who he has reconciled through Christ to share in this missionary task. Through the work of the Spirit and the emboldened preaching of the kingdom of God as a result of that enablement, the missionary of Acts is purposed for mission "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). God uses believers' effort in tandem with the leading of the Spirit in cross-cultural missionary work. God calls and directs individuals to designated, specific peoples and places empowering them to share the gospel in a meaningful manner. A Spirit-led orthopathy primarily considers the leading of the Holy Spirit amongst all other information by which to draw a direction of mission.

Engaging people groups with the least amount of access to the gospel is a focus of current UPG mission efforts. UPGs by contemporary definition have "no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize" the group (Koch and Winter 2002, 536). The Joshua Project, Operation Mission, and Open Doors present the

unreached in addressable groupings derived from the missiology of Ralph Winter and others. Research on UPGs can provide excellent perspective on contextualization of the gospel and the lack of evangelistic engagement of people groups. Compassion for people outside of one's own Christian experience is learned through exposure to information from these sources. This approach highlights well-researched, pre-determined destinations for mission. The missionary's awareness of the characteristics of reached and unreached peoples can lead to an ambition to share the gospel to the least reached, akin to Paul's "ambition" (Rom 15:14).

WINTER OF 1974

A progenitor of "people group" thinking, Ralph Winter's address at Lausanne 1974 categorized and detailed the cultures of people groups as well as their cultural proximity to the gospel. Two scales are proposed, an E-scale (representing cultural distance a missionary must travel to share the gospel) spans from E0 (most alike ones culture) to E3 (very different from one's culture) and a P-scale representing the cultural



distance potential believers must travel to join a church) spanning from P0 to P3. Winter places an emphasis on missions to be prioritized wherever a culture is vastly different from one's local Christian experience (E3) and where the church is not present in their cultural context (P3). Engagement of a UPG with little or no access to the gospel is considered "frontier mission" (Koch and Winter 2002, 538). This elevated importance of reaching a UPG is a

reaction to finding that 90% of missionaries are engaging "reached" peoples while only 10% are engaged in frontier mission (Koch and Winter 2002, 543). Redundancy of missionary workers in being sent to lands which are not E2-E3/P2-P3 is problematic to this idea. A missiological approach which accentuates Winter's hope to bring about closure is the essential missionary task of engaging UPGs (Johnson 2009, Kindle Loc., 1211). The evangelical church may find that their destinations of mission pre-plotted, direction and distance set, after adopting this missiology. Well researched calculations of low percentages of Christian population can appear to steer mission projects and funding. At this juncture, efforts relating to closure of the missionary task may inform missionary activity more than the guidance by the Spirit in the hope of "all nations" at the Parousia of Christ.

Pre-determined destinations which pertain to the E2-E3/P2-P3 cultures may be offered to parishioners along with statistics which present an imbalance of funding mission towards these people groups. UPG missiologies may employ promotional material highlighting their differences in culture and lack of church presence. Based on emphasis by the missionary agency, local church, and missionary, this approach to mission exhibits an increased ideal of efficacy in mission giving and sending, drawing correlations based on numerics. Truly, this approach can drive itself “on rails” by underscoring cultures vastly different from one’s own in connection to the absence of the church.

HOGAN’S RESPONSE

Philip Hogan, the director of Assemblies of God Foreign Mission, responded to Winter’s Lausanne 1974 address with praise for Winter’s acumen in methodical delineation of mission (Hogan 1974b, 242). Hogan shifts the “go ye” in the Great Commission to not be one of attention to geographical distance, but of cultural and sociological distance, noting peoples who have yet to hear the gospel. Arguing for efficacy within Winter’s framework, Hogan offers a pragmatic application of UPG categories for mission. Foreign students may present a greater opportunity to be reached to create “E-1 emissaries” back to their own people, rather than sending missionaries who have a greater cultural distance (Hogan 1974a, 242). After warning missiologists of overreliance on human constructs of mission, Hogan presents the main point of his response: all must recognize the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit in mission per Acts 5:32.

“Sometimes in the very act of analyzing, we rule out, on the basis of human categories, the overriding factor of our times that we are witnessing worldwide, an outpouring of the Spirit of God upon persons and in places for which there is no human design and in which there is no human planning.”
- Philip J. Hogan

He pleads with the reader to realize that the church is in partnership with the Spirit, arguing that “When the wind of God truly blows, E-3 evangelism becomes as easy and successful as E-2 and E-1 evangelism.” What arises from Hogan’s perspective is the idea of efficiency found in a church who relies upon God.

