

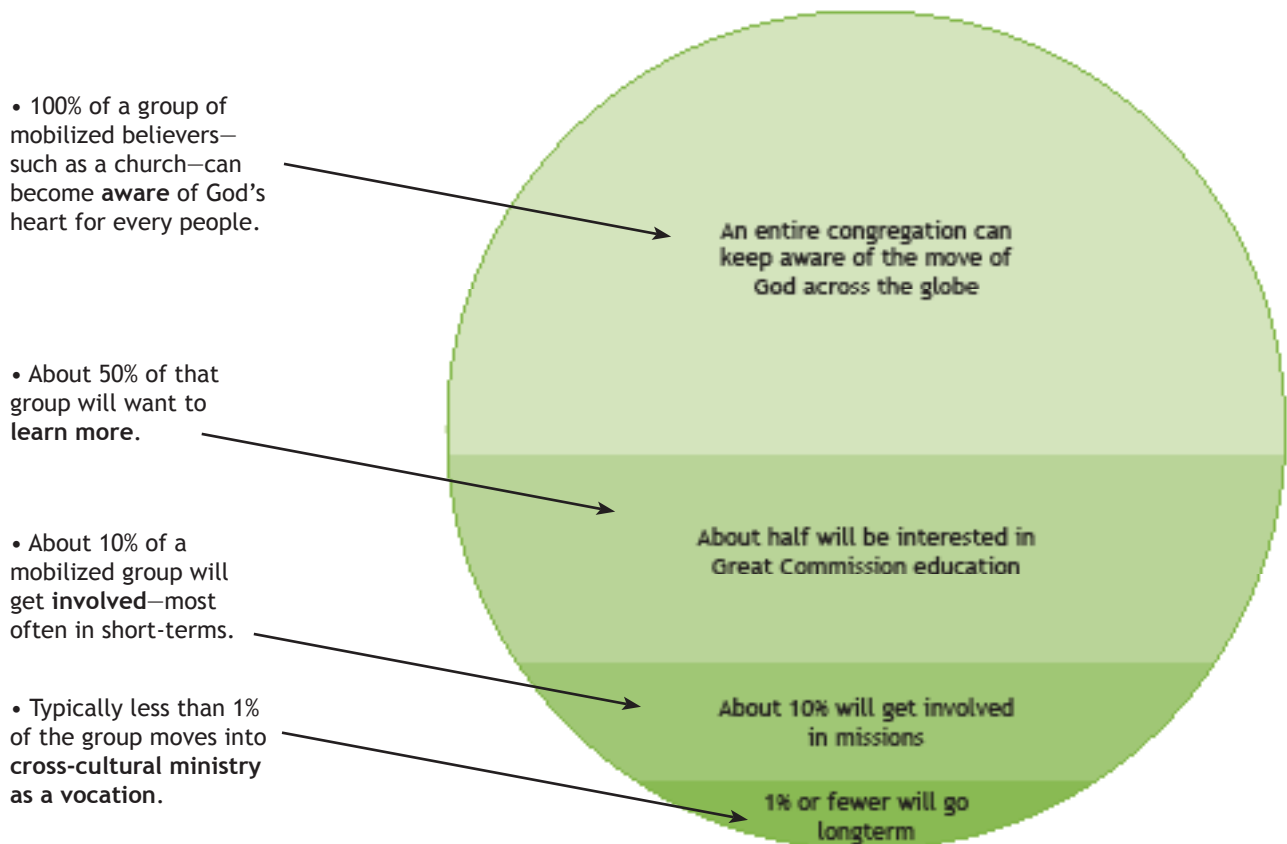
MOBILIZATION: MAKE A DIFFERENCE

How to mobilize mission vision among your fellowship

*The proven do's and don'ts of sharing mission vision—
mobilization skills that every World Christian must master.*

Face it: Every one of us world Christians have got to learn how to mobilize regardless of **our specific role** since we all want to help raise mission vision.

The point isn't to get everyone to go as missionaries; it's to be realistic and facilitate whole-church awareness, education, involvement and deployment—a process that in North America takes at least 3-5 years in a non-mission-minded fellowship!



What we've learned about mission mobilization over the past couple decades is:
The old ways don't work anymore.

