

Discussion Questions for
Kingdom Without Borders: The Untold Story of Global Christianity
by Miriam Adeney

Introduction: What I Learned from Filipinos

1. How did Ruth “create wealth”? If your church does a project to serve the poor, what can you learn from Ruth?
2. Money not only needs to be made, it also needs to be managed. What do you learn from Carmena and Lina about managing and maximizing money? Discuss the incremental development of their program. Is there a project you would like to start where some of these ideas might apply?
3. Read aloud Bel Magalit’s “I Have a Dream” speech. Do you have a dream for a body of people? As a group, write out your dream in specific terms like Bel’s.
4. Melba cautions Christian leaders. How do her words apply to you?
5. “Pray and Party” explores Filipinos’ strengths and also their failings. Which do you tend to notice most—strengths or failings? How can you develop a more balanced view?
6. From Miriam’s story at the beginning of the chapter, what do you learn about America? What would you add?

Chapter 1. These Are My People

1. What do laborers in Abu Dhabi have in common with the prophet Daniel?
2. Did the good news come to Asia and Africa through Anglo-American missionaries? How did it come?
3. “Christians can break your heart.” Give an example from the book or from your own experience.
4. What is a “pure pilgrimage church”? In what ways could your church be like this?
5. How does the story of the African students and Korean fishermen model interdependence?
6. In training leaders, what factors should be considered?
7. As you read the list of questions that face the world and church in the twenty-first century, which strike you as important? Why?
8. When you are tempted to be critical or even cynical, how does Daniel’s vision help?

Chapter 2. China: The Elephant in the Room

1. “China is the ‘elephant in the room.’” Give details that support this.
2. What are the three major kinds of churches in China? How are they different?
3. How does the government justify restrictions on churches? What restrictions are common? Is there any freedom to witness?
4. When you read the story of “The Playboy,” what pleasures and tensions do you see in the lifestyle of modern professionals in China? How does the gospel speak to these people?
5. Of the three stories of contemporary Chinese martyrs—Wang, Steven and the Shi family—which one will you remember longest? Why?
6. Describe a major Chinese mission movement. Tell the story of Simon Zhou.
7. Do Chinese need to learn to adapt to minority cultures when they do mission inter-ethnically? Why? Tell the story of Wang and Liang.
8. In the Chinese church as a whole, how important are those who live outside China? What resources and competencies do they contribute to China and to the church worldwide?
9. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese study in North American universities. How could your church or small group befriend Chinese in the college that is nearest to you?
10. God gives courage; several stories in this chapter show this. How does this apply to you? Where do you need courage?

Chapter 3. Word

1. When you read about Ann Judson, what costs of Bible translation do you see? Discuss Ann’s life.
2. In what ways is the Bible important for our lives? In what ways is it a mystery?
3. People in different contexts interpret the Bible differently. Sometimes this goes too far. What are signs that that might be happening? What principles can we follow to safeguard our interpretations?
4. When Africans read the Bible, what are some themes they emphasize? As you learn about this, how does it expand your own understanding?
5. What does a dog gnawing on a bone have to do with the Bible?

6. List verses about the Bible cited in this chapter. Which one speaks to you most powerfully? Why?

Chapter 4. Latin America: Pulsating Passion

1. How are Latin American churches helping the poor? Give examples.
2. Being “born again” in Jesus often stimulates literacy, community organizational skills, and more accountable husbands and fathers. Explain and discuss.
3. Why did the Marxist Shining Path movement target Christians?
4. Documents of the Peruvian Peace and Hope Commission weave Bible teaching with current events. Are there issues in our own communities where we should try to do this?
5. When you read the history of the past fifty years, how does this help you understand Latin America better?
6. Why did “liberation theology” develop? When? What are its strengths? What are some possible weaknesses?
7. Pablo Deiros lists ten dangers for Latin American churches. Do any of these apply to your church?
8. What surprises you about Christians among the tribes? What problems do tribal people face?
9. Describe the birth of a Brazilian mission. Describe Brazilian Antonia van der Meer on the field in Africa.
10. When Latin Americans migrate to the U.S. to find work, how may they be missionaries? Are there any immigrants in your community who hold this vision? How could you find out?
11. After missions are born, they need to mature. What specific recommendations do Carlos Pinto and Antonia van der Meer make? Could these apply to our ministry too?

Chapter 5. Spirit

1. What does the Spirit have to do with ecology?
2. How do the Spirit and the Word balance each other?
3. Is Sundar Singh a practical model for us? In what ways?
4. Of J. I. Packer’s five questions about the Spirit, which one convicts you? Which one offers a helpful corrective for your church?

5. Consider Daniel in Argentina, Vishal and Ruth in India, Aisha and Faridah in their Muslim country, and Mannu in Nepal. What do you learn about the Spirit from these stories?
6. Some people who think they follow the Spirit actually veer into heresy and cause harm. To avoid this in independent African churches, five questions have been raised. Are any of these relevant for your church?
7. What did Hudson Taylor learn about the Spirit? Do you experience this?
8. According to theologian Minnie Abrams, what is the purpose of being filled with the Spirit?
9. Is mystery something to conquer?

Chapter 6. Muslim World: Axis of Hope

1. When Muslims forbid conversions, do they think they are helping their community? Why?
2. What is positive about Muslim cultures? about Iranian culture?
3. Persecution threatens Iranian believers. What forms does this take?
4. In what ways is the Iranian church “mature”?
6. How old is Iranian Christianity? Describe various waves of witness.
7. Name three things that you learn about missionary work in this chapter. After reading it, what do you appreciate about missionaries?
8. List four points to emphasize in witness to Muslims. Discuss these.
9. What are four dangers in over-contextualization?