Winter and Hogan present two differing orthopathies in constructing a missiology. Each took into account both strategy and the Spirit, in view of Christ’s return. Until 1974, Winter’s UPG focus was not informing the church’s mission. Yet, this approach

greatly assists the church in understanding contexts and peoples who need churches planted among them. Winter mourns that an imbalanced missionary force is sent to the reached. Conversely, Hogan clearly hopes that the church finds direction and inspiration by hearing from the Spirit and then going, trusting God for the fruit among the nations above any missiological tool. The church is living in the tension of trying to discern the Spirit alongside of an increasing amount of data and analytics. If the church must choose a correct “voice” to primarily listen to for one’s destination for mission, who will they listen to? This tension is still present in missiological circles today.

THE GREAT MISSIONS DEBATE

In October 2019, Trinity Bible College held The Great Missions Debate between David Jacob, (Missionary-in-Residence) and Alex McGregor (College representative of Assemblies of God World Missions). Both have served in missionary agencies in various capacities. The exchange in the debate is reminiscent of an engagement of Winter (Jacob) and Hogan (McGregor) and parsed the missionary task in like form. McGregor shared that the church must actively participate with the Spirit while in mission rather than blindly following an instructional missiology grounded in strategy. Jacob considered how only 4% of missionaries sent by all evangelical missions agencies are sent to UPGs (Trinity 2019). Jacob and McGregor agree that the results of evangelical mission in 2019 are unsatisfactory: 41% of the world have yet to hear the gospel. To remedy the lack of missionaries engaging this statistic Jacob accentuated a UPG focused missiology. After 2000 years of mission, Jacob challenged his audience to consider that there should have brought forth better results than 41% remaining unreached. To reach the 41%, McGregor postulates that the missionary must participate with the Holy Spirit on a personal level in mission in unity (John 21:17). He then proposes that this statistic is the result of missionaries and missionary agencies might not be listening and walking with the Spirit on a personal level, relying on set missiologies derived from data.

If McGregor’s notion is true, any missiology we favor over the guidance in the Holy Spirit may err on self-reliance in seeking guidance in mission rather than inquiry of the Spirit. In addition, membership to a Spirit-led organization in agreement to their orthodoxy of theology may not equate to orthopraxy in being Spirit-led (Zarns 2019, 148). Further, if an organization is Spirit-led in name only, yet self-reliant in concern and practice, then the design of the organization of mission will produce the exact results the design elicits as apart from God’s influence: unsatisfactory results. God

might not be the primary influencer of mission movements He authored (1 Cor. 3:7). The difference-maker which affects and transforms missiological pathways is the orthopathy (correct concern) applied to orthodoxy and orthopraxy of mission.

To those witnessing Jesus' final charges to his missionary people on earth, the orthopathy was clear: the Spirit directs the disciples in mission (Van Engen 1991, Loc. 487). This primary concern of the church is Jesus's chosen path to send the church to a world waiting for the gospel. At the time of Jesus's resurrection and ascension, the entire world was considered "unreached" by today's definition. Before His departure, Jesus offered no charts or maps for mission other than a brief outline of emanating regions from Jerusalem with the Spirit as guide for the church through the future wilderness, just as He had trusted the Spirit's leading in the desert.

UNDERSTANDING ORTHODOXY, ORTHOPATHY, ORTHOPRAXY IN MISSION

The exchanges of Winter and Hogan, Jacob and McGregor, lead one to Scripture to ask three questions about mission. What was the early church's understanding of the missionary task? How did Jesus equip them to carry out the task? In what way did missionary work occur in Acts? An investigation into a biblical orthodoxy, orthopathy, and orthopraxy of the early church answers these questions. Respectively, the relationship between right teaching, right concern, and right practice transforms the way that missionaries function given the monumental task that Winter and Hogan consider. The former ortho- words may be readily understood to the reader, orthopathy undergirds the relationship between doctrine and practice providing the right affection/concern by which to carryout and prioritize doctrines and practices.

ORTHODOXY, "RIGHT DOCTRINE" IN THE MISSIONARY TASK

On correct doctrine, the Great Commission details "making disciples," who receive teaching and baptism as followers of Christ (Mt. 28:18-20). Jesus's authority sends the disciples with confidence under God's sovereignty (Carson 1984, 595). His commission implies a centrifugal direction to *panta ta ethne* (Gk.- of all nations) from the point where His new people stood (Bosch 1991, 51). This mission to all nations includes the people of Israel who need to be evangelized by the new and growing church (Bosch 1991, 50). Places and people where the name of Christ is not yet heard, indicates where believers need to be sent (Johnson 2009, Loc. 1693).