For example, the next time you share about what you learned in *Perspectives*, you might avoid the dreaded "M" word. The word *missions* has lots of preconceived and usually inaccurate baggage in our culture. Instead of "missions," consider tossing into your conversation phrases such as:

The worldwide move of God
Extending the Kingdom throughout the earth
God's call to this generation
God's global plan for all peoples
The global cause of Christ
The Kingdom move of God
God's plan through the ages

Joining God in what He's doing in our world
God's unchangeable purpose
Finding our place of significant service
Strategic global impact
Our life-purpose & God's big picture
Cross-cultural effectiveness
Reaching all peoples locally & globally

DON'TS: HOW TO NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

You've caught a grand, scriptural, historic, global, strategic vision in your *Perspectives* studies. And you're almost compelled to share it. Here's how not to mobilize new mission vision—tactics you've possibly already found to blow up in your face:

● Don't push.

- Pair up with a friend. Place the palm of your right hand out in front of you against the palm of her/his left hand. Begin to talk to the friend about your mission vision and push. Push harder as you continue. What does the friend naturally do in response?

If you keep pushing and your friend either backs off or falls over—you've just lost a friend. And some people think pushing others to Great Commission commitment is a powerful mobilization tactic. Hmmmm....

Action-step: Relax. (You not going to *make* somebody catch a vision.)

● Don't blast.

- You've gleaned so much exciting information from your *Perspectives* course that you simply blast zeal and energy at your friends, your home group, your pastor, at anyone who'll listen. Imagine a pale whiteskin getting severely sunburned; the last thing he'll want is to run back out into the sunshine. Will your friends throw on dark glasses and dive for the shadows when they see you coming?

Action-step: Take it from mobilizer Amy Stearns who after her first *Perspectives* course, blasted her pastor with, "John! We're doing everything wrong!" In a word: Apologize.

● Don't plead.

- Tugging at people's heartstrings used to work marvelously in our North American culture. (Just watch a few maudlin movies from the 30s or 40s—really—to accentuate how much our sense of sentimentality has changed.) But showing FOB (flies-on-babies) photos now only provokes a knee-jerk reaction to send money instead of sending ourselves—or a reaction of turning a blind eye to all the insurmountable suffering in the world. (Disturbing, pathetic situations are rampant in our real world; it's just that exploiting them as motivational props is an ineffective mobilization tactic in our current culture.)

If your goal were to raise money, pleas for compassion still work in the short term. But they don't work when your goal is to sustain a church's long-term vision of God's heart for every people.

Action-step: Go watch an old 40s movie! They worked during The Greatest Generation days; their sentimentality just doesn't cut it today. We've changed as a culture, and we've got to be realistic about the sensibilities of those we want to mobilize.

DON'TS: HOW TO NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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● Don't shame.

- North Americans are incredibly adroit at avoiding guilt. We all run—mentally, emotionally or literally—when polyestered missionaries hint, “Shame on you. You probably have one of those new i-Phones and ate out last week and spent more on dog food than on missions while the whole world is going to hell!” Etc.

Our hair-trigger barricades against the long pointy finger of guilt mean that even simple comparisons backfire. So in polite company where you want to raise mission vision, don't bother trying to make people feel guilty. (Never mention, for instance, that we North Americans spend more on storage units to store our extra stuff than a total of 29 countries spend on everything. The mission world is full of this kind of shame-inducing trivia. Don't. Don't. Don't.)

Guilt is effective in shame-based cultures, but guilt as a motivational weapon is counterproductive in our North American culture.

Action-step: Activate 1 John 1:9—confession. (Since usually working to induce guilt in others = judgmentalism = arrogance. Ouch.)

● Don't think one-size-fits-all.

- Dr. James Engle some years ago developed the Engle Scale of Evangelism. He simply pointed out that different people are at different levels of readiness to accept the Gospel message. The same is true of Christians' openness and understanding of the dynamics of the Great Commission.

Study the chart on the next page. Determine where your friends or whole fellowship is on this “scale of mobilization.” Then use the “Do” list below to customize your approach. Avoid one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter mobilization.

YOUR RECIPIENTS' READINESS TO CATCH, BUILD AND ACT ON THE VISION

YOUR ROLE AS A MISSION MOBILIZER

YOUR MESSAGE AS A MISSION MOBILIZER

Act On the Vision

Level 6:
We'll go, stay, do anything for His great global Cause.

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Level 5:
We're working to integrate a vision of God's heart for every people into our lifestyles and our fellowship.

