



Third Penang Consultation on Child Theology

12-18 June 2006

Child
Theology
MOVEMENT

Jesus placed a little child among them.....

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Report of the Third Penang Consultation on Child Theology 12 - 18 June 2006

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Preface

This is a report of a meeting arranged by the Child Theology Movement in Penang, Malaysia, with the support of Compassion International and The Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary. It was the third such meeting in Penang and the seventh overall.

For those readers familiar with the term 'Child Theology' as we use it, the front cover of this report may come as a surprise. After all, we are always saying "the child in the midst" when we do our theological reflections. Here I have put the children on the edge and a *lion* 'in the midst'! Some may wonder why a lion at all. Those readers familiar with the 'Narnia' stories by C S Lewis have a clue. Though these were "children's" stories they had significant theological content. At the time of our meeting, the stories were receiving a new lease of life because of the release of a Hollywood film based on the books.

However, the real trigger for this cover was not that fact but a verse from the prophet Amos brought by one of the participants early in the meeting:

"The lion has roared... who can but prophesy?"

I hope that the reflections recorded in this report have more than a hint of prophecy in them, in the sense that they bring a word from God to the church in the light of the situation that we face today – and that oppressed and exploited children also face daily. Unfortunately, injustice and oppression did not cease in the time of Amos! And oppression and exploitation of the weak is as much an issue in economically rich countries as economically poor ones.

The other reason for putting the lion at the centre is this: to remind ourselves that though we want to put the child in the midst of theological reflection, it is not to *focus* on the child. Rather, God is our focus in theology and it is him and his purposes that we wish to see more clearly. It is our profound belief that when we put 'the child in the midst' *in the way that Jesus did* we will have a better view of God and his kingdom. This should affect not only what we do but also how we do it. You can be the judge of that as you read these pages.

Here is one of my favourite passages from the Narnia stories. In 'The Silver Chair', Jill is very thirsty and sees a stream in the forest. But there is a lion in between. It speaks:

"If you're thirsty, you may drink." She was frightened and didn't respond.

"Are you not thirsty?" said the lion.

"I'm dying of thirst," said Jill.

"Then drink," said the lion.....

"Will you promise not to – do anything to me if I do come?" said Jill.

"I make no promise," said the lion.

Jill was so thirsty now that, without noticing it, she had come a step nearer. "Do you eat girls?" she said.

"I have swallowed up girls and boys, women and men, kings and emperors, cities and realms," said the lion. It didn't say this as if it were boasting, nor as if it were sorry, nor as if it were angry. It just said it.

"I daren't come and drink," said Jill.

"Then you will die of thirst," said the lion.

"Oh dear!" said Jill, coming another step nearer. "I suppose I must go and look for another stream then."

"There is no other stream," said the lion.

We came together for this meeting not just to meet with each other but to approach God and hear from him. Walking towards God involves stepping out of the comfort of what we think we know. But we were thirsty. You too?

John Collier

PENANG CHILD THEOLOGY CONSULTATION 2006

The Ministry of Children in training for Ministry

Day1 Tuesday

Session 1.1 Devotions

Devotions were led by a team from MBTS

Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant" (Gen 33:5)

Yes, who are these children with us, in our families, in our communities, in our world?

These are the children God has created in his own image,
in the image of God he created them male and female.
Created! Knitted! Fearfully and wonderfully made.

Who are these children?

These are the children God has graciously given to us.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them..."

"People were bringing little children to Jesus..." (Mk. 10:13)

Parents were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them.

Jairus came, seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him: "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." (Mk.5:23)

Elizabeth and Zechariah brought their son to the Temple and named him "John" and so set him aside to be "a prophet of the Most High" and to "go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him."
(Luke 1:60-63,76)

Hannah took the boy with her, young as he was, and brought the boy to Eli, and she said to him, "As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord." (1 Sam 1:26-28)

The people brought their children.

Jairus brought his daughter.

*Lord, we bring our children to you.
We bring our neighbour's children to you.
We bring the world's children to you.*

God so loved the world that he sent his Son, born into the home of Joseph and Mary.

*Thank you Lord for sending the boy Samuel to the home of Eli the priest.
Thank you Lord for sending the nameless Jewish slave girl to the home of Naaman the leper.*

*Lord, we welcome children into our homes;
Lord, we welcome children sent by you to change us;
Lord, we welcome children because we welcome the Triune God.*

We sang: "Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world."

Session 1.2 Welcome, Introductions and Expectations

We welcomed each other in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Keith reminded us of the Maori greeting: "I've come with an empty basket". Even though many came with much to share, in a sense with a full basket, the invitation offered to all of us was to empty it, at the beginning of the consultation so that God might fill it anew.

The Indian theologian, Ramabai, taught that we cannot communicate unless we know something of the other's life story. So we took time to introduce ourselves to another in pairs, answering following questions:

- What has drawn you to this consultation?
- What do you hope you will give or take away?
- How do you hope this will happen?
- Who or what are you especially wanting to hear about?

Then each person was introduced by the partner. What follows are introductions written subsequently by the participants to introduce themselves.

Personal Introductions by participants

LaReau Anderson

I currently serve as director of outreach for International Bible Society (IBS) focusing on outreach to children globally. Prior to joining IBS, I held several positions with Compassion International. My passion and calling in life is ministry and outreach to kids. My greatest passion however is my family. My wife and I have 2 daughters ages 20 and 12. Eph. 3:16-19



Rechal Bagh

I belong to a Mennonite Church in India. I have degrees in Christian ministry specializing in Christian education and conflict mediation. In 2000 I moved to Union Biblical Seminary, Pune where I am involved in Teaching as assistant professor. I also headed the Centre for Extension Studies for 5 years. I am involved in the Women's Ministry of the churches. Churches utilize me as Resource person for Sunday School and Vacation Bible School and Teachers' Workshop. My husband is Registrar of the Seminary. My son is doing post graduate studies in Human Resources courses and my daughter is doing a masters degree in psychology. I thank God for the opportunity to involve my self in C.T. movement, for His glory and extension of His Kingdom.



Dan Brewster

I am told that on the day I was born, my father carried me in his arms and prayed that one day I would be a missionary. I believe that his prayers were answered in my life as I have spent most of my life in cross-cultural ministries. I am a missiologist, having my degree from Fuller School of World Mission.



In my 22 years with Compassion International, I have held a dozen or more positions, mostly in 'field' capacities. Research shows that most people who are going to make a decision for Christ will do so between the ages of 4 & 14. Thus, I am pleased and enthusiastic to devote my life to ministries caring for children in need. I have "repairer of broken walls" (Isa. 58:12) printed on my business card and that is how I view my calling and ministry.

Marcia Bunge

I am a professor of theology and humanities at Christ College, the honours college of Valparaiso University (a Lutheran University near Chicago). I also direct a project called The Child in Religion & Ethics, which aims to strengthen theological understanding of children and our obligations to them. I have two children: Anja (5) and Isaac (12) and they are a great blessing in my life.



Terezinha Candieiro

My name is Terenzinha Candieiro. I am a Brazilian missionary and worked in Mozambique for almost 15 years. For the first 10 years I worked with church planting and leadership training. I was married a Mozambique Pastor but he passed away in 2000 because of a car accident. I have a son named Davi, now 10 years old. We live in São Paulo, Brasil.

Since 2000 I have been working with PEPE – for 5 years in Mozambique and now as an international director of this programme. I praise the Lord for this wonderful opportunity to continue serving Him through this wonderful missionary tool.



Cecilia Casiño

I started life in a very strong Roman Catholic family of ten children in the Philippines. Because there were so many of us to take care of we were allowed to attend Sunday School at a nearby evangelical church. I encountered Jesus at the age of twelve. I went to Bible College despite my family's opposition. I had to work to put myself through school. I have been a kindergarten school director and teacher, pastor, pastor's wife, Bible College instructor, Sunday School teacher, wife and mother. I am now a missionary to migrant peoples in Korea and other parts of the world. I taught ESL in an international Christian school in Seoul for eight years and then served as chaplain.

***Tereso Casiño***

I was born to a family of ten children. Being the second to the youngest, I grew up learning the realities of life from my brothers and sisters as our parents were busy figuring out how to raise us! I was 16 when I personally met the Lord Jesus Christ and at a tender age started ministry with children. Over the years, I served in different ministry leadership functions – pastor, teacher, trainer, and administrator. Since 1988, I have been involved in theological education, training men and women for leadership in both national and international settings. My special interest is in diaspora missiology, having served as a missionary church planter in Korea since 1993. I'm presently involved in global initiative programmes related to the theological education, missions and organizational networks.

***Ian de Villiers***

I am father of Gail, aged 1 who is a budding ornithologist, and husband of Katharine. We live in Kuala Lumpur and are part of a small family-oriented Lutheran church. I am a social worker and I first made friends with marginalized children in South India. I work for Viva Network in Asia, enabling Christians collaborate better so that more children at risk will be helped.

***James Gilbert***

I am married to Elsie and we have 4 children: Lucas, Andrew, Victoria and James. We live in Vicosia, MG, Brasil. I teach Systematic Theology at the Brazilian mission school, Centro Evangelical de Missões, and am a vice-president of the seminary Board. I also work as a part-time pastor of a small poor church.

In the past I worked with an Evangelical Social Action programme called Rebusca, which works with 300+ children. I still continue to raise support for this programme.

I was first baptized as a Lutheran and confirmed, later went to a non-denominational church, studied at a Baptist Seminary, while attending a Mennonite community church. Now I'm pasturing a Presbyterian church and my favourite living systematic theology is Methodist.

***Karissa Glanville***

I am a PhD student at Fuller Seminary studying the discipling of at risk youth. I have enjoyed mentoring and discipling children since I was a youth myself. Taking the spirituality of children seriously has been a life long passion. Before returning to study I was a school teacher. I am currently writing novels inspired by the theological questions of children.

***Jan Grobbelaar***

I am from Petra College in South Africa. Our only focus is to train people, especially leaders for children ministry in Africa and beyond. We have two campuses in South Africa and I am the vice-principal at the campus at De Doorns, near Cape Town. I am a pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church. At the moment I am busy with a DTh thesis on an intergenerational approach to children's ministry. I am married to Marie, who is head of the department of training in early childhood ministry and education. We have three children Kaileen (23), Schalk (21) and Jan (20) all students at the University of Stellenbosch.

***Allan Harkness***

I am originally from New Zealand, but have been in Singapore for some years, involved in theological education as members of OMF International. Currently I head the Asia Graduate School of Theology (Malaysia/Singapore/Thailand), a consortium of seminaries offering specialized post-graduate programmes. My special interest is intergenerational processes in Christian Faith Communities. My wife, Marion, and I have 2 young adult sons.



Jesudason Jeyaraj

I was born into a nominal Christian family converted from Hinduism (Sairism). I accepted Jesus Christ during my college studies through the ministry of Youth For Christ. After receiving God's call to the ministry, I resigned my job and went for theological training. I worked for a Missionary Organization before joining the faculty of a local seminary. For the past 27 years I am in teaching ministry, preaching and writing articles and books. My service includes contributing to the training of faculty members of my wife's college and preaching in the chapel. My son is a software engineer and my daughter is studying psychology.

***Bobby John***

My wife Nirand and I live in Pune, India with our daughter Lilliane (8) and son Lael (5). We are part of the Poona Faith Community Church.

I trained as a physician and worked at the Pandita Ramabai Mukti Mission and World Vision India, involved in the care of women and children and designing a programme on HIV AIDS. At present I lead an international network of advocates on health, seeking to promote greater attention to the control of AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and to achieve the health indicators set out in the millennium development goals

***Paul Joshua***

"Child of God" is the primary badge I wear. Husband and father are also relationships I'm privileged to enjoy. My wife Sumitha and I have three children: Sithara, Tharika and Pratheek. To a large extent our lives revolve around them. God has also enabled us work along side children at risk, which has transformed us perhaps just as much as it did the young people. I'm also a theologian/missiologist and serve as the Director of Mylapore Institute for Indigenous Studies, a research institute dedicated to the interdisciplinary study of Christianity in South Asia.

***James Kombo***

I am Professor of Systematic Theology, Daystar University, Nairobi, Kenya and Dean of the faculty of Postgraduate Studies at the same University. I give leadership to the Child Development programme at Daystar University (MA and Postgraduate Diploma) and I have written extensively in the area of African theology. I hold a DTh in Systematic Theology from Stellenbosch University. I am husband to Pamela and father to Laonida (14), Philip (12) and Samuel (10)

[Prof Kombo left the meeting shortly after its commencement.]

Stella Lau

I was converted at age 13 through the witness of my school teachers at Bukit Bintang Girls School, set up by Plymouth Brethren Missionaries in 1893. I practiced law for 14 years and later studied at MBTS graduating in 2005 with Masters in Christian Studies.

Now I assist at MBTS with the HCD student enrolment. I also volunteer as a legal counsellor with the Women's Centre for Change, a multiracial, multi religious NGO. My husband and I lead an intergenerational home cell and I supervise the "Kids Slot" at my church Together we also teach pre marital counselling at church.

I have 3 sons, 16, 13, 6. My husband is a Research & Development manager at Avago technologies, a spin off from Hewlett Packard.

Sunny and Rosalind Tan

Sunny & Rosalind Tan – we live in Penang and serve at the Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS). We have been linked with the Child Theology Movement since the first consultation. Sunny is the Academic Dean of MBTS and Rosalind directs the Child Studies programme at the seminary. Sunny is presently one of the CTM Directors. We have a daughter, Sarah (24 yrs) and a son Asher (19 yrs).

Teresa Lua

Prior to my involvement in theological education I served as a Christian Education director in the church where my husband was pasturing. Then I served as Registrar, CE faculty and academic dean at Alliance Graduate School (formerly Alliance Biblical Seminary). Just last month I started in my new role as Dean of Asia Graduate School of Theology (AGST), a consortium of nine seminaries in the Philippines. I'm still serving as part-time faculty and director of the HCD programme at Alliance Graduate School. My husband is serving as faculty and chaplain at Asia Theological Seminary. We have two sons, Timothy Joseph (15)



and Joshua Caleb (9).

Philip Lutterodt

I am married to Annie and we are blessed with a son: Cyril Lante, 12. I serve at Maranatha University College in Accra, Ghana as a lecturer in Systematic Theology and Social Science. I am also an Associate Minister at Calvary Baptist Church, Accra and chairman of the Board of the Ghana Baptist Convention. I am hoping to organise a conference in Burkina Faso.



Doug McConnell

I am dean and associate professor of leadership in the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Seminary. My wife, Janna, and I spent 15 years as missionaries in Australia and Papua New Guinea with Asia Pacific Christian Mission (APCM, now PIONEERS). From 1992 to 1998, I taught at Wheaton College Graduate School, where I was an associate professor and chair of the Department of Missions/ Intercultural and Evangelism. Prior to coming to Fuller, I served as the first international director of PIONEERS, from 1998 to 2003. I am currently spearheading the School of Intercultural Studies concentration in mission to children at risk. I am leading courses and research on missional responses to children at risk..



Shiferaw Michael

I received Jesus Christ as my saviour through the testimony of a missionary when I was 18 years of age. I serve God in Compassion International's Ministry to needy children. God gave me the unique opportunities of starting two country offices for Compassion in Africa – one in Ethiopia and the other in Tanzania. At the time of the writing of this short biography I serve as the associate director for Child Advocacy in Africa. In this role my responsibility is to create awareness about the potentials and plights of children and challenges, equip and empower them to make their work with children more effective and to increase their interventions. I also challenge theological schools in Africa to include ministerial training for children in their training programmes.



Upul Nishantha Silva

Greetings in the name of Jesus and from Lanka Bible College! It is a great privilege for me to serve at Lanka Bible College where my theological foundations were shaped for my ministry. Currently I teach, coordinate conferences and seminars and am involved in mission work there. I am also a pastor of Assemblies of God of Ceylon. I thank God for my loving wife Nilamthika and two sons: Nilupul (10) and Nilushan (3 ½). God has been faithful to us and I am sure that he who began a good work in us will bring it to completion in His perfect time.



