



**A Letter to Young Researchers:
Ask Good Questions**
by Steve Sang-Cheol Moon, PhD

Perhaps I am not qualified to write a letter to young researchers because I consider myself still young as a researcher. I have been working in mission research now for 27 years, but I feel like I have just passed a preparatory period in my ministry. Research seems to involve a slow maturation process that demands a long-time commitment.

There are not so many people who are interested in mission research as a ministry field. It is a less traveled road. It's not a popular ministry field probably because people do not recognize its importance enough. People know that it demands ardent zeal and self-discipline to start and stay on the right track.

Mission research is very important for effective mission practice. It provides a sense of direction for activities in the field. Often it carries prophetic voices based on disciplined observations, opinions, and suggestions. Mission research celebrates the corporate wisdom accumulated in mission communities.

One of the most serious problems in modern missions seems to be repeating the errors of past missionaries. Previous mistakes can be aggravated because researched information about them is not shared enough across generations and cultures. Donald McGavran used the analogy of fog to explain this point. Evangelists and missionaries are surrounded by the fog of ignorance. To fight against the fog, we must do research. Research is just like securing sight in the fog. This is the reasonable and safe way of doing missions.

Another terrible weakness of modern missions is activism. It seems to be a common pitfall of many missionaries that is rooted in their shallow understanding of the nature of missions. We need both passion and wisdom to do missions well. Practitioners might lean toward passion and hurry to do activities based on it, but researchers are cautious and pursue wisdom. Ministries need to be based on research. This is the wise and balanced way of doing missions.

Mission researchers need to facilitate reflection so that missionaries can work as reflective practitioners. To accomplish this, mission researchers need to conduct empirical research more extensively and rigorously. To proceed on this less traveled road, young people need to consider the following points related to the life-style of mission researchers.

- First, researchers need to commit themselves to the life-style of life-time learners. We are supposed to be diligent in learning and relearning. With genuine teachability, we will be able to continue to grow as a specialist while overcoming rigidity and complacency.
- Second, researchers also need to commit to companionship and fellowship with other missionaries. Companionship with other researchers is a critical point in keeping oneself up-to-date. Fellowship with other missionaries and workers is a vital point in maintaining a realistic outlook. I have been enormously blessed in this area with many people's help up until now. This has been a special gift from God.
- Third, researchers need good sources of encouragement. People generally respond to preachers immediately, but rarely to researchers. That's the reason why we researchers need people around us who understand us deeply. Mission research requires the sacrificial support of



- like-minded churches and people, although their numbers may not be many.
- Fourth and last, researchers need to commit to critical thinking. We need to ask questions about the issues raised by our research instead of assuming certain perspectives and drawing conclusions prematurely. Good research questions are prerequisites to good research. I do not believe there are “dumb” questions, but it is also true that there are good questions. Good research questions drive good research. This point has to do with creativity. New questions may lead to new findings.

It is not always true that students ask questions and teachers answer the questions. Sometimes it's the other way around. As for mission researchers, they need both to ask questions and to answer their own questions themselves. It is a fun and challenging job, and God has encouraged me greatly so far in my pilgrimage as a mission researcher.

* Steve is Executive director of the Korea Research Institute for Mission, <https://krim.org/>

KRIM and Mission Research in Korea

by Steve Sang-Cheol Moon



The Korea Research Institute for Mission (KRIM - <https://krim.org/>) was started in 1990 to help Korean churches and mission agencies by conducting mission research as well as providing education on intercultural ministry for world evangelization. KRIM has the following purposes:

1. To contribute to the Korean missionary movement by conducting research related to the mission field, mission force, and mission strategies;
2. To assist Korean churches, mission agencies, and missionaries by providing relevant information and strategic education needed for intercultural ministry;
3. To mobilize, educate, and assist Korean churches for their effective participation in world evangelization; and,
4. To facilitate cooperation and partnership among Korean mission agencies and missionaries.