Help others **act on the vision** by suggesting options for strategic involvement—short- and long-term, local and global.

You're ready to act on the vision of God's heart for every people—your own people included. **Here are several options for involvement that match your interests and resources.**

Considerable commitment is required on their part since abandonment to discipleship always has a cost.

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Key Question suggesting a group is moving to the next level: The prevalent question among our congregation is: "What do we do now?"

▲

Build the Vision

Level 4:
We'd like to be more active in cross-cultural ministry.

▲

Level 3:
We're getting a new perspective on Scripture, on creative ministries and on the realities of our part in this world. We're feeling burdened now to pray for other peoples.

Help others **build the vision** by researching for them:
1) educational tools and
2) exposure experiences—particularly short-term vision/outreach opportunities.

You're curious about exploring scriptural patterns you've never before noticed—surprisingly obvious themes of God's unchangeable purpose in history. You're eager to see more of what God is actively orchestrating in our world today. You're intrigued that God's strategy for today pointedly involves your personal destiny. **Here is how you find out more.**

Some commitment is required—but not much beyond a typical church-going commitment to Christ, commitment to study, learn more and pray.

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Key Question suggesting a group is moving to the next level: My question and a prevalent question among our congregation is: "How can we find out more about these things?"

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Catch the Vision

Level 2:
I'm starting to learn that God is amazingly active in the world out there. I'm disturbed that I've never noticed some clear Scriptures on God's historic plan.

▲

Level 1:
I'm a believer, committed to Jesus Christ.

Help others **catch the vision** by dripping into the normal life of the church God's breakthroughs and the reality-slaps of Scriptures that emphasize "It's not all about me."

I know you feel that missions is just one of the hundreds of fine ministries a Christian can be involved in. Yet when you're shocked to learn that God has a clear, overarching purpose for us and that He's breaking through in miraculous ways all over the planet, you feel *jealous* to get in on it! Your heart cries for a compelling vision of the Kingdom of God and your significance in it. **Here's what God is doing in His world today—and has been doing throughout history!**

No commitment is required. The response may be as passive as, "Huh."

DO'S: HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Ninety percent of believers in North America are *non-mission-minded*. That means the majority of most congregations are at a Level One on the Mobilization Scale.

And that means most of your influence as a world Christian needs to be focused on helping others *catch the vision*. That's where most of the following resources hit, since after helping people catch a vision, their natural questions ("How do I find out more?") pull you into the upper levels—where there are plenty of resources.

Help Them Catch the Vision

How do you help believers catch a vision of God's heart for every people?

Most raise-mission-vision advice doesn't work because it presumes a congregation to be at the Build or Act On Levels:

- Put up missionary bulletin boards, maps, unreached peoples posters?
- Wheedle small groups into "adopting a missionary"?
- Try to get them to read mission books?
- Do whizbang mission conferences during which they hear missionaries talking about missions and eat raw fish?
- Send as many as possible on as many short-term trips as possible?
- Or—trickiest of all—try to get them to take the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* course?

Those efforts work with believers and congregations who are at least at Levels Three/Four; they're mostly about *education* and a bit of *exposure*. Even viewing a compelling unreached-people video or watching a missions skit leaves at least 90% of a congregation feeling, "I'm glad the missions people are doing their thing." A few primed individuals here and there *will* catch the vision in these efforts. Yet even that outcome suggests that a few super-spirituals are supposed to be missionaries while the rest of us watch.

Actually catching the vision, as we all know, is the life-changing dynamite of *Perspectives*. So instead of jumping to education/involvement, you weekly, monthly, year after year drip into the normal life of these believers the Scriptures and current-event breakthroughs that lead to a *change in worldview*.

Shake up status-quo thinking by using the following elements at every opportunity:

- In casual conversations
- During the typical "minute for missions" announcements
- On-screen before services
- In church service programs
- In regular church newsletters
- When prayer requests are asked for
- In anecdotes offered to speakers
- Yes, on bulletin boards, etc.

DO'S: HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

(Continued)

Be the encouraging resource to point out what God is doing in His world today—and has been doing all along!