Welinton Pereira

I am the son of a Christian family although for a while during adolescence I was far from the church. In the 80s I founded a project with children at risk (drug addicts) and worked with them for 10 years. I have been working for 8 years with World Vision in Brazil in the area of church relations and advocacy. I am also a pastor of a Methodist church on the periphery of Sao Paulo. I have graduated in theology and have a master's degree in organisational leadership. I am married with two children.



Daniel Ponraj

I was born to two great missionaries, Ponraj and Sheila. Having been sponsored by Compassion International since the age of five I also consider them to be my parents. I have a calling for planting churches among unreached people groups. I have a wonderful friend and guide in my wife Asangla who has been a fellow preacher of the Gospel. We have two lovely kids, Jeremiah and Deborah, who have transformed and enriched our lives.

For eight years as a family we have laboured for the spread of the Gospel among the Santal tribe, planting churches. I have worked as a project Director for a Compassion Assisted project among the Santal people. Having seen the significance of childcare work in accelerating, sustaining and empowering, church planting movement among the Santals, I desire that we can serve, recognize and empower children.



David Ramirez

I am David Ramirez, the second of six children of a missionary family from Chile in Argentina. My wife's name is Fernanda Snaidro from Argentina and we have three children: Santiago (15), Fenanda (11) and Valeira Allison (6)



From my teenage years I have been involved in youth ministries in Chile. Since I graduated with my MDiv and CPE I have been involved in the training of Christian leaders throughout Latin America. I am the founder of SEMISUD, which started in Buenos Aires, Argentina and then moving in 1993 to Quito, Ecuador. For the last 20 years I have served as the Principal of the school and have planted 2 churches. We have graduated 800 BTh and Masters students who are serving in 22 countries around the world.

Kim Ting Wong

I am a student at the MBTS. I am now pursuing my bachelor's degree in Theology after completing my Child Studies diploma. Before I came here, my wife and I operated a preschool for 10 years. We also taught preschool teachers for the state and went around teaching among the indigenous people in Sabah. We were helping them to setup schools for their communities. I am also involved in giving Sunday School seminars especially in East Malaysia.

Keith White

I am married to Ruth and we are parents of 4 children and have one grandson, Isaac. We live in a Christian residential community called Mill Grove in the east of London, UK. Since 1899 this place has been home to children and young people who have been abandoned, orphaned or abused.



I lecture on theology & sociology with a particular form on children. At the beginning of this consultation I held the first copy of a new Bible I have been working in for 20 years. I cried when I saw it.

Angela Williams

I was saved and called at 14 to serve the under privileged. I studied medicine in the United Kingdom to fulfil this calling. When I completed this, the Lord used post-graduate lectures in tropical paediatrics to challenge me about the multi dimensional needs of children and the devastating interactions between poverty, ill-health, abnormal family, psychosocial and community dynamics!



The Lord then led me into further training in paediatrics, community health, psychology and theology. My life's work has been to integrate these to serve children and to teach child case practitioners from various disciplines. In 1996 my church appointed me as an accredited missionary. My husband, Calvin, is a church leader in Jamaica where together we serve a wonderful God.

Menchit Wong

I became a Christian during my first year in university. By the time I was in my second year in college, I discovered my calling from God to serve Him all my life in ministries to children. I am currently the child advocacy director of Compassion International, based in the Philippines. Around the world we seek to challenge the worldwide church to build awareness, engage in holistic child development ministry and speak up for the cause of children in poverty. My husband Rico and my three sons (Eric 18, James 17, Joshua 5) all support this commitment to serve Jesus by letting children come to Him.



Other participants were: Kheng Boon Ooi, Kathleen Vogel, Petrina Shee-Satvinder, Shekhar Singh and John Collier.

Expectations***What has drawn you to this consultation?***

- The programme, the idea of child theology, my work
- Wanting to learn more about the situation of children and the world
- Wanting to explore further the notion of child theology in a global Christian context
- Wanting to learn about academics and theology programmes emphasizing children and childhood
- Learn from other people's experience/sharing

- I was at Penang 1 which was a special & deep experience...
- It was an opportunity given to me by VIVA, India, as person from Christian education background.
- My interest as a reflective practitioner in Child Theology mission to children at risk
- My interest in developing courses on Child Theology for seminaries in India. We have conducted two meetings on this need in India. I like to get the international perspective of CTM
- I have been drawn to this consultation because the first one I attended in 2002 was a life-changing experience for me. Since 2002, I have begun more deeply to understand the value of children in God's eyes and in His Kingdom.
- To understand more about child theology what people involve in this
- My desire to have a better understanding of child theology movement and to recruit faculty for our HCD programme
- To meet people who are already involved in developing child theology to learn from them and to discover how I can apply child theology in the training ministry I am involved in
- The need to develop a child holistic development programme challenged me. So, when the organizers of the conference invited me to come, I did not hesitate to say yes
- God has drawn me. God, I believe, is going to help me to grow by sharing and hearing experiences with others, beyond Theological knowledge
- A life-long burden to serve children in the kingdom of God
- The desire to be involved in international dialogue related to children & theology
- I believe that through this consultation where we get the mixture of Christ's Body will lead me to the clear picture of Child Theology so that I may impact my home, church & country.
- This consultation will help me handle more challenges in doing ministry with children and their parents. It will also help me in assisting teachers in handling students who are going through spiritual struggles
- Opportunity to network with international participants in a strategic aspect of theological reflection

What do you hope you will give or take away?

- Ideas, methods, new perspectives, connections, relationships
- I hope to share some resources and ideas for developing child theology further
- I hope to learn about practical issues and theologies in other contexts
- I hope to get to know people who might contribute to a book on child theology
- I would like to give open challenging field of India to others to contribute into the suffering section of our nation, i.e. children.
- I want to learn and willing to utilize others methodology in doing child Theology from other culture and evaluate its application to Indian context
- I hope to contribute contextual perspective to the discussion and hope to take away nuggets of the collective wisdom on "CT" and its role in Church, Theology and Mission
- Contribution in the discussion and take away the views and opinions of scholars
- I hope to share experiences and learning from previous consultations on child theology and in direct work and interaction with children
- I would like to take away insights, ideas, recommendations from seminaries on how best to engage them in equipping Christians in ministries to children and encouraging child theology reflection
- Understanding childcare in a church planting movement
- Ideas, versions of equipping, lessons on the vision
- I hope to share about our HCD programme and other related programmes such as the marriage and family ministry, counselling, and community development

- I hope to take away resources for our HCD programme particularly in terms of faculty and materials. I also hope to be more passionate about equipping workers among children at risk
- To get a better understanding of child theology
- To make contacts and establish possibilities for the development of future partnership to help to develop our training and the level of a M degree
- I hope to 'give' and to share with conference participants my knowledge – albeit limited! Of equipping others in the area of “theological construction” applicable to children’s ministry. How a child conceptualizes God, for example, has been part of my journey as a theologian. Thus, I would like to share some of my experiences in this area. On the other hand, I am new to the CT Movement (at the moment) I hope to gain from listening to other participants and learn how to expand the “movement” in my present works
- I hope I will stimulate and inspire my brothers and sisters to develop children ministry. I hope I will take away knowledge, experiences, which are going to contribute spiritual growth and to my ministries
- To give anything the Lord enables me to give
- An understanding of how HCD courses start in other countries, of what curricula consist of elsewhere, and to make contact with potential lecturers with a view to initiating a parallel programme in the Caribbean
- The opportunity to interact with others concerning child theology and missiology in an international forum
- I hope to give anything I can from my own experience & study. I hope to be challenged and be given many things to think through
- I would like to be more of a listener-learner party. If there is a need to share my experience as a practitioner I’d be willing to do that too
- I hope to give assistance to the participants for example administrative and take away new insights from children workers/teachers/seminarians all over the world
- A strengthened commitment to a fully inclusive theology for the people of God

How do you hope this will happen?)

- Through the meetings and afterwards in lectures, the meetings (informally)
- By uniting Theologians, Clergy and theological graduates and church leaders. By bringing awareness in the churches through theological education of the future pastors and leaders of the church and para church organizations
- Listen! TALK! Discuss!
- By listening and collecting the papers and taking notes of their speeches/presentations
- I hope that this will happen through the process of listening & good conversation & paying attention to God’s Word
- Being (?) – sharing - listening
- Getting reports and note taking
- Prayer - passion
- Interactions
- Through the integrative insights of the consultation I believe that God will lead me into his BIG – Idea, & to work it out
- Hear from those who have ideas
- By listening, participating and networking with fellow participants
- Through the presentations and the personal contacts and interaction with different people
- I’ll do much listening and creative interaction with other participants
- This will happen through discussions, conversations, devotion time, testimonies

- In the course of the planned programme, group discussions and interaction and informal discussions, probably one-to-one in nature
- Through dialogue as a group and with individuals.
- Through listening to what others have to say
- I can share insightful experiences in my daily encounter/interaction with children, their parents and staff
- This will happen by listening, asking questions and evaluating what I received to see how it can be applied to my context
- I look forward to plenary/small group/interpersonal processes to achieve these outcomes

Who or what are you wanting to hear about especially?

- Holistic Child Development course (HCD)
- Feedback from HCD programme planners, course instructors, past & present students
- Reflection or dialogue with Child Rights in the relevant places/discussion/training
- I want to hear both theologians and practitioners about methodology of doing child theology effectively in a relevant context or in the context of the children of various cultures
- Perspectives from around the globe on 'CT'
- Child Theology – a biblical perspective
- To hear about child theology and how it can form the holistic ministry with children
- I want to hear about the progress and impact of the Child Theology Movement
- I am eager to listen to workers of theological schools and inquire about their value/mindset/vision for children.
- Practical applications – challenges, opportunities
- God's voice especially through his anointed Body
- I want to hear more about how to integrate child theology in the whole seminary curriculum
- Keith, Dan, Marcia on Child Theology and the Holistic Child Development Programme
- I hope to hear how CT can play a crucial role in reaching out to children – regardless of their faith backgrounds – in diaspora settings
- I am here to hear others validate what we do in our school
- I want to hear from God, speaking through the Scriptures and through his people and what they are experiencing God to be doing where they are.
- No one/nothing in particular – looking forward to outcomes being achieved, though, overall.

Session 1.3 Introduction to Child Theology

A PowerPoint presentation was shown to give background to Child Theology. This may be accessed at the CTM website: www.childtheology.org

History, Purpose and Process

Keith White

Child Theology is a way of conversing. It's interesting to reflect that the Reformation scholar, Erasmus, thought that the Greek word 'logos' is best translated as 'conversation'. We have gathered for a conversation not a conference. For those who want a more substantial description, the leaflet and the complementary copies of all six consultation reports provided to all participants gives the background to Child Theology¹. In the English language, it is possible to put the two nouns: 'child' and 'theology' together without a preposition to define the relationship between them. If you like, it's the words dancing together. Child and theology are

¹ These are available on the website: www.childtheology.org

attempting to dance with each other. This is not possible in many languages. Even so, we find that CT occurs naturally in many places, usually without that name.

Women's studies and women's theology give us a different way of doing things: e.g. it is essential to have women present. Similarly, CT insists on having both theologians and practitioners. We also value global participation so not to be dominated by one part of the world. This means that we must listen before speaking or we are doomed to speak without relevance. As we read the gospel with this in mind we see Jesus the great Listener. In an earlier age, Richard Glover, from Bristol, UK said: "Before you open your mouths in India first find out what God has been doing before you."

So as we meet, we must discipline ourselves to hold children in our minds and represent them, remembering always how Jesus represented us on the Cross.

This consultation has been organised by the Child Theology Movement (CTM). CTM intends to be open and transparent in the way it operates. As a demonstration of this, the board of directors is meeting on Sunday morning is open to all who wish to attend. The way we do things is as important as what we do. CTM intends to wind itself up in 18 years at the most, because it will have done its job.

Although registered in the United Kingdom for legal reasons, CTM is linked to the CHILD centre at the Malaysia Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS) in Penang and is also developing a database of contacts at Valparaiso in the USA and a website is being developed.

In response to a question about the impact on the churches and colleges as a result of previous consultations, Keith acknowledged that only after two consultations in India was there beginning to be an impact. There had been a lot of resistance. It's very new for seminaries to relate children to theology. To reform theological training requires that we reform theology. It is probably more about a change in the way things are done rather than what is done.

Another query was whether CT is a component in any course, other than MBTS HCD course. At present there are no others but it is beginning to influence similar courses.

As we consider black theology or women's theology as a model, we observe that there are female and black theologians. Are we making an error as adults talking for children? This is a risk we have to be aware of – we are vulnerable, we might start speaking for the child. Marcia responded to this problem we have in doing theology on behalf of children. The question we have to face is: how do we bring children into the process without abusing them? She suggested several approaches: – through literature, conversations with children, asking children to keep diaries, asking adults about their childhoods. All of these approaches have weaknesses. In her experience, many of her students know very little about the content of their faith and how it relates to life even though they came from church going families. Our churches do not seem to expect children to reflect on their faith and ask questions.

Child Theology Distinctions

Marcia Bunge

Christian Theology approaches children and childhood in a number of ways, each with particular emphases and interests. Child Theology is distinct from:

- Theologies of Childhood
- Children's theology
- Children's spirituality
- Theologies for children
- Children and religious education

For example, to compare and contrast, CT with another theology concerned with children

Theologies of Childhood:

- Provide sophisticated theological understandings of children and childhood and our obligations to children;
- Should take into account various perspectives on children and childhood from the Bible and the Christian tradition;
- Should honour the dignity and complexity of children.

Child Theologies:

- Build on theologies of childhood;
- Re-examine fundamental doctrines and practices of the church using the "lens" of the child;
- Provide new insights into central themes of the Christian faith.

They both:

- Put children at the centre of serious theological reflection;
- Prompt action on behalf of children;
- Have implications for the church and children themselves, especially in the areas of
 - Children and family ministry
 - Religious education and faith formation
 - Child advocacy

The approach adopted by CTM and reflected in this consultation has the following features:

- It involves an international network of theologians and practitioners
- It uses a distinctive approach for putting a child “in the midst”
- It recognizes that child theologies will be diverse, building on:
 - The Bible
 - Authoritative texts in particular traditions
 - Research in social and national sciences
 - Experience in their own specific cultures and faith communities

Child Theology affirms that in traditional understandings of children in theology, the emphasis is too narrow, e.g. as depraved and victims of original sin. We need to broaden this understanding to note that they may equally be models of faith. Some theological approaches to children emphasise their vulnerability and need. While not overlooking these issues, we should also note their strengths and gifts. We often develop programmes to teach children but within those programmes seldom allow space for the children to ask their own questions.

The comment was made that in India children are cursed by the caste that they are born in. Children ask why they were born in this particular caste. This is an example of the cultural dimension, of the diversity that is necessary. In South Africa, there is a different issue: Afrikaans does not have a word for ‘childhood’.

Session 1.4 Concept, vision and current status of HCD

The HCD story at MBTS

Sunny Tan

It is important to recognise that there is a difference between CT and HCD. In 1999, MBTS started a course in Early Childhood education. Representatives from Compassion International visited MBTS to ask about the possibility of running the HCD course. In July 2001 it was agreed to make the MBTS facilities available. The first batch of students started in Nov 2001. The original plan was to have two study sessions a year but it was eventually decided to have an intensive single month once a year to save on costs. Eventually, in June 2005, the course was integrated into the regular programmes of the seminary, which required that the whole school curriculum be moved by one month. As a result, the regular seminary students can choose HCD as an elective course. This means the classes have got quite big.

It course has three core modules:

- Child, church and Mission;
- Child Theology;
- Child Developmental Theories.

Work is currently progressing on to offer the course in Mandarin and we are hoping also to offer the course in Bahasa Malay. One interesting cultural/linguistic issue this has revealed is that there is no phrase for a ‘child at risk’ in Mandarin.

Kheng Boon has just completed the HCD programme and is starting an MTh programme. He has an academic approach to things, systematic analytical thinker, having been in practice as a lawyer for 15 years. He had been used to systematic theology but found the Child Theology instruction on the HCD course to be very different. It introduced him to a new process of doing theology, helping to put blood and flesh into it. It also affected him as a parent, enabling him to see his 13yr old daughter as a teacher as well as a pupil.