End of Luke, Beginning of Acts

Luke's detailed account of Jesus's final days on earth conveys vital information to the disciples prior to His departure (Luke 24:47-49). The beginning of the Book of Acts reiterates this information in Acts 1:8, leading to a greater emphasis on the task Jesus was leaving for the disciples. Luke employs a chiasmic structure¹ to emphasize the components of these passages, bridging Luke and Acts.

Luke 24:47 Preach repentance and forgiveness of sins to all nations.

Luke 24:48 You are witnesses.

Luke 24:49 The promise will be sent; stay until clothed with power.

Luke 24: 50-53 Jesus blesses the disciples who then worship in Jerusalem.

Acts 1:1-7 Preaching the kingdom of God, The risen Jesus encourages the disciples to trust God's decisions on timing.

Acts 1:8a You will receive power.

Acts 1:8b You will be witnesses.

Acts 1:8c Jesus states explicit geographic places, in Jerusalem, Judea/Samaria, ends of the earth.

The method for carrying out the missionary task appears in this pattern: the Gospel of the kingdom of God to the nations, Witnesses of Jesus, The Promised Spirit in Luke 24:47-49 then leading to the mirrored structure of Acts 1:8 as The Promised Spirit, Witnesses of Jesus, and Gospel of the kingdom of God to the nations. The risen Christ's preaching the kingdom of God and his emphasis on the importance of the Spirit's guidance in mission sit at the fulcrum at the end of Luke and the beginning of Acts. Jesus readily answers the disciples' question concerning when God would restore the Kingdom of Israel. He aims to re-center the disciples not on their expectation of when and how God would restore His Kingdom but that the Spirit would come to assist. By His Spirit, then, the kingdom of God would be preached through the disciples to the nations (Acts 20:24).

¹ A rhetorical or literary figure in which words, grammatical constructions, or concepts are repeated in reverse order, in the same or a modified form.

ORTHOPATHY “RIGHT CONCERN” IN THE MISSIONARY TASK

Many evangelical missiologists agree that the Great Commission carried out through the power of the Holy Spirit fulfills the missionary task (Keener 2012a, 689). Luke teaches his reader about the peoples with whom the disciples share the gospel through successive encounters they experience after the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Scripture reveals the impartation of the same Spirit to the church that Jesus Christ received at His baptism (Carson 1984, 110, Loder 1989, 86-87, Moltmann 1977, 33). The prominence of this spiritual immersion received attention by Luke as a part of the instructions and experience for the church and all believers (Acts 2:38-39).

According to Jesus’s instructions, fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) by the preaching of the Gospel in self-reliance would not be enough (Edwards 2015, 467). The Spirit would help the believer to carry out the missionary task. Abiding with the Holy Spirit provides perspective and direction to the believer (Brogden Jr. 2013, 35, Gallagher 2019, 340). It stands to note that the church experienced persecution, scattering Spirit-led believers to discover new opportunities of mission (Keener 2012b, 1467)(Acts 4:6-7, 5:17, 8:1).

Luke teaches the reader through the consistent inclusion of the term *Holy Spirit* to communicate the influence of the Spirit prior to actions taken by the worker. This correlation informs the reader that the actions of the disciples are the fruit of this inspiration (Green 1997, 492). The Spirit provides a right concern and attitude in sharing the gospel leading to unity, spiritual fervor, as well as divine guidance (Josefsson 2005, 417).

The Spirit’s work within believers can lead to inspired speech and divine guidance. Displays of these two categories of the explicit work of the Holy Spirit are found throughout Lukan literature (Green 2018). According to Luke, the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to speak prophetically to the gathered crowd of traveling Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 2:8). Inspired speech is recognized as the work of the Holy Spirit by Peter (Acts 4:8), Paul (Acts 9:22), Agabus (Acts 11:28), Stephen (Acts 7:1-53), and Philip’s four daughters (Acts 21:9) (Miller 2005, Kindle Loc. 4478). In essence, these events were also opportunities for preaching the kingdom of God. The Spirit provides destinations both near and far from one’s culture to engage audience with the gospel. In Luke 24 and Acts 1 Jesus highlights that Spirit-led disciples will preach the kingdom of God in near and cross-cultural evangelism.

On explicit examples of divine direction/guidance, Jesus's charge was that the church was to go "to the nations". The community of faith is found functioning in the Spirit simultaneously in all regions to accomplish the missionary task. In each case, the Holy Spirit provides a point of reference, or destination for the missionary.