● Drip key Scriptures. For example:

- “Be still, and...” What’s the rest of Psalm 46:10?
- How would you summarize the Bible? Jesus’ summary is in Luke 24:44-47 (P.S. The word “nation” is literally “ethnic group.”)
- “God bless us, be gracious to us and make His face shine upon us....” But what’s the rest of the sentence? (Psalm 67:1-2)

● Drip provocative exercises that suggest maybe our worldview is not letting us see what’s really out there. For example:

• *What Are You Looking At?*

This is a famous photograph of melting snow—by a photographer who, when he saw the image in it, came to faith in Christ!

Add a prayer:

God help us to keep from so much distraction that we don't see You in our world.

(Hint: By turning the graphic 90° counter-clockwise and blacking-in the distracting corner trivia, you'll finally see an image.)

- Read this and count the number of F's in 15 seconds, then look away. How many F's? One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight? If in a group, offer them even a second chance of 10-15 seconds to count the F's. About 90% will have wrong answers. If we're all looking at the same thing—such as Scripture—are we all seeing what's really there?

(Especially effective in a large group as a PowerPoint slide or overhead transparency.)



FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDIES COMBINED WITH THE EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF MANY YEARS OF EXPERTS.

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DO'S: HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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● **Drip breakthroughs** of God's "wonderful works among the children of men." Use mostly positive breakthroughs. Don't feel you're peddling PR or trying to put a positive spin on current events. Instead, you're obeying some very clear commandments:

Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name;
make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted.

Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world.

—Isaiah 12:4-5

One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts.

They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty, and I will meditate on your wonderful works.

—Psalm 145:4-5

Expect responses such as "Huh," "Where'd you get this information?" and "I don't believe that." Habakkuk had the same responses:

Look among the nations. Be astonished, wonder, observe. For I am doing something in your day you would not believe if you were told!" —Habakkuk 1:5

Here are some examples of the incredible things that God is doing around the world...

- Christian researchers at *Ethne '06* in Indonesia report that 4,500 new churches open globally now every week. —*Momentum*

- Worldwide, the Gideons now hand out more than one million Scriptures every week. —*Gideons*

- Galcom globally distributes radios pre-tuned to Christian broadcasts. Last year in one Estonian prison, 200 prisoners with Galcom radios came to faith in Christ. —*Galcom, IBRA, World By Radio*

- It is estimated that more than 55,000 Christians will be martyred this year for the cause of Christ. —*COMIBAM*

- Think nobody's sharing their faith? Every day 166,000 people hear the good news of Jesus Christ for the first time. —*World Christian Database*

- This Saturday, pray for the 700,000 believers gathering in worship in Nepal—since they meet on Saturdays, the national day off! The number of believers in Nepal has quadrupled in the past 10 years. —*Assist News Service*

- Nigeria has a church building that seats 50,000. At a Nigerian Christmas celebration last year in Lagos, two million five hundred thousand believers showed up. —*World Pulse, pielgrzym.org*

- With 5,200 Nigerian missionaries already serving in 56 countries, the Nigerian Evangelical Mission Association network has committed to mobilize 50,000 more missionaries over the next 15 years to take the Gospel through the North African Islamic nations back to Jerusalem. —*World Pulse, pielgrzym.org*

- Since 1979, the *JESUS* film has been translated into 932 languages and shown in 228 countries. More than 42 million video copies—mostly pirated!—are in circulation worldwide. Over these 27 years, more than 201 million viewers have indicated their commitment to Christ as a result of the film. —*The Jesus Film Project*

- If they had to choose a religion, 37% of Japan's youth say they would choose Christianity. 80% of Japan's brides choose a Christian wedding. —*REAP, Tokyo*

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DO'S: HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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- And you thought God was losing: Every year another 27 million people profess faith in Christ. -- *Barrett & Johnson, World Christian Trends*

- If Jesus doesn't come back before 2025, the 81 million believers in China are expected to increase to 135 million. -- *Barrett & Johnson, World Christian Trends*

- In Romania, Norwegian missionary Andreas Nordli says, "Everywhere I go, I meet young Romanians who have on their heart to go to countries like Turkey, India and China." Romania has already sent out 50 career missionaries. -- *Andreas Nordli, Constanta, Romania*

- A Bible school in Algeria trains leaders among the 50,000 Berbers who have come to Christ since 1984—a movement fueled by miracles, dreams of Jesus...and persecution. --*Sources withheld*

- In Pakistan in September 2006, 45 churches held open-air meetings in front of a mosque. About 10,000 attended the meetings. In the following six months, 14 new churches sprang up, and nearly all the churches doubled their memberships. -- *Friedhelm Holthuis, christuskirche.holthuis@t-online.de*