Compassion in Partnership: Equipping for ministry in HCD

Dan Brewster

Dan spoke as a missiologist committed to helping the church reaching the next generation (see Ps 78:2-7). Half of the world’s population is overlooked and they happen to be the most responsive - the Great Omission! They are all at risk – whether from poverty or prosperity. The problem of poverty is a sin problem – not lack of resources or overpopulation.

Compassion International cares for 750,000 children around the world. This is good but God asked us: 'What about all the rest?' This question led us to start an advocacy initiative with the desire to bring our vision into seminaries around the world. The tool for this is the HCD programme. We are interested in people becoming competent leaders as well as competent practitioners. In Malaysia, we have had 200 participants from 17 countries. Spin-offs are planned in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

The HCD programme was designed as a partnership in Asia between MBTS and Compassion International (CI) to provide graduate level training for Compassion Asia staff, for key Compassion Partner staff, and for strategic child development workers and practitioners from other non-Compassion countries in Asia. The goal is that both Compassion staff and non-staff participants will be equipped to become competent leaders in all aspects of Holistic Child Development. The programme was designed to further three corporately encouraged ministry objectives:

- Equipping of Compassion's own staff for more effective child development ministry.
- Equipping Compassion's partners for more effective child development ministries.
- Extending our ministry support to other child care workers, agencies, and churches, similarly equipping them for more effective ministry (the "worldwide church").

The overall objective of this programme was and is to equip students with prior experience in child development with a wide range of competencies and understandings related to Holistic Child Development and to develop analytical and critical skills to relate the Bible to current child development theories and practice and evaluate their own experience in the light of the interactions.

The goal is that future church leaders from all over Asia will be equipped to become leaders in all aspects of HCD in church and para-church organizations.

HCD Programmes have certain important distinctives in their:

- **Scope:** The needy inside -- and outside the Church. Many seminaries provide courses or degrees in teaching and nurturing children and young people *already in the church*. However, for many, the idea that the Church has a responsibility to care for needy children *outside the Church*, and that seminaries have an obligation to prepare students for such ministries, is a very new idea.
- **Nature:** Holism. The HCD Programmes are different from the course offerings some seminaries offer to improve Christian Education or Sunday Schools in the churches. The HCD programme fosters a holistic view of ministry to children, and both influences and equips the church bring a holistic ministry to needy children both inside and outside the church.
- **Approach:** The Centrality of children as objects of and agents for mission. The HCD Programme understands ministry to children as essential for growing the leadership for the next generation. HCD programmes are at the forefront in understanding of the reality of "The 4/14 Window" and the centrality of children as both objects of, and agents for mission.
- **Foundation:** Centrality of children in our biblical theology. The intent of HCD programmes is nothing less than to produce a whole new layer of Christian leadership – leadership which has a unique understanding of God's heart for children, and of the relevance of holistic child ministries to the Ministry and Mission of the Church.

Compassion is interested in extending the HCD programme because seminaries are the "production line" for developing Christian leaders for the next generation. Including programmes in HCD will ensure that the church has leaders who understand the significance of ministry to children in poverty and who can influence others at all levels in their countries on behalf of those children. By making the programme available in more locations, it should increase the enrolment and potentially expand the range of students, to encompass new groups of people, including many women and a growing body of young professionals.

We envision promoting both graduate and undergraduate level HCD programmes, both for a maximum of 2 years. Possible configurations include:

- Undergraduate:
 - One Year Certificate in HCD
 - One or Two Year Diploma in HCD
- Graduate:
 - One year Graduate HCD Certificate or Diploma
 - Two Year Master of Arts in HCD

Compassion envisions partnerships with a few key seminaries and other Christian training institutions to implement academic programmes in HCD. The purpose of the partnership will be to see the establishment of

an independent, on-going, seminary owned programme in HCD as an integral part of the seminary course offerings. In all cases the seminary or participating seminary or Bible College will be the owner of any programmes developed and retain full responsibility for both academic and administrative aspects of the programme. Compassion's roles in the partnerships include the inputs noted below. The participating seminary will have the responsibilities to:

- Own and operate the programme, providing all administrative and academic oversight.
- Secure recognition of the programme as necessary with the appropriate Ministries of Education or other governing bodies.
- Provide the facilities and teaching and study spaces, food and lodging where needed, computers, available library resources, etc.
- Promote the programme through its own networks and associations.
- Recruit at least 50% of students and faculty.

Compassion will provide the following support:

- Visit to influence, inspire and equip the leadership and faculty on the rationale and significance of HCD ministries.
- Provide models of curricula and library copies of course books, course guides, readers and other resources.
- Recruit and/or provide scholarships for a maximum of five students from among Compassion's staff, partners, alumni or 'children at risk' networks for the first 3 years.
- Provide consultation on administrative guidelines, entry and completion competencies, academic guidelines, and other advice.
- Provide help in securing some (not more than half) of the needed instructors.
- Link to the Child Theology International Learning and Development (ChILD) Resource Centre in Penang, Malaysia for ongoing assistance in curriculum planning, textbooks, CDs, HCD materials, links to the Child Theology Movement (CTM) and other support.
- Provide programme promotion through HCD and 'children at risk' networks.
- Invite key leadership to participate in dialogues with other seminary leaders and theologians on issues of child theology, holistic ministry, and the roles of seminaries in equipping students for HCD ministries.
- Provide opportunities for fieldwork for selected students in Compassion assisted projects

A participant asked if the plan included a course for the parents. It does not but it has been considered and has not been rejected.

Session 1.5 HCD in the seminary context

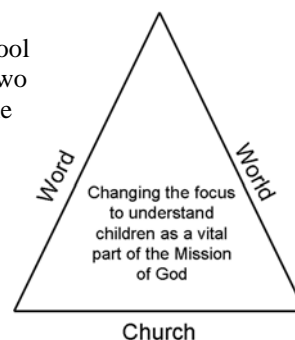
Fuller Seminary

Doug McConnell

Fuller Seminary has 3 schools with independent faculties. I am the Dean of the School of Intercultural Studies but to be effective, we need the active support of the other two schools as well. Seminaries tend to think of themselves in competition. This isn't the Kingdom. We want to share what we have.

The Columbine tragedy² woke up middle class America to what is happening in the ghettos all the time. This helped understanding the need for this programme. This is not a model but a case study.

When he went to mission field (Oz abos and PNG) the emphasis was on reaching people groups (Mt 28) then started to think about discipling, raising leaders. But non-Western missionaries tend to look to John 20 'As the Father has sent me so I send you' so they often take work as domestic workers etc, evangelising as they go.



² Shooting of children in a school

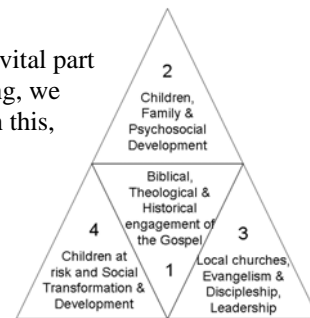
Children in Missiological Reflection

We need to work to change our focus. We are coming to understand children as a vital part of the Mission of God. As we engage with the Gospel with this fresh understanding, we need to bring Biblical, theological and historical methods into play. But more than this, the holistic approach requires an even broader picture.

Integrative Disciplines

There are four disciplines that have to be integrated.

1. Engagement with the Gospel
2. Psychosocial development of children and family
3. Local church processes of evangelism etc
4. Special issues for children at risk

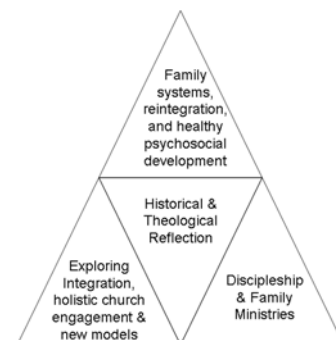


This is not straightforward. Take the issue of evangelising children: at one end of the spectrum there is the Child Evangelism Fellowship which does quite deliberate child evangelism, through Scripture Union with a more subtle approach, to a Mennonite who said that evangelising children is child abuse.

Domains to Advance

This leads to four domains that we need to advance:

- Family systems
- Historical and theological reflection
- Discipleship and family ministries
- Integration and holistic church engagement



Fuller Faculty working with HCD

- Centre for Youth & Family Ministries: Director, Dr. Kara Powell
- Primary Faculty (3 schools)

SEMISUD

David Ramirez

In September 2005 there was a Missiology consultation in Ecuador which produced several statements of beliefs and principles. These have influenced and been incorporated into our course. The aims of the meeting were:

- To evaluate the Church's position and mission related to children
- To identify the various forms of ministry toward children in Latin America and the Caribbean
- To investigate some avenues of development for the future

The result was that participants began to see their mission in a new light, in particular that the Mission must be "developed in the space between indignation and pastoral actions in favour of children". This means "welcoming and healing marginalized and vulnerable children". The implication goes beyond tweaking existing programmes. Rather, pastoral work for children in Latin America must undergo a dynamic change from traditional pastoral work to one of an integrated and liberating work.

The South American Seminary (SEMISUD), with the support of Compassion International, has created a programme with the purpose of contributing solutions to the urgent needs of Latin American and Caribbean children, through a high level of interdisciplinary training of those persons that work in the promotion and protection of children's rights. We have developed a Master's programme in HCD (in Spanish DIN) to be launched next September. It involves 6 semesters with online classes; live seminary classes (twice a year for ten days) and a practical session. It will be possible to do a certificate level programme completely online. We have an agreement with the University of Costa Rica who will provide academic accreditation for the degree.

The General Objective of the programme is to improve the administrative and operative capacity of Christian professionals that work to improve the lives of children by providing them with tested theologically, biblically-based psychological, social, managerial, legal and educative tools. Our expectation is that this will optimize Christian services to Latin-American children and thus improve their quality of life.

The course is divided into four development areas:

1. **Psycho-Social:** Trains the professional to comprehend the psycho-social problems of children of the region, in order to propose alternative integral solutions.
2. **Social and Biblical Science:** Offers to the professional tools that allow them to articulate the social sciences with biblical-theological reflection for the holistic development of the child.
3. **Management:** Offers to the professional technical-management tools that allow them to manage projects that contribute to the solution of childhood problems, according to the Latin America and Caribbean social contexts.
4. **Practical:** Offers to the professional the opportunity to practice what is learned in each subject.

In more detail, the curriculum covers the following subject matter:

- Childhood, Church and Mission
- Intervention, Resilience and Recovery of Childhood Traumas
- Childhood Situations in the Latin-American and Caribbean Context
- Theological and Hermeneutical Foundations of Child Care
- Psycho-pedagogy of Children
- Rights, Laws and Codes for the Protection of Children
- Pastoral and Systemic Counselling for the Family and Children
- Christian Leadership, Personal and Professional Development
- Pastoral, Recreation and Child Health
- Design and Project Management
- Degree Thesis

The DIN Masters Programme is available on line. This programme allows the student to do multiple teaching and learning activities through virtual communication. Our virtual classroom gives the student access to the DIN courses in a simple, rapid and dynamic form.³

A participant asked how would people who emerge from the programme find employment? There is no doubt that there is a need for the course but, in general, churches haven't committed themselves to paying children's workers. The Jamaican government are requiring those who work with children to have a certain level of training. Secular organisations pay child workers but may look askance at a qualification from a seminary. Perhaps CTM could consider the issue of how it might assist accreditation/ validation of courses. A useful outcome of Child Theology would be if pastors were to start asking themselves why they are paid a salary but the children's workers are not!

Another comment raised the issue of working with parents to teach Biblical values. It is important that we do not subtly undermine the family unit by making parents feel unqualified to manage their own children in comparison to church children's workers.

Session 1.6 HCD503 (a) Child and Church

Dan Brewster

Dr Brewster presented a copy of the course book and reader he uses when teaching this particular part of the HCD course at MBTS. The purpose was that it should serve as a resource to the participants in the following days when reflecting theologically on the course with a 'Child Theology' perspective.

In setting the scene for the context of children and the church in this part of the world, Dr Brewster referred to the problem of baptism and conversion in a multi-religious setting. This had been a major issue in Sri Lanka. After the tsunami many children were left with no family. The church stepped in to help care but the government and Buddhists complained leading to proposals for a law against what is called 'forced conversions'. Some churches did make mistakes.

A course like HCD is heavy on theories of childhood and child development. This is necessary for secular validity but we must be sure that we don't neglect the spirituality of children.

Children's work may assist or stop church growth. Part of the strategy of Christian mission in the past was through schools, especially in Africa. Was this exemplary? Anyway, there is a need for a new strategy in these days.

³ The DIN web site for the classes is: <http://www.semisud.edu.ec/ded>

Another troublesome area is the issue of Christian discipline. Some research has shown or claimed that there is more physical abuse in Christian families than others. People don't understand the difference between discipline and punishment. The church needs to help families in this area.

"We haven't really mined the scriptures very well. It needs a lot of work."

Day 2 Wednesday

Session 2.1 Devotions

Menchit Wong

My two sons were in their first day of university yesterday. I'm a social worker by profession. I once asked a Mum in an orphanage how she was. And she said she was much better because before she only fed like a dog

In 1 Sm 17 we read the story of David and Goliath. Here we have a child in the midst of the battle lines. How is the battle won with the child in the midst? It seems the wrong place for a child to be.

- **No-one is too young to serve God's purpose.** Yesterday I met a child who wanted to go forward in an evangelistic meeting. She asked her Mum if she could. Her Mum said 'Are you sure?' The counsellor asked 'What shall I do with her?' They thought she was not able because she was only a child. Even now, at elders' meetings items regarding the children's work are often last on the agenda.
- **God uses the simplicity and common sense of children to win the battle.** See 1Cr 1:27. It's not just because the strategy is endorsed by others or uses complicated state of the art processes that ensures success. God can use something simple.
- **The genuine faith of children destroys the enemy.** (Ps 8:2) How can we encourage them to receive Christ? Can we find ways to listen to them more?

Session 2.2 Publications relating to Child Theology

Marcia Bunge

The Child in Religion and Ethics Project

Marcia shared with the meeting some of the initiatives supported by "The Child in Religion and Ethics Project".

1. Biblical Book

A book is being prepared, with the provisional title: "Biblical Perspectives on Children and Childhood" which will give an overview of Scripture showing the presence of children in the sacred text. At the time of the meeting there was still a need for a biblical scholar who has written on the image of God and could apply his or her knowledge to children and childhood and re-examine Genesis 1-11. The book will be published by Eerdmans.

2. Jewish, Christian and Muslim Book

Another book that is being edited by Bunge is examining the Jewish, Christian, Muslim perspectives on children and childhood. The book will include two parts:

- Part I: major theological themes and ideas about children and childhood in each religious tradition (with two essays per tradition; 6 essays total);
- Part II: contemporary challenges facing children today.

There is still the opportunity open to influence the issues addressed in this book and participants were invited to offer suggestions. Some of the ideas thus far include:

- 1 Children's Rights and Responsibilities
- 2 The Boy and Girl Child (gender issues)
- 3 Adoption, Foster Care, Orphans
- 4 Education and Faith Formation
- 5 Rites of Passage in Pluralistic Contexts
- 6 Poverty and Prosperity in a Globalized Economy
- 7 Honouring and Obeying Parents

3. Child Theology Book

This book would be theological; international and interdenominational. It would be a theological text that foregrounds the child and, we hope, stimulate more work in this area. Possible titles include:

- “Exploring Child Theology: International Perspectives”
- “Revisiting Theology with a ‘Child in the Midst’: Perspectives from Global Christianity”

We still have to decide which are the most promising themes and doctrines that we should explore, who are the outstanding theologians (from the contexts represented in the meeting) who could contribute to such a book and, at a practical level, where would be the best place to meet for an international conference.

4. Primary Texts From Six World Religions on Children and Childhood

A book is planned from Rutgers University that would collect the major theological texts on children and childhood from world religions. Participants were invited to reflect which texts in the Christian tradition that they have found most helpful in their own work and to consider which primary texts they would want to see in this reader in the section on Christianity.

5. Course Work on Children and Childhood:

There is the possibility of showcasing syllabi from courses on children and childhood on the webpage of the project. Participants were invited to send in such material for consideration.