The many churches that cooperate with KRIM agree with what we are trying to do as an RDD (research, development, and delivery) community dedicated to world evangelization. Only a small number of churches, however, actually support our ministries financially. KRIM's ministry thus offers an example of how the contributions of a few dedicated churches provide much benefit to many other churches.

KRIM functions independently and autonomously but is part of the umbrella organization Global Missionary Fellowship (GMF). GMF is a partnership of like-minded mission organizations that share the vision of establishing a fully-functioning missions community based in Korea. In 2000, ten years after its founding in 1990, KRIM had four full-time staff; currently five people work full-time, and another three work part-time. We also collaborate with several missiologists and several more professors in other fields for our research projects and journal publishing.

As a research institute KRIM maintains a database of Korean missionaries and publishes a research report every year. It also conducts research projects with specific themes, such as the fourth industrial revolution and missions innovation. Korean mission agencies cooperate willingly since they eventually benefit from these research endeavors. As a think tank we try to help local missions grow as a community of “reflective practitioners” in a symbiotic relationship.

KRIM is modeled after other mission research centers in the West. Our networking has helped us maintain the quality of our research. KRIM's ministry partners include Global Mapping International (GMI), the Overseas Ministries Study Center (OMSC), and Operation World.

KRIM is the first mission research institute of its kind in Korea, but it is not the only one. There are several more research institutes dedicated to serving the cause of world evangelization. They largely function as part of denominational mission agencies, seminaries, or associations. KRIM and other research institutes cooperate and occasionally hold reporting sessions together, but we also need to have fellowship time more frequently.

Recently some Korean churches and mission agencies, as well as some NGOs, have attempted evaluations of their past ministries, hoping to find desirable directions for their future ministries. KRIM has been responding to this need for the past few years. What they expect is not merely an evaluation based on social-science approaches but a more integrated missiological approach to their issues. I find

the whole research process has a heuristic effect on members of the organizations, too.

I am reminiscent of the initial developmental stage of mission research in Korea when we were busy translating unreached peoples profiles into Korean to facilitate the frontier missions movement. There has been much progress over the years, but I also see the important need for equipping researchers with up-to-date methodologies. Most Asian countries need many young people who could serve as mission researchers. Bob Waymire, the founder of Global Mapping International, once shared with us that he had prayed even before the founding of KRIM for mission researchers to be raised in Korea. I too am praying today, believing we are all responsible for continuing this kind of role for future generations.

A Closing Down and a Rebirth

Closing something down is very hard, but it is always amazing to me how God finds ways to bring life back when it is still needed in the Kingdom. I would like to share with each of you in this very special community of mission information workers that GMI will be closing by the end of June. You can get all the details at www.gmi.org/transition.

Please join our team in mourning the loss of this vehicle for mission information. But, as I have told my team, God is not particularly interested in organizations. He cares about causes and people. As long as organizations can serve those two things, He uses our creations – these organizations we design to organize our work.

The important message that I want to share with you at this moment is that just because GMI will be closing doesn't mean that the cause of Knowledge Stewardship and the people He has been using in that are finished. In fact, I believe the opposite is true. God will use this closure to bring new birth, new opportunities, new approaches to the people and the causes He cares about.

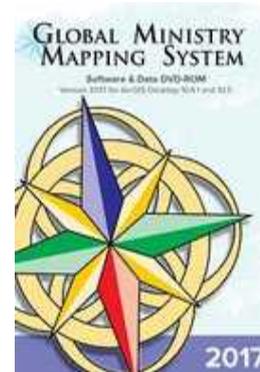
One of the ways we will be doing that is through Knowledge Stewardship Grants. When you visit the link I shared above, you will see that many of our products and services are being granted to others as a way to infuse those resources into new initiatives in order to bring about new opportunities. I encourage your organization to consider applying for one of these grants. There are some rules and requirements to participate, so please read those carefully as well.

And God will use you in that process. Each of you who has walked alongside GMI and its staff over these years in the work of mission information is a potential vessel to be used for His continued work in this area.