- Ananias - guided to a destination to assist Saul, to pray for him (Acts 9:10-17).
- Philip - guided by the Holy Spirit to stand near to a chariot while travelling, and the fruit of this action was a believer who would evangelize his people in Ethiopia (Acts 8:26-30).
- Paul - guided not to travel to Asia, but to travel to Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10).
- Paul - guided back to Jerusalem (Acts 19:21, 20:22).

A Crossroads of Orthopathy

The disciples relied on the Holy Spirit, guided in mission. The destinations plotted are not guided solely by human perception based on percentage, but by God Himself. What is learned through these passages is that the Spirit coordinates meetings between a missionary and audience. As Paul embodies the referential missionary to the unreached, with Jesus as the "primal" missionary (Bosch), key moments in Scripture inform us of the attenuation of Paul's ambition to the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:14). This exchange of his self-reliance towards a God-reliance connects the missionary to audiences he did not plan to meet.

Guided away from an "Unreached" people to another "Unreached" people

The ambition of Paul caused him to recognize the unreached people of Asia (Bruce 1988, 306). The people were on his heart as they had not heard the name of Jesus. Yet, the Spirit prevented Paul not to travel there. His new destination, Macedonia, another unreached people revealed in a dream (Peterson 2009, 453). Paul set himself to engage wherever the church is not in existence and learned firsthand how divine guidance directs the steps of the missionary amidst his methodical engagement of Jews at the synagogue in each new city (Fitzmyer 1998, 577). Paul was redirected from one place, known to have no witness, to another by the Spirit of Jesus (Schnabel 2012, 668). The Spirit can prevent missionaries from going to places which would qualify as a "least reached" land in frontier mission missiology in favor of another. Decisions about direction in mission are best made in reliance on the Spirit's guidance.

Guided toward a previously “Reached” evangelized people

Paul is “compelled” by the Spirit to travel to Jerusalem in Acts 20-21.

22 And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. 24 But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace. (Acts 20:22-24)

Jerusalem, which contained a local church, does not satisfy the contemporary description of “unreached”, however the destination of mission is decided by the Spirit (Acts 21:17-19) (Keener 2014, 3114). Whereas the implied structure of Acts 1:8 emanates from the original locus of the holy city, Paul’s travel exhibits a different direction through his obedience to the Spirit enroute to providing access to the gospel (Keener 2014, 2860). He brings with him a contribution for the poor in Jerusalem given by the believers in Macedonia and Achaia, making Jerusalem a recipient of relief and development (Rom. 15:26). This pathway through Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 20:1-4), Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-23:30), and Rome (28:16-31) would be anything but symmetrical in geography. Once in Jerusalem, Paul asked to address the Jewish crowd on the steps of the barracks and shared about Christ’s impact in his life (Acts 22:1-21). God saw it fit that a people who had an established church were still deserving to receive a missionary who would speak to those within that context who had not heard the gospel. It would be their racism against the Gentiles which would thwart their reception of the gospel. This reapplication of the gospel to the context of Jerusalem educates us of God’s love for unreached Jews and Gentiles as recipients of mission despite contemporary classification (Nanos 1996, 244).

Paul’s ambition

Paul’s ambition in mission is “to preach the gospel where Christ is not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation” (Romans 15:20). Yet in the midst of this objective, Paul chooses obedience to the Spirit to travel to Jerusalem rather than continue his trajectory of “ambition.” This decision to follow the Spirit is not of Paul’s fabrication, but by God’s imposition into Paul’s plan in progress (Schnabel 2012, 841).

Clearly, the missionary task of Paul is toward unreached people groups. He tempers his personal desire and trusts the direction of the Holy Spirit to travel away from the unreached region of Asia. This response came from obedience to the prophetic “Spirit of Jesus” while following the instructions of Jesus, the Great Commission (Acts 16:7) (Bruce 1988, 307). Further, his path to the unreached is guided by the Holy Spirit toward the area of Jerusalem, an area already containing many believers (Acts 21:20). While Jerusalem is considered the missions sending base, it was clear that the Spirit led him to return with Rome and Spain in his future plans. As a change agent, Paul bridges cultures of the Jews and Gentiles in the hopes of their unity in Christ and common mission of “making disciples” (Matt 28:18-20, Acts 21:20-25). In addition, the Spirit was setting Paul on a path of personal redemption to the community which he once terrorized (Acts 9:13).

Missionaries in Acts display reliance on the guidance of the Holy Spirit for a destination to preach the kingdom of God. As the disciple preaches the gospel, the Holy Spirit yields results. What can Christians learn about the work of the Spirit in mission? (1) The Spirit provides divine direction for the missionary which correlates to people groups both unreached and reached, and (2) obedience to the guidance of the Spirit bears fruit.