Selected Resources and Initiatives

Marcia Bunge

Marcia gave a list of useful resources which is attached in Appendix 1. While this list is impressive and helpful, for many participants the concern was the *cost* of books. A comment from one participant was that it would be helpful to have books printed in India so that they can be made available more cheaply. For future books, CTM should look at local publishers with this in mind.

Session 2.3 PEPE project: a new look at church (Candieiro)

Terezinha Candieiro

PEPE is a social, educational and evangelistic missionary programme, intended for local churches that want to cause an impact with the gospel through attending to the social, educational and spiritual matters of concern to 4 to 5 year old children. It is a pre-school educational programme and this is what determines the age of the children involved.

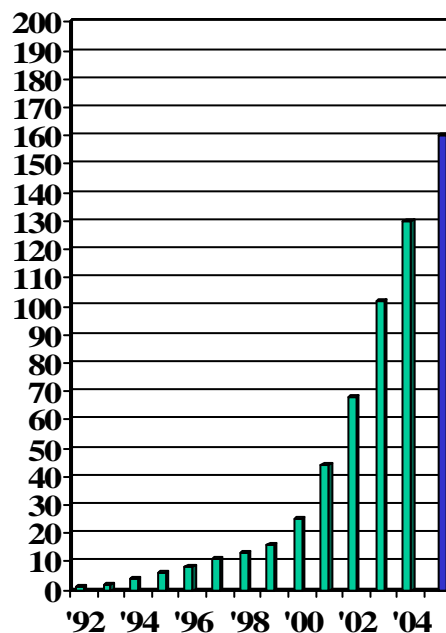
Its goals are to:

- Provide good education
- Help the child to mature
- Provide Christian education
- Help the church in its mission

PEPE was born in 1992 in Jardim Olinda, São Paulo, Brazil in response to the question: how can we plant a church in an area of such poverty and deprivation? Will it be a church with all talk and no action, like so many others?

In the time since then, it has grown rapidly (see graph; figures for 2005 projected). Expansion was initially in Brazil but later to other parts of the Spanish and Portuguese speaking world:

- 2000 Brasil-Northeast
- 2001 Mozambique
- 2002 Peru, Paraguay, Chile
- 2003 Guine Conacry; SãoTomé e Príncipe
- 2004 Angola
- 2005 Bolívia, Ecuador



What does the programme achieve? Some 80% of children 'receive Jesus' and we have found that it is a good way to plant churches in Brazil. Community in Christ is formed through PEPE. But in Africa, we have found it works better as a way to grow the churches in quality and depth.

The programme also runs in Muslim communities and they know that it is run by Christians. There is no coercion on children to go to church but they see the love of God through the educator's life. In Guinea, the educator is a Muslim but he experiences the love of God through the contact with the co-ordinator. About 80% of the children respond to Christ but many families wouldn't allow them to express it. In Brazil it has been a good way to plant churches but in Africa it has been more about strengthening and deepening church life.

Most of the countries in Latin American cannot afford public preschool education for disadvantaged children and there are not enough school places for all the children. Many children cannot go to school. Therefore this ministry is very relevant. Most of the children would be by themselves in their homes for long hours. Most of the church buildings are empty 5 or 6 days a week, they could be filled with children. Some of the best volunteers are senior citizens— many are bored. In some countries they are building senior and children homes on the same property.

There is an issue regarding children who do not have any opportunity to get into primary education. In Brazil, and in most of the countries, PEPE tries to contact local primary schools. When it is linked to a church, the church has a responsibility to continue visiting the families. The programme establishes a community which can become a church – the church grows out of the midst of the children.

Comment: in the Caribbean, a government has discovered that the return on investment in education was greater the younger the age of the child. So churches have switched their resources from High Schools to pre-schools. In one school, the growth has been exponential because parents are seeing the value.

One participant was concerned that such a programme would just be another burden on the pastor, who is expected to do everything. How could the project get volunteers from within the church when church members either have no education or have to work? Do volunteers get paid? This is an issue that must be considered. Typically, the church supports volunteers in some way, not by salary. In Mozambique there are some funds from the Baptist convention to give a small salary to the educator. Also the parents are encouraged to give something, whatever they can afford – can be rice or vegetables.

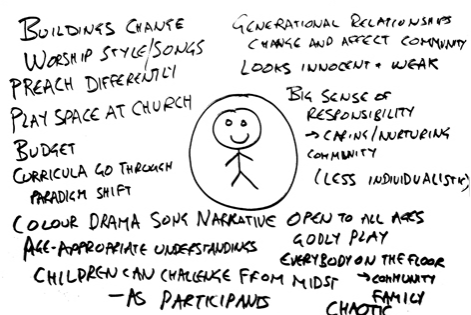
What is different about this that makes it CT? Because it starts with little children, it led to a rethinking of what church is. Churches don't usually emerge from kindergartens. In Matthew 18 when Jesus took the child, it started a new community: he and the child.

Sessions 2.4/5 Working Groups: The child in the midst of Church

The task in this session was to reflect theologically on the church, using the 'child in the midst' as a way of gaining a new perspective. Participants divided into smaller working groups based on the countries they came from so that perhaps there was a degree of cultural uniformity within each group. The reflection was guided by the following six questions and for each there is a summary of the responses that were shared in the subsequent plenary session.

Q1: What theologically is the 'middle' of church?

One group struggled with the word 'middle'! Other groups offered: preaching; the Kingdom of God; the message; family of God/community; money; sacrament; liturgy; worship; social action, teachers; perhaps the hierarchy; perhaps the rich influential members. When music is the centre (dressed up as 'worship') it can seem that the centre of the church is entertainment. Sometimes church seems like a place of refuge, a womb, a safe place. When children are taken out of the 'worship time' it's an admission of failure that we don't know how to train children to worship or provide them with relevant models of worship.

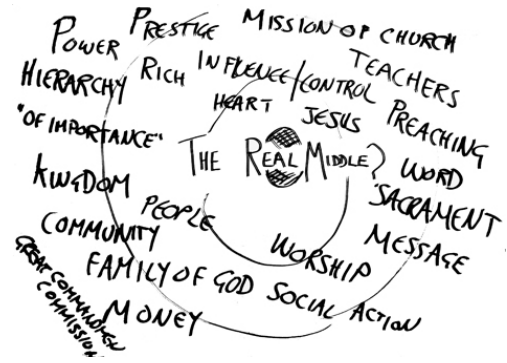


Q2: What is our 'operative theology' of children and church?

('Operative theology' refers to the theology that is actually practiced which may differ from the standard formulations of theology/doctrine espoused by our church or denomination.)

Many thought that 'church' is clearly directed to adults more than children, even though there is much interest in and many programmes for children. Children are treated as spiritually inferior because they seem to have fewer of the resources that count in church life. Sometimes children are addressed as a means to an end e.g. children's work is an apprenticeship for future pastors. Sometimes, the church uses children like consumers – they are given packaged programmes.

Sometimes they are used as ornaments during special festivals like Christmas and Easter. These attitudes result not only from doctrine but also from church politics e.g. the focus on activism, on what we are 'doing for Christ' rather than 'fellowshipping in Christ'. Some churches are schizophrenic in their attitude towards children – they are called the 'Junior Church' but not allowed to take part in events like Holy Communion or to vote in Church Meetings.



Q3: What would church look, feel and sound like if children were in the middle?

To summarise: there would be a different texture. It might look 'cute' and innocent, colourful and weak.

- The buildings and furniture, currently built for adults would need to change. The buildings and car park would not take all the land. There would be space to run around. (Why are cars given more space than children in affluent churches?)
- The church service and worship would be different: the songs used; more art, colour, drama, and dance. All might sit on the floor or all on chairs so it would become a community church. Children could sit with their families - it would be a bit chaotic, more spontaneous. Godly Play in the church (not just the Sunday School). More movement and physical activity.
- The preaching: shorter sermons; more variety; interpretive models of the message - an interpretation to their age categories.
- The budget: children allowed to challenge adults; children allowed to participate
- There would be a paradigm shift in the curriculum – it would be relevant to all age groups. It might be more countercultural– first changing families and then society; would look innocent and weak;
- Adults would become more caring and nurturing as they realise the vulnerability of children. More emphasis on relationships.

Q4: What obstacles prevent this from becoming a reality?

Traditionalism is a key problem, whether of the religious or cultural variety. There is a general unwillingness to change. Some feel it is a question of denominational distinctives that must be preserved. Some leaders don't want to take the risk even if they believe in it. Some cultures don't allow adults to worship with children – they are segregated because children are not seen to have arrived. Behind all this is a lack of understanding of the spiritual capacity of children.

Professionalism is another problem that kids' play fouls up. We have to start and end at whatever time. Kids want to keep doing things and be more spontaneous. We need to loosen up what that 1 ½ hour looks like. But little of this professionalism is given to creative thought to create working models and examples of what kids can do. Churches need to be shown models of God working through kids because people don't know what kids are capable of.

Fear might be an obstacle. We tend to idealize something that we fear. Perhaps we have idealized childhood for this reason. Similarly, there is fear of adolescents and single mothers. The church doesn't know how to handle them.

Could an obsession with novelty be an obstacle? There is a tendency to think that there must always be something new on offer but the best children's books are often repetitive. Children appreciate knowing what is coming. There is value in ritual and liturgy. Spontaneity is good but it isn't everything.

Q5: What theological and related issues need to be addressed to remove these obstacles?

There needs to be a rediscovery the Biblical principles of church in the Bible with a reformation of the doctrine of Ecclesiology. This in turn will lead to a shake up of the liturgy. –But the changes in church would have to go beyond what happens on Sunday, there would need to be structural and administrative changes.

Q6: What practical steps are recommended for CTM and/or others?

- A clear definition of CT is needed
- Develop an interdisciplinary framework of CT
- Establish a CT society in each country or region
- Promote CT in seminary context and then churches
- Help to create model churches to show how it would work
- Influence and support CT in various ways
- Give positive examples of children engaged in church
- Provide a core course of CT by 2007 – might already exist, find it and publish it, keeping in mind the culture
- Revision of curriculum in theological colleges
- Participants should start implementing in small ways e.g. by preaching on it regularly
- Read John Wesley who recommended that every pastor should preach once a month to the children; if a preacher couldn't communicate to the children he was considered out of a job!
- Institute a Children's Sunday – we have a Mother's Day and a Father's Day
- Work out how to do CT with children
- Accreditation in leadership development

Day 3 Thursday

Session 3.1 Devotions

Philip Lutterodt

Sing: Jesus loves the little children

1 Sm 1: 1-10; 19-20; 21-22; 2-28; 3:1-8 For most of Africa, this story of Samuel is well recognised. A married woman without a child has little or no value. The story reminds us of several things:

- **God's ownership** – children are a gift of God; no child belongs to its parents, they are all God's children. Hannah affirmed this by sending Samuel to the temple.
- **Humanity's stewardship.** Hannah affirmed that the child belonged to God, a great testimony considering that she had waited so long. This is God's calling to us too, for the children he has given us. How do we care for the orphan children? And what about the woman with no children, no child in the midst? Adoption is not easily done in Ghanaian culture. A woman with too many children may sell some for child labour – for her this is a form of childcare! And the children may prefer to stay where they have work and money.
- **Child discipleship.** It seems strange that Eli did not hear the word of the Lord. Might this be true of us? I have been struggling to understand what CT is but I decided I wanted to hear the voice of the Lord. Eli was supposed to be the expert, the one who heard from God. Should we listen first to the children? God has a preferable option for children. If this is so, Liberation Theology says we listen to the poor not that we speak for them. So we should listen to children and be careful about speaking for them.

There came a day when Samuel spoke and all Israel listened. Maybe the day will come that when CT speaks all the church will listen.

Session 3.2 New Book Review

Keith White

Real revolutions always start with little things. CT is revolutionary, subversive of the status quo. Part of me is in the West, and part of me is in the East. The practicalities of how you get a book are huge. We are not just concentrating on books, we aim to produce booklets as well, which should be easier

for people to afford. If we can get the agreement of those who write books, we might be able to write extended reviews or synopses that we could get out to those without the means to buy the whole book.

Graced Vulnerability: A Theology of Childhood; David Jensen; Cleveland: Pilgrim Press; 2005

This is probably the nearest thing to a book doing Child Theology at present in print.

His aim is “to offer an inductive theology of childhood that provides the basis of an ecclesial ethic of care for all children. It is inductive, in the sense that it pays attention to concrete realities that imperil children's lives in the present age: war, poverty, child labour, the death penalty, and the sex trade to name a few.” It is also a work of “constructive theology ... insofar as it grounds its portrayal of children in the self-giving, self-disclosing God of covenant, incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection.” (page xii)

He calls it an advocacy theology seeking to speak with those whose voices are often drowned in the cacophony of commercialisation and violence. (page xiii) . In attempting this he finds several doctrines are challenged, including anthropology, imago Dei, sin, the church's ministry and sacramental life.

The Christian *story* centres on the vulnerable love that embraces difference throughout creation: e.g. covenant with an oppressed people, present in a vulnerable baby in Bethlehem, spilling out in Jesus' ministry of repentance, reconciliation, proclamation of God's reign, the cross, and the love that goes beyond those spaces where we proclaim the resurrection. The abundantly diverse forms of graced human life with God inform the nature of childhood.

The image of God when applied to children as its full bearers shows itself in vulnerability and difference. Children are chosen by God, open to relation with different others, pilgrims oriented to the present. They show this through imagination, playfulness and attentiveness (all of which are theologically significant).

Focussing on the tragic realities of childhood requires a reconstruction of the Christian doctrine of sin. Children are agents *and* victims of violence.

Next comes an exploration of four ecclesial practices: baptism, peacemaking, sanctuary and prayer.

Finally there is consideration of what it means to change and become like children, with its ambiguities and possibilities, focussing on Matthew 18, and Karl Rahner's understanding of childhood as the basic condition that underlies grace human life in God's world. “To be a child of God ... is to become like children through God's grace, open to the joy of relation, but also susceptible to the tragedy and violence of human life in God's world.” (page xvi)

Hope for the future rests on the possibilities of an alternative vision epitomised in the gospel's unique privileging of children.

It is contextual theology in that it pays close attention to the everyday life that God assumed: ordinary acts of care and community building, varied vocations of a life's work, nurture of home, family and friends. We must pay closer theological attention to caring for children and to the children who are the subjects of our attention.

Let the children come: re-imagining childhood from a Christian Perspective; Bonnie Miller-McLemore; San Francisco: Josey-Bass; 2003

Bonnie Miller is a theologian who writes from a feminist perspective and has thought deeply about children and childhood with a view to finding what she calls “operating instructions” for faithful parents. She is concerned to identify a practical theology of children. And so she is writing what might best be described as theology of childhood. Yet in the process she encounters and engages with a number of theological issues.

In her author's note (pages xxvii-xxxii) she describes how she sees choosing the subject of children as requiring “a radical rethinking of the theological encyclopaedia (biblical, historical, systematic and practical theologies), and a fundamental redefinition of practical theology itself.” (page xxix) She draws from feminist theology to stress the importance of respecting the voice and experience of the subject, and admits the challenge of adults seeking to understand children in all their historical and

cultural diversity. She believes that mothers have a distinctive contribution to make to this process with at least four core premises:

- Giving privileged voice to mothers and children because of their marginalisation
- Challenging the contradictory idealisation and demonisation of children and women's bodies
- Enriching theological debates about Christian love, sin, and grace with the insights of the love between two unequal parties, mother and child
- Stretching claims for justice and liberation to include children and mothers where the idea of equality with the adult male does not work.

There are two broad agendas

- Reflection on daily life because the divine manifests itself in the mundane Respecting the voices of the marginalised
- In thinking about childhood as a historical construct she argues for "the imperfect, even volatile child in an imperfect, volatile world rather than romantic or sinful, corrupt understandings."