Chapter 7. Catastrophe

1. What is the difference between charity, development and advocacy? Why do these differences matter?
2. Before we begin a community development program, what six guidelines should we consider? Discuss these.
3. Sometimes “sustainable development” conflicts with “integrated development.” Why? What are the strengths of each?
4. When people become Christians, does this affect their interest in development?

5. To help grow more food, what does ECHO offer?
6. Before setting up a microloan program in a poor community, what criteria should be considered?
7. Some problems, like international debt or AIDS or adequate water, are transnational. Give an example of a movement that has made a big difference at this level.
8. Think about the Uganda farmers, the Filipino fishermen, the Peruvian egg seller, the tribal coffee growers and the Middle Easterners who were suspicious of the pump. What do you learn from these stories?
9. In a disaster, Ajith Fernando asks eight questions. Which ones do you tend to overlook?

Chapter 8. Hindu World: Mystic Servants

1. What is India's population? What percent are under the age of thirty?
2. "Dharmics" and "Dalits" are Hindus with very different concerns. What do Dharmics value? What do Dalits value?
3. What is Hindutva? Why is it important for Christians?
4. Tilak models a Christian thinking biblically in the context of his culture. Compare his contextual Indian Christian thinking with contextual Chinese Christian thinking (chap. 2), contextual African Christian thinking (chap. 3), contextual Latin American Christian thinking (chap. 4), and contextual thinking of Jesus' people in the Muslim world (chap. 6). How is each "ethnotheology" unique?
5. Consider the stories of Tilak, Rochunga, Garuammal, Vishal and Ruth, Pandita Ramabai, and the ideas of K Rajendran and E. Stanley Jones. From these examples, list two things that you can apply in your own setting.
6. On issues of class and gender, where has the Indian church failed, according to Ambedkar? On the other hand, where has it provided a shining example for all Indians?
7. Mention two examples of Indian ministries—churches, training schools or missions. Give an example of an expatriate Indian Christian's ministry.
8. Which of the Best Practices in Mission are important for your church's ministry? Which are important specifically for India?

Chapter 9. Song

1. Give an example of a story or song that has taught Christian ideas powerfully in a particular cultural context. What impressed you about this example?
2. From God's perspective, how important are stories?

3. What are the functions of songs? Describe African American spirituals. Describe the songs in the rain forest. Could you expand the function of songs in your own worshipping community? How?
4. Do Christians need to read? To answer this question responsibly, what factors do you need to consider?
5. When teachers use stories, songs, dramas, etc., do they run a risk of nurturing an unbalanced theology? How can we guard against that?
6. Does it matter whether books are written by local people? Tell the stories of Hilmy of Malaysia and Patricia of Peru.
7. What surprised you about the statistics on Internet evangelism?
8. From this chapter, what do you learn about art? Do you know any artists who would be interested in talking about song and story in churches in other cultures?

Chapter 10. Africa: When You Go Through Fire

1. How has Africa shaped the Christian mind?
2. What did foreign missionaries bring to Africa? What have African missionaries contributed? Describe the Nigerian who began university ministry in Equatorial Guinea.
3. Rape is traumatic. How can victims be helped?
4. Ethnic violence causes deep wounds. Describe an effective trauma healing workshop. Describe Nestor's "third cheek" philosophy.
5. What are the characteristics of a "failed state"? How is it possible for oil-rich countries to have many poor citizens?
6. Does God want us to be rich? Discuss "prosperity gospel." Does your own Christian circle incline toward a gospel of prosperity, consciously or unconsciously?

Chapter 11. Way of the Cross

1. Persecution in Afghanistan is fierce. Tell the stories of Qazi Abdul Karim and Zia.
2. Where else do Christians suffer? Contrast the experiences of Rami Ayyad in Palestine with Elizabeth in Southeast Asia.
3. Who is the supreme model for Christians who suffer? Note the Bible texts on suffering in this chapter. Which text comforts and encourages you?

4. How does persecution generate new leaders? Describe Chhirc Taing and his “Elisha” in Cambodia. Do you think it is possible that something like this may happen in Afghanistan?
5. How can people bring good out of evil? Describe the African American “Joseph Assignment.” Describe prison ministry in Colombia.
6. What are best practices for ministry in violent contexts? If someone is kidnapped, what are sources of help?

Chapter 12. Way of Life

1. In a variety of ways, globalization connects us with people from many countries. Some who come to the U.S. are jailed as illegal immigrants. Where is the Homeland Security detention center nearest to you? Can your church minister there?
2. Why is Buddhism like killing a tiger?
3. Training leaders is vital. Compare Burmese Bible schools with leadership training programs described in chapters 1, 4, 8 and 11. How could your church offer support or partnership to an indigenous Christian training program like one of these?
4. As a group, compare Burmese mission with the mission work of Abraham Duran (chap. 1), John Sung and the Back to Jerusalem movement (chap. 2), Antioch mission, Antonia van der Meer, and tribal missions (chap. 4), Sadhu Sundar Singh (chap. 5), William Miller and Sarah Belle Sherwood (chap. 6), and Nestor (chap. 10). Consider the Best Practices for Mission discussed in chapters 8 and 11. As you review these mission outreaches on diverse continents, make a list of what you learn from them.
5. How are the contrasting themes of order and transformation, and unity and diversity woven through the apostle John’s vision in Revelation 4 and 5? How do these connect the local with the global? How do they frame our own lives?