Our team has been spending significant time in the Sermon on the Mount in recent weeks. It is clear that Jesus was advocating a whole new order as He ushered in His Kingdom. We want GMI's closure and the rebirth of ministry to live out those principles of humility, self-sacrifice, love and stewardship.

Sincerely in Christ,
Jon Hirst
GMI President and CEO

FINAL NOTE: GMI recently released its GMMS (Global Ministry Mapping System) 2017, with the latest data and software. However, GMMS 2017 will no longer be offered after GMI closes. As a special gift to your our colleagues in mission information, we are offering a 15% discount to anyone in the CMIW community when you apply for use with this code "CMIW-GMMS." We hope that some of you can take advantage of that discount and receive this powerful mapping tool before it is no longer available.



cartoMission provides cartographic (mapping) services to inform and inspire mission. The world is full of geographic data, covering topics such as population growth, language, and religion. These figures may be recorded at a country level or narrowed down further to a province, city, or neighborhood. And, the

mobile devices used by many around the globe transmit accurate location information and can be used in recording key data related to time and place.

cartoMission strives to produce innovative designs that geographically depict demographic, religious, and social trends. These could range from a detailed, wall-sized map to a graphic that is viewed in a social media feed on a smartphone. The key is to develop a design that communicates the data clearly and quickly.

cartoMission serves a wide range of ministry partners including missionaries, missions organizations, churches, and authors. Key projects include (a) maps for upcoming publications by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and (b) maps supporting the ongoing research efforts of Operation World, the prayer guide to the nations. Additional previous projects include work for the Joshua Project, a research initiative that highlights the ethno-linguistic peoples of the world, Global Mapping International, Every Home for Christ, and the Traveling Team.

Bryan Nicholson, the project leader, studied geography, cartography, GIS (geographic information systems), and the sociology of religion at the University of Georgia. He is passionate about helping others visualize their work and better communicate their vision.

The cartoMission website and blog (www.cartomission.com) contains maps of recent data related to religious affiliation, population, life-expectancy, migration, and various other topics. These graphics are available to be shared in ministry contexts to hopefully encourage prayer and expand vision for mission. For more information or to discuss ways to visualize data for your projects, please visit www.cartomission.com or email info@cartomission.com.

What about those international students in my hometown?



We recently received the following questions in an Email from one of our community members who had returned from a security-sensitive context:

Returning to North America after years abroad, I notice how many international students there are now in my home town from "unreached/unevangelized" places. A quick peek at a few universities revealed that the percentage of international students is growing fast. One university coordinator told me, "International students are a profitable market for our

university and we intend to grow to 20% [international students] within 5 years."

I see a need to integrate research and outreach between the international students in our church-rich environments and the countries of origin of those students. I am very curious:

- Who else is involved in this type research and/or service?
- Who may have data on internationals and outreach initiatives to them in North America or other places with much open outreach?
- How can we find data on which people groups are represented and not just countries of origin? It is hard enough to get numbers of students by country, but having the province of origin would really open up new strategies to reach the unreached.
- What would we do with the data and information collected?
- Are there networks of churches and organizations that could benefit and make strategic use to connect both to people here and people there?

If you can help with any of these questions, please get in touch with this brother by sending an email to info@globalcmiw.org. We will pass your comments along.

Who's Who in Missions Information

Special Profile: Désiré Kajabika Bisimwa

In this edition we want to introduce Pastor Désiré Kajabika Bisimwa. Pastor Désiré does not see himself as a full-time Missions Information Worker. Rather, in a recent GMI Research Fellowship project that he conducted on behalf of Harvest Evangelical Ministry that he leads, Pastor Désiré looked into

reasons for why men were not involved in church. He learned more how to genuinely listen to men outside the church instead of assuming or projecting how they felt about church. Along with seeing new confessions of faith during the research, Pastor Désiré and church members are deeply encouraged about new ministries to married couples that have emerged. We thought his story might inspire others to incorporate some aspect(s) of information work into their ongoing ministries to enhance their overall Kingdom fruitfulness.