She believes that Christian theology can and should critique and correct popular psychological readings of childhood where children are seen as victims. Children should be loved for their own sake; be received as harbingers of the Kingdom. Those who cause a child to stumble merit a fate worse than death. Likewise it is necessary to visit popular theology. Sin has an important place in understanding children and is not just part of a poisonous pedagogy: "one needs a little power before one can recognize one's true identity: a sinner who can be forgiven, rather than a victim who can protest." (page 80)

She sees children as portrayed biblically as both gift and task, and does some important theological reflection on the way. (Page 104) She argues that children are also the labour of love, and agents. She concludes by seeing the care of children as a religious discipline and community practice. (page 161)

And her key biblical sources are where Jesus places a child in the midst and takes children in his arms.

All through she holds mother and child together or in tension as a key to the process. She is not claiming to establish a definitive position, but rather to model how current and historical understandings should be challenged by the realities of life and the mother-child bond.

Child Sign: Exploring Child Theology; Willmer and White;

Keith White

At the first Penang consultation in 2002, Keith White and Haddon Willmer canvassed ideas about a book on Child Theology. After four years gestation it is ready to be delivered but those involved in the original 'conception' might wonder if it is truly the same child! But no child was born by committee. Keith shared the following outline which describes the manuscript recently delivered to the publishers.

Chapter 1 Child in View

"Jesus called a little child and had him stand in the midst" (Matthew 18: 2). An exploration of this action of Jesus as one might approach one of the signs in John's Gospel.

Chapter 2 The Elusive Kingdom Of Heaven

"The disciples were discussing who was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 18: 1). The Kingdom of Heaven (God) is at the heart of Matthew's Gospel. Understanding what it means was not easy for the disciples, and has not been much easier since. This is the theological context and setting into which Jesus places the child as a sign or clue to the nature and meaning of this (elusive) Kingdom.

Chapter 3 Jesus and the Way of the Cross

"Unless you change and become like little children" (Matthew 18: 3). The child as a clue to the way of Jesus and the nature of true discipleship,

Chapter 4 *Becoming as a Child*

"Whoever humbles himself like this child" (Matthew 18: 4). Becoming as a child and the meaning of humility.

Chapter 5 *Receiving a Child*

"Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me" (Matthew 18: 5). Receiving the child and its meaning.

Chapter 6 *Representing a Child*

"Do not despise one of these little ones: their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in Heaven" (Matthew 18: 10). The ways in which children can be despised and refused by humans and the meaning of their being represented by angels in heaven.

Chapter 7 *Child Theology?*

"What do you think?" (Matthew 18: 12). A summary of the road we have travelled, and something of what we think we have been doing, and what we have not been doing in the process of writing this book.

There were several questions from participants, some of which, with the answers given by Keith, are summarised here.

Q Often we ask what we can do for the child but what can CT do for us? Why is Paul so silent about the child?

A Our method doesn't require us to answer for Paul, but maybe it was because he wasn't married. In writing the book, we have gone through several conversions as the child challenges our thinking. It is about seeing Jesus and his way differently.

Q I don't see anything relevant for children at risk.

A We come from interaction with children at risk. The child we had in mind was the child at risk. The child in Matthew is the 'unknown child' and we hope readers will put an appropriate child in the midst as they read it.

Q What is CT? I still don't get it.

A It is helpful to understand it not so much as a discipline we've arrived at but rather we're a movement we're participating in. In a movement, the vision is embodied in a person and in that embodiment is shared and an awareness is developed and we help others become aware. After a while it becomes mature, and it is disseminated in info. Then boundaries are drawn up, ideals, etc. then battles and dies down. At the moment, Keith is the one embodying the vision. We're still at the brainstorming stage. We don't want just another book on the shelf. It's not something to get our heads around, but something to think through. The moment we talk about a child of a different age, it varies the results. CT can't have fixed limits. Or the limits are broader than we thought.

The Narrative Bible

Keith White

What was your very first Bible like, if you accepted Christ between 4 and 14? My first Bible was KJV there was a space to fill in my name and date, which I did. It was the 'Holy Matrimony' page! 'Matrimony' was not the only word in the Bible I didn't understand! A reviewer of Children's Bibles of that time considered them to be a scandal and a hindrance to children finding God.

The context for this Bible is the multicultural household at Mill Grove. Sometimes I (Keith) am away yet they need to be able to carry on with the family prayers. This bible will help them do that. We need to get away from our words and spend more time in the Bible. The first copy of the Bible will be given to David age 13 in Cebu, Philippines. He was a street boy in a Compassion project and an artist painting without brushes. He gave me a picture he had done, which speaks powerfully to me and to others who see it, and I promised to give him the first copy of the Bible in return.

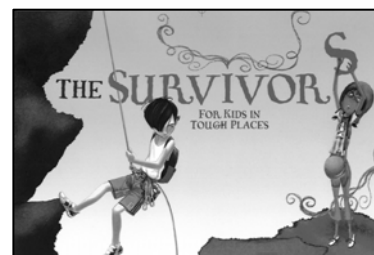
LaReau Anderson

From our study at the International Bible Society regarding Bible engagement, we have certain criteria for making the Bible accessible to children. The criteria have given rise to certain strategies, all of which incorporate these criteria.



Criteria

1. Content
 - a. Labelling
 - b. Translation
 - c. Presentation
 - d. Packaging
2. Appropriateness and context
 - a. Audience
 - b. Culture and diversity
 - c. Child groups
 - d. Conditioning
 - e. Communication
 - f. Culture sensitivity
3. Learning
 - a. Holistic
 - b. Cognitive development
 - c. Application of learning
 - d. Personal safety
 - e. Transformation
 - f. Interactive
4. Effectiveness
 - a. Implementation
 - b. Guidelines for effectiveness
 - c. Evaluation



Strategies

We use the idea of the 4/14 window - the ages when children are generally most accessible and responsive. We have materials developed for children at various ages and living in various contexts within that window. These include:

- My Monthly Bible Reader
- Children's Bible
- The Bible Narrative and Illustrated
- Audio materials
- Web
- Critical moments Scriptures

The Bible: Narrative and Illustrated

The Bible uses a format that distinguishes story from other material. It is the NIRV translation. There is a brief introduction to each book, simple margin notes (over 5,000) and a short introduction to each story. There are over 500 colour illustrations and 21 original maps alongside the text.

It is designed for groups, children and families in both Christian and non-Christian settings. The notes were developed by Dr. Keith J. White, the art is by Andy Bisgrove and the design by Tony Cantale. It was reviewed by a team including: Dr. Martin Selman, Dr. Deborah Reid, Martin Manser, Emma Redfern and IBS staff.

First edition is English but we have plans for Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Russian editions. Maybe there will be more. There is a clear link to Child Theology in the whole concept, the notes, design and art work.

Shiferaw Michael

Shiferaw led us all in dedicating the Bible in prayer.

JOHN 19:27

write "The King of the Jews." Write that this man claimed to be king of the Jews."

²²Pilate answered, "I have written what I have written."

²³When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes. They divided them into four parts. Each soldier got one part. Jesus' long, inner robe was left. It did not have any seams. It was made out of one piece of cloth from top to bottom.

²⁴"Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's cast lots to see who will get it."

This happened so that Scripture would come true. It says:

"They divided up my clothes among them.
They cast lots for what I was wearing."

So that is what the soldiers did.

²⁵Jesus' mother stood near his cross. So did his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

²⁶Jesus saw his mother there. He also saw the disciple he loved standing nearby. Jesus said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son." ²⁷He said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, the disciple took her into his home.

Disciple he loved 19:26 Probably John, the writer of the Gospel. See also 13:23.



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Session 3.3 Taking Stock: Understanding Child Theology

What I now see about CT

Everyone wrote their impressions on a piece of paper. We hoped to discover that we were travelling together, as a journey opens up new vistas.

What I still don't see about CT

Similarly, everyone wrote down their comments which were later shared in open session.

Maybe we have to accept that we will be marginalised as children are – and as Jesus was. True community is with Christ on the margins. Jesus is outside the city on the Cross.

Sessions 3.4/5 Informal Learning

The afternoon and evening of Day 3 were given over for times of informal learning and reflection by means of play, leisure and chatting even more informally than in the other sessions.

Day 4 Friday

At the beginning of Day 4 we noted that Doug McConnell unfortunately had to leave us because of other commitments and also that Karissa was absent from the meeting through sickness.

Session 4.1 Devotions

Angela Williams

The Comprehensive and Holistic Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ: Isaiah 61:1-3; Lk 4:18-19;21

These texts reveal the heart of God for a broken, hurting world, including children. They give God's mission statement. What does it mean to be anointed? Would you say you are? Sometimes I don't feel that I am but I still have to serve. I feel uncomfortable in this. So perhaps I have come to disturb the comfortable. Can children be divinely anointed? We have been reminded of Samuel.

Categories of those the Lord was anointed to reach:

- **The poor** – to bring them Good News, and empower the marginalised to look beyond their present circumstances.
- **The Broken-hearted** – comfort and consolation; would include children grieving family breakdown, bereavement etc.
- **The Bound, the captives** – child labour, CSE, etc
- **The Blind** – may take this to indicate all forms of physical illness, physical deformity and sickness; also those spiritually blinded by affluence
- **The Oppressed** – child soldiers, pornography
- **The Mourners** – to bring them praise and joy, strength and security ('oaks') and beauty

Preaching was part of the Lord's Ministry. Can children be involved in this?

Children have a strong sense of injustice. The anointed child in ministry – let us play our part in equipping children to participate in the Lord's mission, as agents of that mission: preaching to the poor, healing the broken hearted, releasing the captives etc.

The Lord God says:
"Share your bread
With the hungry,
Bring the homeless poor
Into your house,
Cover the naked."

Dear Lord God,
We have got
New carpets, so this will
Not be possible

Steve Turner

Dear God,
I wish that there wasn't
no such thing of sin.
I wish that there was
not no such thing
of war.
Tim M
age 9

Session 4.2/3 Working with the pre-Christian child

Participants brought presentations showing different approaches to working with the pre-Christian child, bringing the children into the meeting in imagination, as an introduction to our reflection on the Child and Mission (session 4.4).

Ethiopia: Child Development Training and Research Center

Shiferaw Michael

Shiferaw expressed a great fear for Africa - the death of hope. Ethiopia struggles with this (Shiferaw is Ethiopian). Ethiopia is the second largest country in Africa by population. The evangelical church of Ethiopia has developed a vision and a strategy based on children and the local church. It is children and local church based and represents the strategy of the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia for Ethiopia's transformation and development.

Basic facts about Ethiopia:

Population	77 million
Ethiopian Orthodox	47.3%
Evangelicals	14. 7%
Muslim	35.4%
Others	2.6%
Population Below Poverty Line	50 %

Threats to Ethiopia's Future:

- Environmental degradation
- Ethnic conflict/tribalism
- Low level of democratic culture
- Poverty
- Lack of good governance
- Low level of appreciation and understanding of human and children's rights
- Poor hygiene and sanitation
- Fanaticism in some religions

The situation of the country is so bad that to get out of where it is we need to create a new generation after the heart of Christ. The best and in fact the only organisation that can create a new generation to change the country is the church.

The Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE) is a national organization of evangelical churches. Over 95% of all evangelical churches are members of the Fellowship and over 87% of Christian organizations are associate members of this body. There are subordinate fellowships at different regions of the country.

Covenant on ministry to children

The general assembly of ECFE passed a historic document entitled "Covenant on Ministry to Children" in February 2003. Since then it has served as an important element in the programme and action plans of the Fellowship. We took time to look at what the body of Christ in Ethiopia has to help it create the new generation. We agreed that children and the local church are the ones that can help to make a difference in the nation for the purpose it wants to achieve. So we agreed that to establish a centre- the Child Development Training and Research Center to spearhead this initiative.

The Child Development Training and Research Center

The Vision of CDTRC is to see a new generation of Ethiopians that are disciples of Christ, lead exemplary lives and become a source of the transformation of Ethiopia and its people so that its shame and agony become things of the past.

The mission of the CDTRC is to transform the hearts and minds of people working for and with children, challenging and influencing the powerful, so that the nurture, development and role of children are given greater importance and emphasis in the Ethiopian society.

To achieve these purposes, the Centre will equip and empower those who work closely with children at home, in schools, in the church and child development organizations. It will conduct research and make known/expose helpful and harmful cultures and practices to children. It will create awareness for and challenge the powerful (policy makers, religious and opinion leaders) on the plight and potentials of children. It will prepare curriculum and training materials for child ministry.

The major groups that CDTRC wish to influence are:

- Church leaders and children Sunday school teachers
- Government officials
- Para church child focused organizations
- Parents and potential parents
- School teachers

As an example of what can be done, consider the following initiative. A project was developed to become a “Green church”, modelling the community God’s concern for the environment and our stewardship of Creation. We asked 15,000 of the 30,000 local churches to plant 1-5 trees in their compounds. Not only does the church become the beauty spot in the community, it also models to the neighbourhood what can be done. We also asked families to do the same: 4 million of the 12 million believers planting 1-3 trees in their compounds. We asked for Community trees to be planted by children. To back this up, we are rewriting the Children’s Sunday school curriculum to include the environment and will train Sunday school teachers on the environment. The first draft of the curriculum has been prepared- will be tested July 16 to 30th 2006. In this way, Sunday school children will learn using the new curriculum and plant and care for trees. Posters on the environment prepared and distributed to the local churches and even homes of believers. We also hope to have Seminars for parents, church, community and government leaders on the environment.

“O dry bones...you shall live” We think much can be achieved in a short time in mitigating the environmental degradation of the country. The plan is to take similar measures with respect to the other threats indicated earlier. This initiative:

- makes the relevance of the church apparent to the community as it enables it to respond to the burning issues of the society;
- makes children into benefactors and contributors; a blessing to today’s society;
- takes the church to the community and brings the community to the church;
- creates sustainability as it builds on today’s children.

Some partnerships are needed to bring this to fruition. We want institutions that will each train about eight men and women that will become the trainers at the Center:

- People who can work with us in Ethiopia on training during the formative stage of the initiative;
- Books and other materials (audio, video) on children, the environment, ethnicity, human rights and children’s rights, etc...;
- Construction of a library for the Centre;
- Computers, LCD projectors, printers.

Conclusion: “Come let us Build... so that we may no longer be a reproach” (Neh.2:17). Glory to God!

The Montessori School in KL

Petrina Shee-Satvinder

The name of the school is “Montessori New Covenant Community.” We have 120 children from the community of Sentul. 60 children are attending the Montessori preschool programme (2 – 10 years old) while the rest are in the Elementary programme (7 – 15 years old). Our school runs from Tuesday – Friday (8.30 – 4.00 p.m). 40% of children are from the local poor families while the others are Rohingyas, they are the asylum seekers from Myanmar. 90% of our children have either dropped out of school or have no access to the public school. We have 11 teachers, 6 volunteers and 3 cleaning/kitchen crew. We also have a youth resource centre which consists of a library, internet facility, café, as well as music and science labs to help address some of the needs of the youth in the community. The youth café serves 50-60 youth monthly. We also have foster care for a few of children and youth from the community.

Changes the Child brings

For us as practitioners, the issues we are grappling with are not so much dealing with the question “what will happen if the child is in the midst or in the middle of the church?” but more “what is in the middle of the child?”.

Discovering what is in the middle of the child changes everything that we do in regard to education, children ministry and possibly the church.

- **The Child changes the education system**

Discovering what is in the middle of the child changes the way we do education.

For example, as we observe children we discover that visual recognition and discrimination is one of many God-given natural skills that they possess. This understanding causes us to rethink about how children learn to count, for example, thus changing how we teach addition and subtraction in Mathematics. As we continue to be challenged with more understanding of what is in the middle of the child, the foundation of how we do and view education is being shaken. We hope that with this discovery we will be able to influence and make significant changes to the education system in Malaysia.

- **The Child changes children's ministry**

Discovering what is in the middle of the child changes the way we do children ministry.

The presentation of the gospel must be relevant to the heart of the children. Finding out what concerns them, leading them to a discovery of who God is to them in their present situations and leading them to a life-style of dependency on God for today must be the heart of the mission of the children's ministry. This leads us to a new look and understanding of God, the bible and the common practices in children ministry.