Efficiency

“The Holy Spirit is equally efficient in Bible-belt regions, in areas of secularism, in places of chains, and in lands of sword threats.”

– Joseph Dimitrov

It benefits the reader to identify a driving reason why missiologies are derived: efficiency. Efficiency is the relationship between energy input and performance within a time frame. Establishing a UPG based missiology may originate from discontent that the missionary task has taken too long and/or that missionary workers are misguided, engaging reached peoples. A biblically defined orthodoxy and orthopraxy of mission may be in place, yet the existing orthopathy is found wanting. Guiding past mission efforts, evangelical and Pentecostal missions may have used “rhetoric of relying on the Spirit”, yet not be reliant on God at all. (Johnson 2009, Loc. 2994). Constructing a missiology which is reactionary can be problematic if not stewarded by missionaries with an orthopathy which focuses on guidance of the Spirit. If rhetoric of Spirit-led mission is in question, mission agencies throughout must do away with empty words

unattached to the Spirit. Missionaries must reestablish obedience to the sovereign guidance of the Spirit and form a closer connection between what they believe and practice. The self-reliance of the missionary force may need to be corrected to inquire of the Spirit for direction and nation/people focus. Shifting attention from primarily hearing the voice of the Spirit for direction to data-driven map charting is not Jesus's intention. He implored the disciples in Luke 24 and Acts 1:8 to wait for the Holy Spirit prior to the work of mission. It stands that the maximum efficiency of mission is attained by the missionary who obeys the Spirit. Therefore, to correct unsatisfactory results in mission, let us reestablish reliance on the guidance of the Spirit and not fall into self-reliance.

A Spirit-led orthopathy emphasizes the preaching of the kingdom of God in obedience to the risen Christ's instructions. The Holy Spirit can guide the missionary church through Scripture (Acts 2:16-21), the confirmation of others (Acts 15:28), and certainly by God's direct intervention to an individual (Acts 9:1-6). A result of the Holy Spirit's guidance is the avoidance of overvaluing an orthopathy of numerics and percentages. Leadership of mission agencies hold the responsibility of deploying workers, with attention to the aspect of access, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Reliance on God's empowerment informs the church's perception of *Missio Dei* which may be relying on self-effort. This restoration of God's empowerment in a Spirit-led orthopathy of mission can transform perceptions of mission (Engelsviken 2003, 494). The mission agency must be aware of repeated social conditioning of parishioners through any one direction of mission may cause them to sense a call to a people highlighted by missionaries who emphasize a particular people/destination. UPGs do need to be reached, yet an orthopathy which raises reaching any one people over another in deserving the gospel is concerning.

An orthopathy with the Holy Spirit as orchestrator of mission primarily considers the empowerment to preach the kingdom of God where a missionary is led. The church's reliance on the Holy Spirit in present and future will define their mission akin to the early church of Acts 2. As demonstrated, Paul travelled against the grain of his own missiological ambition to provide access to the kingdom of God for those in Jerusalem, a place Winter would consider P0-P1/E0-E1.

Truly, any mission which does not consider both strategy and the Spirit is inefficient. Yet, even our mistakes can bring God glory (Phil. 1:15-18). While not stating that "Everything is mission," there are no small destinations nor small decisions made by God in directing mission (Neill 1959). The Holy Spirit as the orchestrator of

missiological engagement can coincide with information from a UPG/access-based missiology as well as recognize opportunities in people groups not unlike one's own, potentially where the church may already exist. A social conditioning of congregations might lead them to focus on UPGs while ignoring mission opportunities in like cultures. A proverbial Jerusalem and Judea/Samaria may be forgotten for the sake of the Return-on-Investment of a UPG missiology. When a missionary is compelled by the Spirit to go to an E1/P1 people to preach the kingdom of God, the effect of their obedience is equally as important, and efficient, to the fulfillment of the missionary task as one compelled to an E3/P3 people.

A believer or congregation seeking closure, with a perception that their mission efforts speed the return of Christ may drive the community of believers to trust a percentage-based chart of Christianization in place of inquiry of the Spirit's leading (Matt 24:14). It is important to emphasize that once all nations are reached, this event will not cause Jesus to return, nor force God's hand, R.T. France makes this clear in his commentary on Matthew. Reaching all nations is a necessary preliminary to Christ's return (France 2007).