● Sources for Breakthroughs

Neutral (from non-sending groups) breakthrough sources:

- *Mission Catalyst*—news breaks: missionscatalyst.org
- *Momentum*—Strategic Network's momentum-mag.org
- Joel News—A Europe-based anecdotal newsletter: joelnews.org
- Brigada—Updates on mission resources: Brigada.org
- *Global Report*—A quarterly compilation: BillAndAmyStearns.info

NEXT: Help Them Build the Vision

In the huge *Perspectives Reader*, David Bryant calls this phase "Keeping" the vision—making it your own. But "keep" sounds as if you're keeping it to yourself. So we're bucking the party line and insisting that it's *Build the Vision*.

How do you help believers build a vision of God's heart for every people?

Here's where great resources are available for you to use and suggest to your fellowship:

- If you are denominationally connected, check with your denomination's mission department for mission education resources.
- Recommend *Perspectives*-based curriculum for your fellowship's adult Sunday School classes and home groups from the Perspectives Family of Resources:
 - *Operation Worldview Video Series and Study Guide*
 - *God's Heart for the Nations Bible Study*
 - *The Condensed World Mission Course*
 - *Encountering the World of Islam*
- Browse more resources below and in our [Resource Library](#).
- Host a [World Christian Fellowship](#) using our sample session. See who is interested in gathering regularly—monthly or quarterly— to encourage and challenge each other as world Christians.

Okay, so if mobilizing your own church to new mission vision is only *part* of your mobilizing niche for now, consider the deal we have for you:

Mobilize *dozens* of churches at the same time!

Join a Perspectives Task Force and/or take Perspectives Coordinator Training!

[Learn more....](#)

DO'S: HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

(Continued)

Consider mobilization as your career ministry focus!

FINALLY: Help Them Act On the Vision

David Bryant in the *Perspectives Reader* uses the term “obey” the vision. Whether it’s actualizing or obeying, *this is the easy phase of mobilization*—since a congregation knows what’s it’s doing to join in God’s global program.

This is the stage during which a church strategically sends out its goers, networked with other churches and partnering with agencies—and with a support team in the church that every missionary longs for.

There are advanced levels of info and tools for a fellowship to actually move out and act on the vision: networks of agencies and churches, books, consultations and more. Browse the full resource lists in the [Resource Library](#).

*For more resources for Mobilizing go to the Next Steps section of the Perspectives website.
www.perspectives.org*

Imagine: After a year, two years of weekly, constantly hearing of God’s wonderful works, more and more believers in a group are getting jealous to be in on what God is doing. And they begin asking, “How do we find out more about this?” (See [Resources for the Mobilizer](#) on the Perspectives website.)

Why? Because you have...

- The *paraclete* (“called alongside”) spiritual gift of encouragement/ exhortation.
- Abilities in teaching.
- A heart for place after place, people group after people group (which worries you as if you’re flighty). Actually, you have a heart for the whole world.
- A love for networking. You’re energized by connecting people and opportunities, and are totally happy letting others have the credit for accomplishments.
- Persistence. Your world Christian zeal doesn’t need to see immediate results.
- A desire to minister to the church in your own culture. You’re most effective on the homefront among Christians.

Why not? Because...

- It’s a largely unrecognized, non-traditional ministry. You can’t get a degree or even certification in mobilization; friends think if you’re interested in missions, you should just give in and go as a missionary.
- Unless you’re recruiting missionaries for a sending agency, there are few measurable results to “raising mission vision.”
- It’s hard to belong: You can count on one hand all the neutral (non-sending) mobilization organizations in the world.
- It is challenging to raise support as a mobilizer. You live in your own culture, your work is vague to most Christians, and you belong to no renowned organization.

How?

Excellent question. There are no Mobilizer Certification programs, very very few neutral (non-sending) mobilization organizations and very little literature on this “new” ministry. But if this is your niche for now, get started anyway, yes?

- If you’re okay with a mobilization ministry that encourages goers to sign on with a specific sending agency, check with your denomination or favorite agency for their mobilizer training materials.
- If you want to stay “neutral” as a mobilizer, work through the resources listed below—particularly *The Ten Modules: Equipping You To Mobilize* by The Traveling Team. It’ll refer you to still more mobilization wisdom:

<http://www.TheTravelingTeam.org>