- **The Child changes us**

Jesus took the child and placed him in the midst of the adults to show them that the issue was with them, not the child. As we discover what is in the middle of the child, we are changed. The child becomes the check and balance of our walk with God and how we are treating one another thus living out the kingdom of God.

Stages in our Conversation with Children

Working with pre-Christian children is like meeting the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4. The story of the Samaritan woman serves as a model for our (New Covenant Community) work with the pre-Christian children from the community. Too often we see social work as a pre-cursor to working with pre-Christian children. Yet this passage shows us that it may not necessarily be so, as the person receiving help was Jesus and not the woman!

Working with pre-Christian children is very much like working through the "stages of contact" that the Samaritan woman has with Jesus.

- **The question stage**

In verses 9-14, the woman asked Jesus many questions. The children that we work with do not come to us as "blank slates". Children normally come with many questions as their minds are being shaped with things that are happening around them. Many of the questions are not easy to answer. Children usually have an insatiable quest for learning and an intense desire for truth to apply to and make sense of the world they are living in. Our work begins with giving children a place where they can comfortably bring their questions. It is important for us, the children's workers, to remember that the emphasis of our work is not in providing the answers but in facilitating a process of learning and growing. In the world where children are exposed to fantasy and imaginative play and to movies there is a growing mistrust generated between seeing and believing. This poses a new challenge to us as their hearts are becoming hardened towards the things around them.

- **The personal-turmoil stage**

The next stage we see that the Samaritan woman went through is "personal-turmoil" as Jesus pointed out her problem of "many husbands," in verses 15-18. As we work with children we see that children go through a cycle of emotional turmoil going through guilt, fear, doubt and belief. They believe in Jesus but yet there many personal and family issues that need to be worked out. At times they may slip back into the questioning stage as we see with the Samaritan woman from verses 19-24. Children may be at these stages for years. It is important we recognize what is going on with them and support them as much as possible.

- **The revelation stage**

Finally the woman has a revelation that Jesus is the Messiah. It is also important for us to recognize that perhaps "conversion" is not a one time and one event experience. As with the Samaritan woman, her eyes were gradually opened and she moved from one understanding to another. One of the greatest joys of working with children is to be able to walk them through a series of revelations.

Network of International Christian Schools

Cecilia

Mt 28 says go into all the world. I did that and found the world came to me! The mission of NICS is to establish a worldwide network of international Christian schools staffed by qualified Christian educators,

instilling in each student a Biblical world-view in an environment of academic excellence and respect for people of all cultures and religions. It is founded on the belief that a major thrust for world evangelism and discipleship for Christ can happen through the classroom with the impact of committed Christian educators overseas. The network has schools associated in 42 countries:

- East Asia: Seoul, Korea; Pyongtaek, Korea; Uijongbu, Korea; Nagoya, Japan; Kunming, China
- Southeast Asia; Singapore; Bandung, Indonesia; East Africa; Nairobi, Kenya
- Central Asia; Kabul, Afghanistan
- West Africa; Accra, Ghana;
- Western Europe; Weil Am Rhein, Germany;
- Latin America; Caracas, Venezuela; Paramaribo, Suriname; Lima, Peru; Brasilia, Brazil; Belem, Brazil; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; La Paz, Bolivia
- Middle East; Ankara, Turkey

It is a way to reach affluent children. I started as an ESL teacher but recently became a chaplain to the school in Seoul, S Korea. Some schools have integrated Bible teaching in the curriculum. Parents agree to this in the contract but may counteract the teaching at home. Children are taken out of their comfort zones to minister to orphans, or work with Habitat for Humanity, through voluntary mission trips.

The children move home every 3 years or so. They are dislocated and often grieving. The nominal conversion rate is over 50% annually but there are some caveats around this figure (see below). Children always have many teachers in their lives. Whether they be at home, in the classroom, on the street or elsewhere, these teachers are the most important influences in their lives. But these powerful influences, good or bad, are rarely afforded the amount of time that is given to educators in the classroom.

The Mission Statement of ICS in Seoul where I work is: "To provide an education that will enable the student to be a productive, responsible citizen. Education being the pursuit of truth is provided in the context that Jesus Christ is the absolute truth."

These intentions are implemented by a variety of means:

- Academic subjects plus Bible Integration
- Bible classes integrated into the school curriculum
- Discipleship Programmes
 - Chapels
 - Seoul Seekers
 - VBS
 - Prayers and Bible Study before or after Sports events
 - Annual Spring Missions Trips
 - Counselling

Some issues that arise:

"Now that I have accepted Christ as my personal Saviour, can I pray that God will save my uncles, aunts, and grandparents, right now?" (2nd Grade, Buddhist)

"We are not sure that we still have Christ in our hearts, although we can remember praying to Him to ask for the forgiveness of our sins in 1st grade." (2nd Grade, Buddhist and Hindu)

"I do not want to be a Christian anymore. I prayed to Jesus to make me happy but he did not answer my prayer. I prayed to Allah and he answered my prayer. I'm happy now." (4th Grade, Muslim)

"When my parents will ask me to do the rituals for the dead when we go back home, what shall I do?" (5th Grade, Shinto)

"If God is good, why does He allow bad things to happen to me?" (4th Grade, Roman Catholic)

"Should I tell my parents about my experience with Jesus Christ?" (4th Grade, Muslim)

"I will be going home next year. How will I continually read the Bible when my parents do not want me to read it?" (2nd Grade, Buddhist)

Students from over eighty nations are gathered in the classrooms of NICS schools around the world. This incredible opportunity should not be taken lightly! Considering that these students come from all major world religions and are from the families of businessmen and diplomats as well as missionaries, the potential to reach the world for Christ is obvious.

Petra College

Jan Grobbelaar

Petra College is not a theological seminary. It is only focused on training people for work with children. It thinks of its mission as extending the ministry of Jesus to the children of Africa and beyond. It was founded in 1989 by Johan en Aretha du Preez. The main campus is at White River, Mpumalanga and in recent times has opened a satellite campus at De Doorns in the Western Cape. It offers a variety of learning programmes including: Residential training; Field training; and Training by extension.

Petra refers to the granite rock on which the College is build, but also to the Rock of all ages on which the ministry is built.

I would like to share with you the story of a Mentor which demonstrates our strategy for multiplying training for children's ministry. Betty Kasaija of Uganda is married to Robert, senior pastor of The Redeemed of the Lord Evangelistic Church in Kampala, Uganda. Betty saw the suffering of the children of Uganda and knew she had to become involved. She heard about Petra College in South Africa and attended a three months course in children's ministry.

On her return to Uganda she reorganised the Sunday School, applying the new found skills and principles that she had learned and started to train her Sunday School teachers. The following year, Dirk and Taleta Coetsee from Petra College, with their children, joined Betty in Kampala for a month of training. Together they trained a group of leaders from all over Uganda and followed this up with further training the following year, including training of trainers (adult learning facilitation). Some of this group immediately joined in workshops with new students, and continued to train others for the rest of the year. All this was done under Betty's leadership. Two years later, the Coetsees returned to Uganda for a last series of workshops. The team of 25 helped facilitate these workshops. With Betty they planned and conducted several other workshops in Uganda.

In between, Betty returned to Petra College to help develop a management course and to participate herself in the seven weeks management course. She also took over the management of Sunrise, a project caring for orphans in Uganda. She has been invited by others to share her knowledge and experience in Sweden, Rwanda, Zambia, Kenya and South Africa.

In 2003 Betty and her team went one step further. They joined Petra College in a training project in war-torn South Sudan helping to raise new children's workers. A core group of these Sudanese children's workers have been trained as trainers and in August Pastor Johnson Alfull from the Nuba Mountains was the first from this group to attend a Children's Ministry Mentorship course at Petra College in South Africa! Since his return to Sudan, Johnson has been actively busy training and mentoring new children's leaders. And Betty, with others, are still walking closely by his side

So Betty grew:

- From concerned pastor's wife
- To skilled children's worker
- To trainer of children's workers
- To manager of a children's ministry
- To international mentor in children's ministry

Former students of Petra College are now involved in children's ministry in 30 countries in Africa.

Our strategy is:

1. Establish a Partnership
2. Develop children's ministry skills of selected leaders
3. Select a core group from these leaders
4. Develop training, management and mentor skills of this group

Mentors are key to this process. They are:

- Leaders who are highly competent
- Role models in basic children's ministry
- Facilitators of adult learning
- Managers of ministries
- Spiritually mature leaders of others

Our Training Philosophy has the following characteristics:

- Need orientated
- Contextualised
- Family and Community based

- Relational experiential
- Learning by doing
- Personal Spiritual Formation

“There is Hope” India

Ponraj Daniel

“There is HOPE” is a movement of the Christians (Churches and Missions) of Jharkhand with a vision for the evangelization of the unreached people groups of India. “There is HOPE” exists to pioneer and preach the Gospel to the unreached people groups in Jharkhand, plant and empower the churches with Christian leadership that will enable them to remain and multiply as a church planting movement, and partner with people of God for the holistic development of the body of Christ.

Through a Partnership with the BGEA we conducted evangelism thro’ the local church during December 2005. We trained 2,234 pastors and 26,045 volunteers. As a result, 53,712 decisions were recorded and 210,000 people were reached. We are planning to continue this work in Malaysia and Singapore.

We also have a ministry to children. We are partnering with the “India Missions Association” to care for Indian Missionary Kids.

I am going to offer the story of a village named Ruthvadi in the state of Jharkhand, India, as a case study

The Story of Ruthvadi

I worked as a church planter among the Santal tribe and started a church planting movement, of which Ruthvadi was the first village. We moved into Ruthvadi village with out any common living facilities: no toilets, drinking water, or electricity. We had a mobile phone and a motor cycle. It was 45 kilometres from the local small town and had only one shop . We lived next door to buffaloes.

The Population comprised 25 tribal – aboriginal – people in 28 houses. Most were animist worshipping a god man called Ohja. Only 4 houses were Christian. Only two people could read and write.

They lived on rice and salt and worked as contract labourers in an illegal coal mine. No daily wagers. One third of the land was mortgaged to the land lord.

The problems the people faced can be summarized as follows: Poverty, Illiteracy, Exploitation, high infant mortality rate, school drop outs, unemployment, migrant labourers, isolation, Suspicion of other people groups. The root causes of these problems can be traced back to centuries of exploitation, irrelevant education methods sustained by their Animist Faith.

We set up the Ruthvadi Child development centre, focussing on the holistic development of a child. We developed activities around four key areas: educational, social, spiritual, and socio-emotional. The activities were age graded, taught life values and gave a basic school education in formal classes for grades 1 to 5. The education was integrated with community life, so that children learned through relationship with their context – such as - animals, bow and arrows, flute, forests, fields, cultivation etc.

In addition, we provided non-formal classes for girls, classes for women covering Child birth, AIDS, clean drinking water, exploitation, health care etc and support for a Community development project, teaching about seeds, water reservoir, relationship with the environment and animal care. We also started a children’s church.

What are the outcomes so far? For the children:

- They are winning prizes of excellence even when they compete with the city children.
- They are open to debate and reasoning
- They are relate to other people groups effectively
- They have a larger vision: from post man, driver, night guard to business men, teachers, scientists, doctors
- They understand the value of learning,
- They comprehend the concept of literature and documentation.
- They understand Sickness and Doctors and God
- They have knowledge of the love of God.

The result in the community is similarly very positive:

- Lower chances that a person will die of diarrhoea
- Epidemics no longer wipe out villages
- All loans borrowed are well documented or stopped.
- In the market, people can do business effectively.

- They can value and effectively engage in the traditional practices.
- They understand the laws, administration of the government of India and can define boundaries of their own autonomous administration.
- Diminishing divorce and social evils like “Daine”
- Know their rights, privileges and responsibilities.
- Know why the missionaries and evangelists do all the good they are doing,

Underlying Principles of this process

We have gone out in response to the commandment to love our Lord with all our being, and our neighbour as our own self. In so doing, we recognize and honour the existing traditions, thinking patterns and systems of the Santal tribe. We aim for gradual not sudden change, taking into account the dynamics of the family and the society at large. We require local participation and contribution so that they learn and grow as a community.

On the other hand, there are some things to avoid. For example, the work should not be attempted by individuals working in isolation. The whole church must be involved. It should not be done primarily as a means to spread the gospel, although through it there might be influence. The benefits are offered to all children/people both Christian and non Christian.

There has been an effect on the church. In the two years of the programme, there are now eight Christian families in Ruthvadi and churches have spread from three villages to 18 villages in that area.

Conclusions

There are some issues arising from this which I would like to see debated:

- **Child and context:** Is there development without the cultural, spiritual, social etc. context in mind?
- **Child and church:** Should we practice child development without the context of the church. (Presence or/and Christian values)?
- **Child and change:** Should Child care result in transformation of the complete man. (The child as a being and/or the community at large)?

Session 4.4: Working Groups: The child in the midst of Mission

Each group had the opportunity to meet informally over lunch. They then met to consider the following four questions and to complete the sentence below. The groups were organised on the basis of gender.

1. What is our operative theology of mission?
2. What particular issues arise in the course of mission in our own experience and culture?
3. What light is shed on theology and the issues identified when a boy (for the male groups) girl (for the female groups) child or children are placed in the midst?
4. What action would you recommend by CTM and others to address these issues?

To distil the discussion, groups were asked to create a sentence including the following words: Church; Mission; Kingdom of God; Child.

Sentences

“The church, taking the marginalised child and putting it in its midst embodies the KOG and expresses God’s mission here and now”

“The church is to fulfil the mission of building the kingdom of God on earth for and with the child”

“The mission of the church is to live out / actualise the kingdom of God as signed by the child in the midst”

“The church must receive the child into the kingdom of God to truly find its mission”

“The child being the centre transforming the church and mission in order to bring the kingdom of God in its totality.”

“In humility and repentance, the church has a mission of living the kingdom of God with the child in the midst.”

Session 4.5: Plenary Discussion and Outcome planning

Q1 Our operative theology of mission

The following phrases capture some of the ideas that participants thought expressed the church's actual beliefs about mission:

Believer to non-believer	Bringing in the sheaves	Disciple-making
Tomorrow in mind	Big is better	Not disciple making – focus on numbers
Faraway	Small is beautiful	Leadership development
Cross-cultural	Christian identity	Lived theology
Church planting	Diffusion	Picture taking
Gospel proclamation AND social action	Money making	Commercial targets
Mission = Missions	Pervade not invade	Sweet smelling vapour
	Living in a community	

Q2 issues arising in the course of mission

- Commercialisation / commodification / market
- The identity of Indian mission
- Ethics and conversions
- A 'lived theology' perspective
- Dealing with new converts – persecution / discipleship
- Anti-conversion law and mission?
- Young children don't know what the faith is
- Mission, religious rituals and rites
- Social action as a means to an end?
- Defining success/effectiveness?
- Church as community – sign / context / unity?
- The Commissions – John, Matthew – what does it ALL mean?
- Lack of collaboration / churches / para-churches
- Denominational barrier / standards
- Limited understanding of mission – proclamation / social action / only!
- Funds – personnel – resources
- Socio-economic political systems
- Emphasis on mega-churches and a culture of spiritual voyeurism
- The CLUB – bring in, not send out
- Want for power in society – societal values v discipleship
- Power of cross or resurrection
- Instant gratification not future
- One-to-one or a people group?
- Need for language for parents of children with other language
- Spiritual void / emptiness
- Balancing social and evangelism

Q3 Boy and Girl Child

Girl Child	Boy Child
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive approaches to children in education training and empowering • Holistic approach in mission to avoid girl-child prostitution • Promote value of life to avoid abortion of girl children • The girl says 'tell me' • Not enough theological reflection on the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasising marginalisation – giving importance to boy rather than girl. • Not respecting the Word of God properly. How does the boy learn if the elders don't? • Lord's Supper: why should the child be excluded not sharers? • Child leads us to invest in the future thus we become more concerned with

<p>girl child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues of safety and justice (e.g. less restriction) – and their relation? • How to speak of Fatherhood of God in contexts of abuse? • Issues of beauty / self-esteem, value and motherhood 	<p>discipleship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family comes to the foreground and societal pressure on the family • The child's comfort in a huge auditorium? • Emphasizing the maleness not helpful • Seeing ourselves as God sees us – a message for everybody • Blessings and curses – intergenerational relationship • Relationship and/or conversion – conversion to a state OR about relationship with Jesus • Does that apply to adults as well as children? • Few male role-models in Sunday school • Encounter of boys with the outdoors – what is comfortable for them? • Need for long-term goals
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Q4 Action recommended for CTM and others

- Boys to be part of our CTM
- Reflection on Girl Child Theology
- Listen to children directly, not via adults
- Pastors need to experience an alternative model - identify good model churches
- Work on liturgies that include children
- CTM to work with Viva Network so WWDP is not just adults / children praying for children
- Committees to work on specific issues
- Priesthood of ALL believers including children
- Development of Fatherly love and how to pass on to abused girls
- Reflections on working with girl children across cultures
- Attention to sociological and psychological studies and what they tell us about boys and girls
- Work beyond the seminaries and the pastors
- Letters to the pastors ... tell them about CTM

Day 5 Saturday

Session 5.1 Devotions

Shiferaw Michael

God has given another blessed day. We are blessed just to see each other again.