To reiterate, only God knows when Jesus will return for His church reading a bit further in Matthew 24:36 reveals this, accentuated in Acts 1:7. Parousia may happen once all nations have a church planted, or it might not – God alone decides on Jesus' return. A formulaic presumption of Matthew 24:14 may provide a clearly stated mission goal of reaching a P3/E3 people and lead to an abundance of effective promotion and funding corresponding mission projects. Yet, the Spirit may also be pointing out destinations of mission in P1/E1 settings which may currently not be considered. The Holy Spirit does not negate one person from deserving the gospel in the book of Acts, nor any people from the receiving of missionaries. This idea may offend reached peoples with a recent narrative of proficiency in sending missionaries to UPGs, potentially the Holy Spirit is directing missionaries back towards reached peoples to address peoples we are just now beginning to categorize, such as those rooted in secularity. Perhaps the receiving culture is not vastly different from the missionary's sending culture, and perhaps the church is available to evangelize their people group. The Spirit can lead workers to join in the missionary task of providing access to the gospel to those presently unreached no matter Winter's classification of a culture.

ORTHOPRAXY, “RIGHT PRACTICE” IN THE MISSIONARY TASK

Biblical orthodoxy and a Spirit-led orthopathy produces correct practice in mission. UPG missiology primarily considers an orthopathy of sending missionaries to those least reached. A Spirit-led orthopathy considers obedience to the Spirit to be paramount in drawing the missionary task.

Simultaneous Vectors of Mission

A mathematical term, the *vector* illustrates a representation of Spirit-led mission in practice. A vector begins at a point of origin and flows in a singular direction and distance. The direction and distance of the vector is decided by the destination revealed. Principles within the element of a vector provide a framework to visualize the missiological movement of the Early Church as the believers followed the instructions of Jesus Christ to the apostles in Luke 24:47-49 and Acts 1:8.

Missionaries travel on a vector from a point of origin towards a destination. A missionary (participant) occupies a single point on the vector at a time between the origin and a destination in travel for mission.

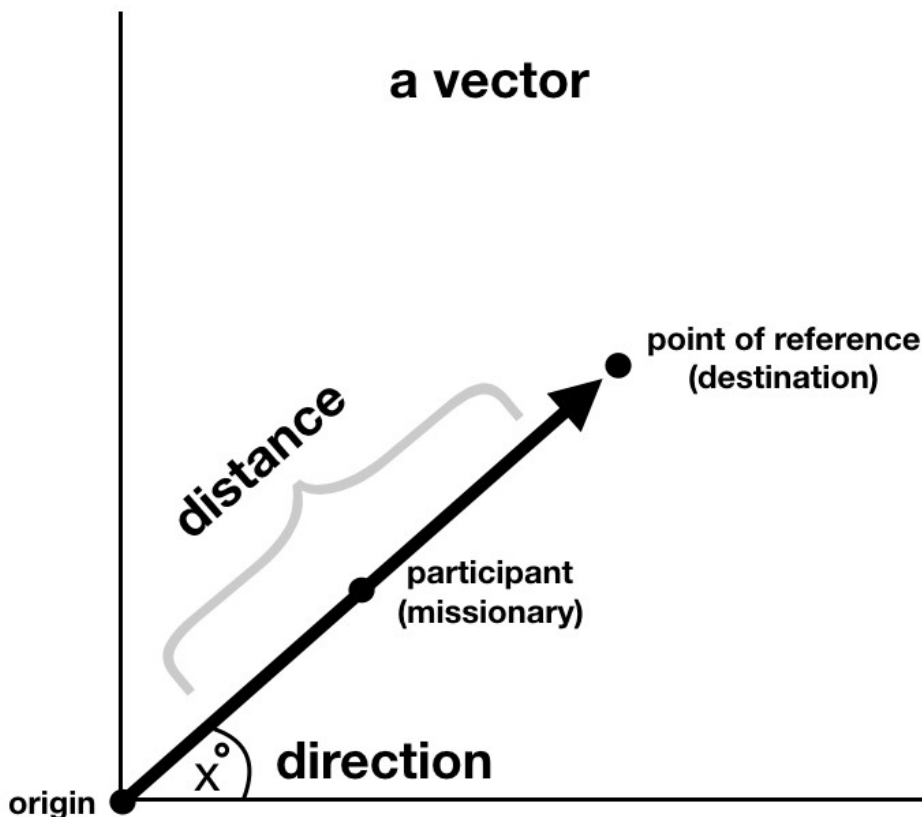


Figure 1 A Vector

The structure of a vector helps to further expound on the chiastic structure of Luke 24:47-49 and Acts 1:1-8.

“...and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations (Panta ta ethne), beginning in Jerusalem.” Luke 24:47

“...in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8c

Framed by Luke, the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached to the nations, with the point of origin the area of Jerusalem containing the people group of the Jews. The original vectors of Spirit-led mission began in Jerusalem, an emanation of evangelistic witness would preach the kingdom of God (Macchia 2006, Loc. 730). Those visiting Jerusalem for the festival at Pentecost would carry their new-found trust in Christ to their homelands becoming Hogan’s “E-1 emissaries”(Gallagher 2017, 112). The sent gospel is centrifugal in direction, providing destinations of mission in many differing geographic regions. Simultaneous evangelistic work occurs to the Jews in Jerusalem, to the Jews and Gentiles in Judea/Samaria, and to the Gentiles found at the ends of the Earth (Lewis 2015, 13). The simultaneous directions of outreach by which the gospel was spoken by Jesus in a prophetic manner.

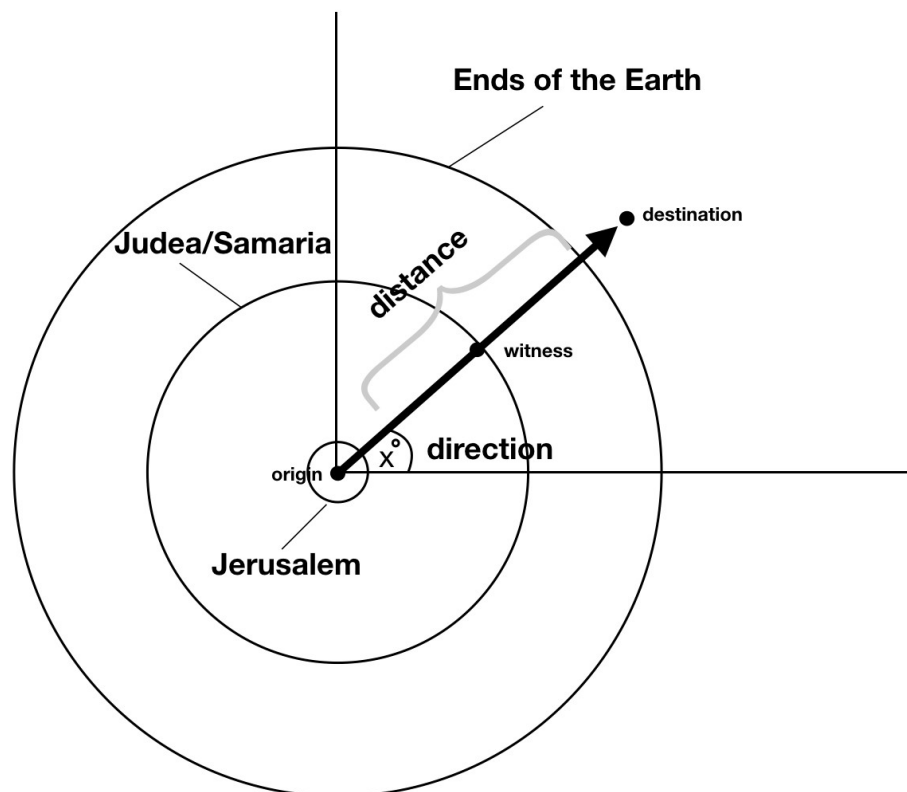


Figure 2 Vector used to visualize pathways of Spirit-led mission

“You are witnesses of these things.” Luke 24:48

“...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem...” Acts 1:8b

The disciples gathered in obedience to follow the risen Jesus’s instructions to receive the promise of the Spirit. They received power to complete the task of preaching the kingdom of God. Further, the empowerment of the Spirit guided the geographic direction of their now Spirit-led, efforts.

“I am going to send you what my father promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:49

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you;” Acts 1:8a

The empowerment of the Spirit provides an answer to how the disciples would preach the kingdom of God. While it could have become enticing for the followers of Christ to evangelize the immediate area of Jerusalem through their own self effort, Jesus directed them to wait until the promise arrived. This divine guidance is as important then as it is now for the impending missionary task.

The eschatological arrival of the coming King is based on God’s own timing. God’s timing is sovereign, which informs current perception of the efficiency of missionary efforts. While waiting on Him, the community of faith engages all nations in mission (Matt 24:36, Matt 28:18-20). Spirit-led missionaries regard closure primarily through a lens of obedience to the Holy Spirit in guiding the community of believers towards the nations. Witnesses can be sent in directions toward an E1/P1 people or a E2/P3 people alike. The work of mission orchestrated by the Holy Spirit in connection to the community of faith joining in global mission culminates in access being realized to all peoples.

What, then, is the qualification on where missional efforts are to be exercised? As the Holy Spirit led the disciples, Scripture displays simultaneous efforts in Jerusalem, Judea/Samaria, and the ends of the earth. So, a parallel, contemporary experience can follow suit in obedience to the Holy Spirit amidst all perceived information.