Mt 22:29

I was in Ghana earlier this year, organising a workshop. Our president was coming and was expecting to speak to the senior pastors but they were not coming. This verse came to me while I was in bed. We don't know what the Holy Spirit makes out of the little things we say and do. I ask you to think of your early childhood and think of one instance that helped to make you what you are today. Think of the children of the street who have no-one to teach them, what is right or wrong, left or right. In Ethiopia there are 539,000 HIV/AIDS orphans. Without training we are nothing. Pv 22:6

There are seasons of learning just as there are seasons in the year. We need to seek out the best season for sowing seed.

God does not want children to grow in a confused and confusing environment. Training makes the child – the contrast between Hannah and Herodias, and therefore between Samuel and Salome. One family produces a prophet, another family silences a prophet.

Session 5.2 “Build Bridge International”

A group from the Tony Campolo school of Social Change in Philadelphia, USA were visiting the seminary to conduct a workshop and spent a little time with the participants to share their vision of transformational arts in Christian ministry.

They are a team working across cultures using arts to reach children in need. When they interviewed artists outside the church, they found that many felt marginalised because the church has viewed the arts with suspicion. This led to a book-‘Take it to the streets’ about using arts to transform society, in a secular setting. Their aim is to speak a blessing into the life of a child every day through arts. There are different types of blessing on offer:

- An art blessing
- An academic blessing
- A social skill blessing
- A spiritual (inner character development) blessing – a sense of identity and belonging, forgiveness, generosity etc

Session 5.3/4 Practical Outcomes for seminaries, CTM, churches and mission

Participants divided as before into working groups to consider two questions relating to the potential impact of Child Theology on the seminary curriculum. The first question asked each group to define the content of a ‘dream’ curriculum that would fully take into account the insights discovered through the Child Theology process over the preceding few days. The second question asked for practical suggestions for the Child Theology Movement, priorities and programme, if it were to take the initiative in spreading such a curriculum. These discussions were then summarised in a plenary session.

The ‘Dream Curriculum’

A group suggested that seminaries should include in the curriculum the learning that comes from those who work with children. Beyond the content, the symbolic presence of the child, it was suggested, should also influence the processes of the seminary as a teaching institution. No examples were given only that the seminaries should reflect ‘childness’. Perhaps more practically but still by no means easy to deliver, another group suggested the need to revisit the way seminaries deliver knowledge. Child Theology, they said, would require seminaries to acknowledge that we are all children (in God’s eyes at least), that service to children should be fully aware of and responsive to who they are and that children are also called to serve adults in the Kingdom of God. This requires adults to be open to their ministry and seminaries can help prepare such people. Another practical suggestion, which may encourage this awareness, was given: that fathers and pastors should be involved in caring for children – their own and those of the Christian community. The absence of men in Christian child care and Bible teaching is quite striking. It was felt that if pastors gave the lead in being involved in this work it would impact significantly the perception of the importance of this ministry.

CTM Introductory leaflet

There had been many calls during the week to make more clear what Ct is and how it differs from other forms of theology relating to children. As a tool to explore how CTM might be able to communicate this message more effectively, groups critiqued a leaflet produced by CTM as an introduction to CT. The following are some of the comments received:

- “they wrote for themselves, not for the (Asian) readers.”
- Some of the language used sounds quite like eastern (Hindu, Buddhist) mysticism
- Explore non-formal learning to encourage non-cognitive learning
- There are other forms of systematic theology: thematic, functional, narrative
- It may be time now to review the 7 consultations and draw out some themes.

- Shouldn't you include children in writing it and produce something you can give to a child
- Is the distinction between CT and CTM important?
- Consider producing it in other languages: French; Hindi; Chinese

Activities for the Child Theology Movement and Participants

Several priorities were offered to CTM:

1. It was felt that a core group should be established to own and keep the 'DNA' of Child Theology. That is, such a group would be responsible for ensuring that CT distinctives were maintained in its activities and, as far as is possible, to discourage ambiguous and alternative meanings of the term 'Child Theology'.
2. Some felt that the 'ownership' of CTM was also an issue. One way of tackling this would be to for a task force or forces to prepare interdisciplinary frameworks that would 'own' CT – not only globally as describe in suggestion (1) but also regionally, in each continent, even perhaps in each country or certain countries.
3. CTM/Participants should encourage ministers in training, and those already working, to spend some time in children's ministries, such as care homes, schools, etc.
4. CTM/Participants should actively create networks that will make CT resources available. These should include an inter-disciplinary framework which would explore Biblical models and develop an interdisciplinary curriculum. (Jeyaraj)
5. CTM should work diligently to diversify the agencies funding its activities. This will serve to facilitate the networking referred to in item (4). This means building well-founded bridges to the leadership of potentially supportive agencies.
6. CTM/Participants should promote CT in institutions and organisations, making use of conferences and meetings organised by groups that may be sympathetic. (Shiferaw; Menchit; Teresa)
7. CTM/Participants work out how to mobilise local churches (Upul; Welinton)
8. CTM/Participants write books on models of CT initiatives at the grassroots. (Daniel)
9. CTM/Participants develop liturgies involving children (James)

- So - WHAT NEXT?
1. DEFINE CLEARLY "C.T."
 2. DEVELOP INTERDISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK OF CT
 3. A C.T. SOCIETY IN EACH REGION
 4. PROMOTE CTM (i) IN SEMINARIES (ii) CHURCHES
 5. MODEL CHURCHES (CREATE THEM)
 6. INFLUENCE + SUPPORT CT IN VARIOUS WAYS
 7. COMMUNICATE TO CHURCH IN DIFF WAYS. EXAMPLES OF CHILDREN ENGAGED IN CHURCH
 8. CORE COURSE FOR CT BY 2007
 9. CONSIDER CULTURAL CONTEXTS / ADAPT
 10. AUDIT CASTE
 11. ALTER SEMINARY CURRICULA
 12. IDENTIFY SPECIFICS YOU CAN DO TO CHAMPION CHILDREN IN MIDST
 13. SERMON OUTLINES
 14. ENCOURAGE PREACHERS TO ENGAGE CHILDREN
 15. CHILDREN'S SUNDAY
 16. ENGAGE CHILDREN IN C.T.
 17. RETHINK CHILDREN'S LITERATURE
 18. ACCREDITATION IN LEADERSHIP DEUT

Session 5.5 Review

"What I now see about CT"

Some similar responses have been combined to save space and repetition:

- It is putting the ministry to, for through and with children in the midst of our theological reflection, not just among academic theologians, but among all theologians (=believers).
- It's all about and for "The Child" – theology begins by listening to the child. The child can and will contribute.
- I see more and more hands, hearts and minds joining or gathering with the child in the midst. The circle is both growing larger and stronger.
- How mainstream theology omitted children and that Child Theology can correct this omission and transform church and society
- A way of understanding our life in Christ and our calling to serve the Kingdom of God
- That children are the centre of God's will and they need to be given due importance, which means that CT must attend to certain obstacles.
- CT seeks an interdisciplinary approach to children, involving a theological foundation for ministry to/with children, development and to apply these to the context in which we work and minister.
- The importance of the child in the midst of everything we do.

- I realised that the process of engaging theological discourse should be done in the presence of a child, so that all the categories and comparisons take note of the life and significance of the 'least of these'.
- I am beginning to see that it is not just a fresh approach but a revolutionary hermeneutic for church, theology and mission.
- CT is beginning to 'find its legs' especially as seminary people see its relevance and strategic value.
- CT as a lens through which kingdom life under the lordship of Christ ought to be lived out.
- CT is a re-evaluation of theology and practice as a whole with a child in the midst.
- That there is still quite a lot of ambiguity and confusion about what CT actually is
- I see the church being transformed by the presence of children
- A gentle wind, a drop of rain in a parched land, a still small voice

"What I still do not see"

- How to implement it clearly in my context
- How to help the child see they are important "in the midst"
- Excess, extremes in the negative
- How can CT be transferred to the masses?
- How CT will be articulated and practiced in theological education. How will it change the way we do ministry?
- Awareness of CT among theologians and a willingness in the church to respond to children's needs.
- A precise definition of CT; a curriculum for teaching CT; a plan for systematically introducing the teaching of CT into the seminaries.
- How will this disrupt the current level of theological discourse?
- The extent to which this will actually change the shape of church, theology and mission.
- I don't see how to change attitudes and ideas that have dominated the church for centuries.
- The leverage within the CTM to move these ideas from the periphery to the centre.
- The distinction between CT and, for example, "Theologies of Children"
- How this process can make it crystal clear that this disturbs and subverts everyone and every initiative without being destructive.
- The framework of CT is still vague.
- I don't see how I can apply these concepts in my ministry
- I don't see how I can implement CT because of a lack of resources, personnel and research data

Session 5.6 Closing Service and Dinner

Keith thanked all those involved. We considered what we might have in our baskets that were empty when we came, or what was added to our baskets:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Purpose fulfilled | • Own children | • Networking achieved |
| • New revelation | • Faith | • Rearrangement |
| • Friends | • Reconciliation | • Affirmation |
| • Value | • Affirmation | • Confidence |
| • Friendship | • First fruits of HCD | • Play |
| • God's pleasure on us | • Full | • Engagement |
| • Insights | • Empty | • Inspiration and presentation |
| • Passion and diversity | • Committing | |

How do we have a ripple effect which ensures that the movement is embodied not just in individuals but as a group? Are there 12 who would be willing to be a core group, spending time together to be with children? If there are any with difficulty in the definition of CT, would they be willing to go to KL and spend time, a few hours perhaps, in the Montessori school in KL. This embodies what I believe CT to be.

James Gilbert shared the following poem that had been ‘dropped into his basket’. He writes: “This poem came out of the experience of the Penang III Child Theology Consultation, June 12-17, 2006. I was asked to share at the final session, which was a church service, what I was taking back with me from the consultation. The consultation had been like a rich tapestry. The colours represented by people from around the world. Children, the suffering child, the giving child, the leading child were the patterns that wove us and the church together. The Weaver could only have been the Holy Spirit.

At first I thought of making a large list, but it just did not seem to do justice to the many stories told, or the profoundness of children and theology. A poem seemed right. Now I should be known that I have not written poetry for quite some time and this is part of the gift which I had received.

Who do you say I Am?

I want a cookie and some milk	O.K. let's play in your backyard
Let's play, o.k.?	Can we play in the tree?
Let's play in the sand	I'm hungry now
I'm going home now	Can we have another cookie
Can you come over too?	and some milk?
Let's have some cookies and milk	Who is he?
Who am I?	Why does he have a beard?
Who are you?	He's a prophet
Can we play at your house now?	Ohhhh...
Yes,	Do prophets like children?
I like chocolate cookies	Do they like cookies?
and milk	Who do you say I Am?

After I had written the poem, the idea of a list demanded my attention, there had been so many things woven together at the consultation. A brief listing from the poem revealed 15 things I had taken from the consultation. I believe in both my life and this poem there are more than 15 things.

Oh, by the way - I did not take any real cookies or milk from the consultation.”

James B. Gilbert

Appendix I: Selected Resources and Initiatives

Marcia Bunge

1 *Theological Perspectives on Children and the Family: Selected Contemporary Texts*

- Anderson, Herbert and Susan B. W. Johnson. *Regarding Children: A New Respect for Childhood and Families*. Louisville. KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.
- Browning, Don, Bonnie I. Miller-McLemore, Pamela D. Couture, K. Brynolf Lyon, and Robert M. FrankEn. *From Culture Wars to Common Ground: Religion and the American Family Debate*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1997.
- Bunge, Marcia, editor. *The Child in Christian Thought*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.
- Cahill, Lisa Sowle. *Family: A Christian Social Perspective*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2000.
- "Children and Poverty: An Episcopal Initiative" [8 page document from the United Methodist Church].
- Couture, Pamela. *Seeing Children, Seeing God: A Practical Theology of Children and Poverty*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2000.
- Dawn, Marva. *Is it a Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.
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- Marshall, Kathleen and Paul Parvis. *Honouring Children: The Human Rights of the Child in Christian Perspective*. Edinburgh: Saint Andrews Press, 2004.
- Miller-McLemore, Bonnie I. *Also a Mother: Work and Family as Theological Dilemma*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1994 .
- ----- *Let the Children Come: Re-imagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.2003.
- Ozment, Steven. *The Loving Family in Old Europe*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Post, Stephen. *Spheres of Love: Toward a New Ethics of the Family*. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1994.
- Theology Today. Special millennium issue devoted to the subject of children. Vol. 56, no. 4 (January 2000).
- Whitmore, Todd David with Tobias Winright. "Children: An Undeveloped Theme in Catholic Teaching." *The Challenge of Global Stewardship*. Maura A. Ryan and Todd David Whitmore, eds. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997.

2 *Selected Classical Texts*

- Bushnell, Horace. *Christian Nurture*.
- Chrysostom, John. *On Marriage and Family Life*.
- Luther, Martin (several texts).
- Ralmer, Karl "Gedanken zu einer Theologie der Kindheit" in *Schriften zur Theologie*. Einsiedeln: Benziger Verlag, 1966.
- Schleiermacher, Friedrich (several texts).

3 *Current Initiatives and Projects*

- The Child Theology Movement (for more information, send an e-mail to: info@childtheology.org)
- Child in Religion and Ethics Project, directed by Marcia I. Bunge, Valparaiso University (website is www.childreligionethics.org)
- The Child in Law, Religion, and Society, directed by Martin E. Marty (part of the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion at Emory University; web site is www.law.emory.edu/cisr/)

4 *General Studies on the Moral and Spiritual Life of Children*

- Coles, Robert. *The Spiritual Life of Children*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990.