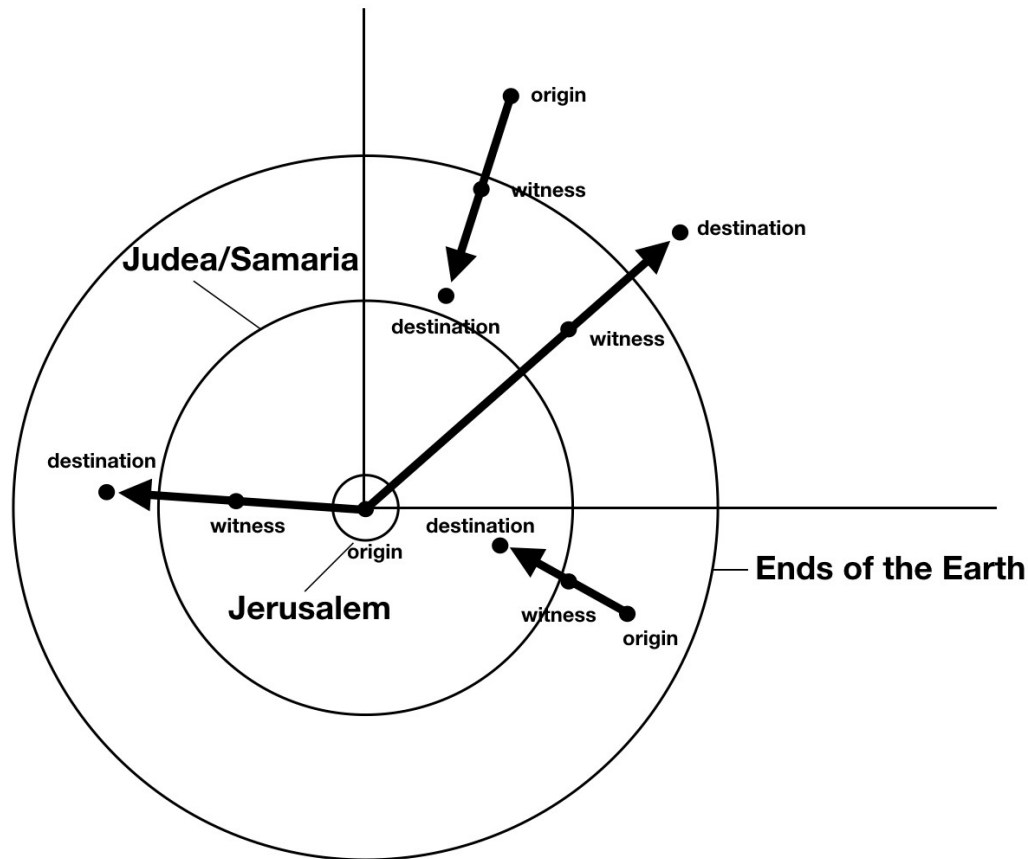


Figure 3 Simultaneous Vectors of Mission

This orthopathy assists to legitimize destinations of mission which originate from the research of man coinciding with revelation by the Holy Spirit. Simultaneous vectors (missionaries) of differing direction and distance can travel with the charge of preaching the kingdom of God to all peoples. Missions-sending nations are now also missions-receiving nations according to this model. Access to the gospel is a byproduct of trusting the Holy Spirit as orchestrator, even if the pathways go against a missiology tailored to address the least reached.

Missionaries may be uniquely directed by the Spirit and not fit the logic of managerial missiology. In these situations, the leaders must inquire of the Spirit and trust the direction. From the local church level to the executive level of missiological agencies, the community of believers must send missionaries as it seems good to the Holy Spirit and to the community. The results of relying on the Spirit as orchestrator leads to a missiology which values and allows mission to peoples guided by the Spirit,

undoubtedly bringing glory to God. There is no measurement of differing worth in missionary direction. A generous missiology guided by the Spirit, congruent to Scripture, creates unity in common mission of sending and receiving missionaries (Acts 15:28).

Lack of access to the gospel gives reference for the missionary task, while Scripture displays a Spirit-led orthopathy which sends missionaries to provide access to peoples classified by contemporary definition as reached and unreached alike. The guidance of the Holy Spirit may challenge the apostolic ambition of where mission efforts occur as well as present new opportunities for mission where workers find themselves. A scriptural, Spirit-led orthopathy allows for simultaneous vectors of mission. If missionaries heed His guidance first, the kingdom of God will be preached to all nations.

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