- Damon, William. *Greater Expectations*. New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1995.
- ----- *The Moral Child: Nurturing Children's Natural Moral Growth*. New York: The Free Press, 1988.
- Heller, David. *Talking to Your Child about God: A Book for Families of All Faiths*. New York: Berkley Publishing, 1994.
- Roehlkepartain, Jolene, and Nancy Leffert. *What Young Children Need to Succeed*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit Publishing, 2000
- Roehlkepartain, E.C., P.E. King, L. M. Wagener, and P. L. Benson, eds., *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2006).
- Smith, Christian with Melinda Lundquist Denton in *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).
- Yust, K-M., A. N. Johnson, S.E. Sasso, E.C. Roehlkepartain, eds., *Nurturing Child and Adolescent Spirituality: Perspectives from the World's Religious Traditions* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

5 ***Additional Initiatives and Conferences***

- The Children and World Views Project (holds an annual international meeting on Children's Spirituality: website is www.cwvp.com)
- The National Study of Youth and Religion at the University of North Carolina (website is: youthandreligion.org)
- The Search Institute (website is www.Search-Institute.org)
- The Search Institute's new "Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence"

6 ***Christian Religious Education and how the Church can work with Parents to Nurture the Spiritual Lives of Children***

- Berryman, Jerome. *Godly Play: An Imaginative Approach to Religious Education*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991.
- Cavalletti, Sofia. *The Religious Potential of the Child*. New York/Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1983.
- "The Child in Our Hands" (a programme developed by the Youth and Family Institute).
- Friedich, Laura Dean Ford. *Putting Children and Their Families First: A Planning Handbook for Congregations* New York: United Methodist Church.
- Guy, Kathleen A. *Welcome the Child: A Child Advocacy Guide for Churches*. Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1991.
- Hull, John M. *God-talk with Young Children: Notes for Parents and Teachers*. Philadelphia: Trinity Press International 1991.
- Juengst, Sara Covin. *Sharing the Faith with Children: Rethinking the Children's Sermon*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.
- Lillig, Tina. *The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in a Parish Setting*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998.
- Morgenthaler, Shirley, editor. *Exploring Children's Spiritual Formation*. River Forest, IL: Pillars Press/Concordia University, 1999.
- Ratcliff, Donald. *Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Application*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2004.
- Stonehouse, Catherine. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books. 1998.
- Strommen, Merton P. and Richard Hardel. *Passing on the Faith: A Radical New Model for Youth and family Ministry*. Winona, MN: St. Mary's Press, 2000.
- Thompson, Marjorie. *Family: The Forming Center. A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1996.
- Yust, Karen-Marie. *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2004

7 Additional Initiatives and Conferences

- The Youth and Family Institute (Minneapolis, Minnesota), directed by Richard Hardel (website is www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org)
- The Center for the Theology of Childhood (Houston, Texas), directed by Jerome Berryman (headquarters for Godly Play curriculum)
- Children's Spirituality: Christian Perspectives (holds a tri-annual conference; last meeting was in 2006 in Chicago; website is www.childspirituality.org)

8 General Studies on the Importance of Supporting Children and all Families

- Amato, Paul R. and Alan Booth. *A Generation at Risk: Growing Up in an Era of Family Upheaval*. London and Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Benson, Peter. *All Kids Are Our Kids: What Communities Must Do to Raise Caring and Responsible Children and Adolescents*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.
- Blankenhorn, David, Jean Bethke Elshtain, and S. Bayne, eds. *Rebuilding the Nest: A New Commitment to the American Family*. Milwaukee, WI: Families International, 1990.
- Doherty, William. *The Intentional Family: Simple Rituals to Strengthen Family Ties*. New York, NY: Avon Books, 1997.
- Edelman, Marian Wright. *The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.
- Elkind, David. *Ties that Stress: The New Family Imbalance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Hewlett, Sylvia Ann and Cornel West. *The War against Parents: What We Can Do for America's Beleaguered Moms and Dads*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1998.
- McLanahan, Sara and Gary Sandefur. *Growing Up with a Single Parent: What Hurts, What Helps*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1994.
- Piper, Mary. *The Shelter of Each Other: Rebuilding our Families*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1996.
- Popenoe, David. *Disturbing the Nest: Family Change and Decline in Modern Societies*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine De Gruyter, 1988.

9 Additional Academic Initiatives

- Childhood Studies and Religion Consultation of the American Academy of Religion. The consultation is one section of the annual national meeting of scholars of religion (website is www.aarweb.org).
- Center for Children and Childhood Studies, Rutgers University (website is www.children.camdenrutgers.edu).

Appendix II: Annotated Bibliography on Children at Risk

By Jennifer Van Heijzen

Fuller Seminary, School of Intercultural Studies

Orphans and Orphanages

Derbyshire, Marion

2002 Friends in Need: A Handbook for the Care of Orphans in the Community. Viva Network Publications. Online. Internet. (Available from <http://www.viva.org/tellme/resources/articles/fin.pdf>.) Accessed Sept. 13, 2004.

This handbook provides practical advice and examples regarding community-based orphan care. Beginning with background information and the biblical foundations for giving care to orphans, the handbook also describes how to create, support, and evaluate such a programme. It is largely based on case studies of three organizations that work with HIV/AIDS orphans in Zimbabwe. Using volunteer workers and networks with other projects, these three organizations provide a wide range of services in a cost-effective and culturally appropriate way.

Haugen, Gary A.

1999 Good News about Injustice: A Witness of Courage in a Hurting World. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

After presenting a heart-wrenching picture of the needs of children and other hurting people around the world, Haugen reminds the reader of the biblical basis for hope in God. He also gives practical tools and insights to investigate, intervene, assist, and advocate for people in need. While it is written from a lawyer's perspective and seeks to promote the International Justice Mission (of which Haugen is the president), this book also provides helpful information for individuals and churches that desire to serve God by helping people all over the world.

Kilbourn, Phyllis, ed.

1995 Healing the Children of War: A Handbook for Ministry to Children Who Have Suffered Deep Traumas. Monrovia, CA: Marc Publications.

Although it focuses primarily on children who have experienced the traumatic effects of war, this handbook provides many helpful insights about the needs of at-risk children, the effects of abuse and trauma, and long-term care. It also offers many practical suggestions for caregivers, communities, and churches. This book presents children in a respectful, caring, and helpful light, and it seeks to glorify God by ministering to children holistically.

1996 Children in Crisis: A New Commitment. Monrovia, CA: World Vision International.

With chapters by prominent advocates for and missionaries to at-risk children, this book is well-written, informative, and thought-provoking. It includes a section on the different categories of risk, along with the biblical responses for ministry. It examines prayer, spiritual warfare, education, and many other often-neglected aspects of ministry to children at risk. This book is an invaluable resource to those who seek to minister to children at risk.

1997 Street Children: A Guide to Effective Ministry. Monrovia, CA: Marc Publications.

This book presents the physical, social, emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of street children. The principles presented, however, are applicable to many other contexts for children at risk. Furthermore, this book describes effective programme planning, intervention strategies, and self-care in the context of ministering to at-risk children and youth.

Makufa, Syloid Choice

2001 "Community Care of Orphans." Online. Internet. (Available from http://www.viva.org/tellme/events/cuttingedge/2001/bestpractice_orphans.html.) Accessed Sept. 13, 2004.

The Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT) of Zimbabwe works with children and families affected by HIV/AIDS. It runs the Families, Orphans and Children Under Stress (FOCUS) programme and is affiliated with the Viva Network. This case study of both FACT and FOCUS provides helpful insights into the role of the community and the local church in caring for orphans. Although it is specific to Zimbabwe and the children affected by AIDS that live there, it also presents information that can be helpful and applicable to children in difficult circumstances around the world.

Matshalaga, Neddy Rita and Greg Powell

2002 "Bold Support for Alleviation of Poverty and Education May Avert a Social Disaster." BMJ Publishing Group. Online. ProQuest. Accessed May 11, 2004.

This article focuses on the importance of the extended family structure in many African societies. It considers the bi-directional relationships between faith and social identity that the cultures incorporate into their daily lives, and then it looks at the implications for the growing numbers of AIDS orphans around the continent and the world.

Miles, Glenn and Paul Stephenson

2001 Children in Residential Care and Alternatives: Children at Risk Guidelines. Vol. 5. United Kingdom: Tearfund. (Available from [http://www.tilz.info/uploads/documents/CareENG_full%20doc\(1\).pdf](http://www.tilz.info/uploads/documents/CareENG_full%20doc(1).pdf).) Accessed May 18, 2004.

This handbook provides principles for good practices with unaccompanied children around the world. It includes theories, ideas, case studies, questions for reflection, and resources. According to the authors, caregivers should focus on alternatives to residential care, including prevention, intervention, and restoration. This handbook is an incredibly valuable tool for evaluating and assisting existing programmes.

Miles, Glenn, and Josephine-Joy Wright

2003 Celebrating Children! Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster Press.

This invaluable resource provides accurate and up-to-date facts and reports on a large number of the issues facing children at risk and their caregivers. Issues discussed include contextualization, child development, Biblical perspectives about children, policy development, advocacy, current beliefs and trends in the field, holism, self-care for caregivers, networking, and many others. It also provides helpful diagrams, examples, and case studies from many different countries.

Moltmann, Jürgen

2000 "Child and Childhood as Metaphors of Hope." Theology Today 56(4):592-603

According to Moltmann, modern-day Christians generally take three perspectives regarding children: that of Christian education, that of the children themselves, and that of "future childhood" (or the way adults remember themselves as children and view "the child in themselves;" cf. :595). The last forms the focus of the article, yielding three related beliefs: the uniqueness of each individual child can build metaphors of hope for the Christian community, which in turn can build metaphors of the hope of God (:603).

Myers, Glen

Children in Crisis. Cumbria, UK: OM Publishing.

A brief prayer digest filled with statistics and specific information for children at risk worldwide, it includes chapters on child labor, street children, and general information. It also has information about sexual exploitation and children who are exploited by war, along with Bible verses that apply to each of these areas. Finally, "Children in Crisis" has a list of resources for personal involvement, prayer, sponsorship, advocacy, and networking.

Peres, Valeria F.

2001 "From Crisis to Peace. Growth Through Good Practice. Caring For Children and Foster Parents in Cambodia." Online. Internet. (Available from http://www.viva.org/tellme/events/cuttingedge/2001/bestpractice_peres.html.) Accessed Sept. 13, 2004.

Valeria F. Peres works with the Hagar Project Foster Home Programme in Cambodia. This case study, presented as a Cutting Edge Conference Best Practice Paper, highlights the intervention and restoration that takes place through the training, education and assistance developed in the residential programme. Not only does the Hagar Project educate and assist children, it also challenges and develops families to serve Christ more effectively.

Spencer, Heather

2001 “‘Our Family’ A Working Model of Foster Care and Birth Family Support Services, in Russia.” Online. Internet. (Available from http://www.viva.org/tellme/events/cuttingedge/2001/bestpractice_spencer.html.) Accessed Sept. 13, 2004.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) is an affiliate of the Viva Network in Russia. This group seeks to promote healthier children through encouraging family-style foster care, accurate assessment, biblical values, and reform of the Russian social service laws. This case study emphasizes indigenous leadership, the role of the community, child participation, education, rehabilitation, and advocacy. These keys to ministry to at-risk children can apply to a variety of ministries to children in many different contexts.

Stephenson, Paul & Glenn Miles

n.d. Child Development Study Pack. TearFund, UK.

The “Child Development Study Pack” discusses in detail the Bible’s value of children, along with the responsibility of the Church to care for orphans and other at-risk children. It also gives helpful guidelines for leadership, such as building relationships, the responsibilities of parents, contextualization, prioritization, participation, advocacy, and using child-sensitive indicators. It highlights the necessity of listening to children and allowing them to participate in their own care.

Poverty

Christian, Jayakumar

God of the Empty-Handed: Poverty, Power and the Kingdom of God. Monrovia, CA: MARC.

A perspective from the two-thirds world, this book provides helpful insights about how to engage in ministry in meaningful, contextually appropriate ways. It gives various models of how to view poverty, and evaluates these models in the light of God’s Word.

Derbyshire, Marion

2002 Voice in the Streets. Viva Network. Online. Internet. Accessed May, 2003.

This Viva Network handbook details the ministry of Steve and Evie Bartel to street children in Bogota, Colombia. It also lists prayer requests that apply to all ministers to children at risk (God’s call, timing & honor, teamwork, respect for the poor, spiritual warfare, and focus on God). After noting several key Bible passages for work with at-risk children, it answers practical questions, offers guidance, discusses attitude and motivation, and explains the four phases of the ministry in Colombia.

Garbarino, James, et al.

1982 Children and Families in the Social Environment. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

Based on Urie Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems model of child and family development, this book incorporates a vast number of scientific studies in the areas of education, economics, politics, social and emotional well-being, and a host of other areas related to the positive development of children and families. Garbarino and his associates also examine the macrosystemic, exosystemic, mesosystemic, microsystemic and individual effects on development and make evaluations and recommendations for public policy and private actions. The final chapter of the book emphasizes a prominent theme: simply stated, “the issue is human quality” (:232), not quantity of goods or dollars, amount of education received, or size of family, neighborhood, or community.

1995 Raising Children in a Socially Toxic Environment. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

This book is a helpful resource in and of itself and in the list of resources and notes at the end. Garbarino is an expert in helping children and families at risk. He guides the reader through a series of easily understood yet deeply meaningful attributes of healthy childhood, family life, and community relationships. Although his approach is purely secular and Western, his findings are applicable to children at risk in other cultures, too.

Myers, Bryant

1999 *Walking With the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*. New York: Orbis.

A senior vice president of World Vision, Bryant Myers presents his expert opinions on development and poverty. He comments on different models of mission, explaining how our perspective of poverty affects the ministry that we engage in. He also presents a biblical perspective of poverty and transformational development. Myers has edited *Working With the Poor: New Insights and Learnings from Development Practitioners* (1999) and has written many other articles and books.

Other Helpful Resources**Barna, George**

2003 *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions: Why Children Should Be Your Church's #1 Priority*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books from Gospel Light.

The Barna Research Group is well-known for their studies on Christian faith in the United States. This book emphasizes the importance of children to Christianity. Not only do children need Christ, but they are also strategic because most people who choose to follow Christ do so while they are young, and the young have many years of ministry ahead of them.

Benson, Peter L., Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, and Stacey P. Rude

2003 "Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence: Toward a Field of Inquiry." *Applied Developmental Science* 7(3):205-213.

After discussing the various definitions of spirituality, religion, and spiritual development, this article brings to light various aspects of spiritual development that need to be studied. It emphasizes that spiritual development should be considered through the lenses of the society in general and academia in particular. An impressive amount of research is considered in this article, but the amount of research that remains to be done is a challenge that scholars, practitioners, and Christians must face.

Bradford, John

1995 *Caring for the Whole Child: A Holistic Approach to Spirituality*. London: The Children's Society.

This brief but powerful book divides children's spirituality into three segments: human, devotional, and practical spirituality. After looking at the integration of these three components, Bradford focuses on how to assist children's spirituality. Although it emphasizes the Christian perspective, this book attempts to develop a holistic and general framework from which practitioners from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds can draw. Helpful excerpts from international documents, comprehensive appendices, and a reference list make this book an invaluable tool for ministers to at-risk children.

Dawn, Marva J.

1997 *Is It a Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

To the question in the title of the book, Marva Dawn would answer an emphatic "no." She claims that raising children to be Christ-like in this world is not a lost cause "if we wake up" (:6). In addition, she includes admonitions and advice for the Church about how to teach children about God. Although it is written from an almost exclusively Western perspective, this book is helpful in its discussion of the evils and challenges that face the Church today.

Garbarino, James and Claire Bedard

1996 "Spiritual Challenges to Children Facing Violent Trauma." *Child and Family Behavior Therapy* 18(4):467-478.

As the title states, this article focuses on traumatic experiences and the resultant spiritual challenges that children face. It hypothesizes that each human desires a meaningful existence, but trauma can hinder this sense of meaning for children, thereby hindering spiritual growth and faith formation. With helpful examples of children in various countries and cultures, this article considers the religious, social, and spiritual effects of trauma, as well as self-care and intervention strategies for practitioners.

Matthaei, Sondra Higgins

2004 "Rethinking Faith Formation." *Religious Education* 99(1):56-70. Online. Accessed May 11, 2004.

In this well-written and well-researched article, Sondra Matthaei emphasizes the community of faith as the promoter and preserver of the Christian faith. While sin hinders community, the Christian faith should promote it. This is especially true for at-risk children whose social networks have often been interrupted. This article discusses the need for the support of the community of faith and then gives practical suggestions for churches and individuals within the community.

McDonald, Patrick

Children at Risk: Networks in Action. Monrovia, MARC Publications.

By the founder and director of the Viva Network, this book discusses many of the topics, statistics, and Biblical perspectives that relate to the study of children at risk. Along with the explanation of why children at risk are the priority for missions, McDonald gives specific examples of children in adverse circumstances, along with those whose lives have been turned around as a result of Christian ministry. He concludes with a well-reasoned argument about the importance of networking.

Stephenson, Paul and Sara Glover, eds.

1998 *Tearfund Child Development Policy*. Online. Internet. (Available from <http://www.tilz.info/uploads/documents/ChilddevpolE.pdf>.) Accessed Sept. 14, 2004.

This handbook provides detailed biblical and academic information about child development. It explains the purpose and motivation for child development work, along with many of the underlying issues involved. In addition to an enumeration of children's rights and various resources, this handbook also includes case studies and examples of best practices.