1. [CMIW] Please tell us about yourself and your family.

[DKB] My wife and I are Congolese from the Democratic Republic of Congo. We live in the city of Goma in North Kivu province, an area which has experienced much conflict. We have been married for 30 years and we have 9 children and 8 grandchildren. Among our 9 children, three are married and six are at school. Of those in school, 3 are currently in university and the other 3 are at secondary school.



After obtaining my degree in Management and Administration, I worked in my country for ten years as a Finance Controller in public administration. I had the opportunity to receive the Lord Jesus Christ when I was working in public administration. After receiving Jesus Christ in my life, I made the choice to leave public administration to join the ministry as a full time servant.

After 3 years of full time ministry, I decided to join public service again, but now with Jesus Christ in my heart. Thereafter I began work with some NGOs, occupying positions as a Senior Manager. I did so serving the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.

To enable me to serve the Lord well, I went to Bible School for six months in Kinshasa (the DRC capital city) and this enabled me to settle in the ministry. I am a Pastor, so my family and I bear witness to Jesus Christ every moment of our lives.

We serve God through Ministère Évangélique la Moisson (Harvest Evangelical Ministry). I felt compassion for orphans and other vulnerable children who were victims of wars in my country, especially in my region, so in 2013 I created a structure to allow anyone of goodwill to come to the aid of an educational program to benefit these children. We wanted to give them the opportunities enjoyed by other children in the area and to help them live in the community with hope.

2. [CMIW] What is your current ministry? [DKB] I have two main ministries: I'm responsible for the Ministère Évangélique la Moisson (Harvest Evangelical Ministry) as founder. I'm also responsible for an organization called CODDHu where we take care of orphans and other vulnerable children to give them hope for tomorrow.

In the Ministère Évangélique la Moisson (Harvest Evangelical Ministry) we focus our activities on prayer, seminars, teaching church leaders, and equipping for children's ministries in order to help young people grow in knowing Jesus as their Savior. In CODDHu we focus on educational projects for orphans and other vulnerable children. We started a school to give them the opportunity to learn to write, read and do basic mathematics.

3. [CMIW] What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction? [DKB] Since giving my life to Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior, I have been involved in the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International. I have been a biblical trainer there for 14 years. At the same time I have been teaching some biblical courses to train church leaders in the Pentecostal Church. When I see men of God working in following God's way I'm very happy and thank God a lot. I have been involved in searching for peace in my area, working with religious leaders in order to have peaceful cohabitation in our communities. This has proven very positive.

I experience great satisfaction when I see orphans and other vulnerable children coming to our school. Our education program is enabling these forgotten children to read, write, and do some mathematics. They will be able to say tomorrow that God has been good and has been their provider. They in turn will be able to contribute to the evangelization of others around them. "Isaiah 1:17: Learn to do right; seek justice, defend the oppressed, take up the cause of the orphan; defend the case of the widow." Although we ourselves are not able to respond to all the needs, I do see that God is in control of

everything and this gives me great satisfaction.

My recent research with GMI has lead me to people who have never been in church, never had interest in church activities. Some were formerly Muslim but, by God's grace, have decided to follow Jesus Christ. Some have even started to go to church, which has filled my heart with great satisfaction.

4. [CMIW] **What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?** [DKB] In the coming ten years, by God is grace, I would like to get additional biblical training to add to my knowledge in serving God. I would then be able to build capacity in others as well. I want to stand in God's service and contribute to bringing people into His kingdom.

I pray that God will facilitate our ministry to grow in evangelization in order to contribute to the increase of men and women in the Kingdom of God. My own need is to stay as a good servant of God for his Kingdom.

We do wish, within the next ten years, to be able to respond to the needs of the orphaned children under our supervision and those of their respective families. Yet we also dream to see among these orphans many who will become good evangelists and then preach the gospel to other people.

5. [CMIW] **Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?** [DKB] I am available to communicate with others about the CMW community, especially if members of the community think they have some activities for me to engage in or if they need my input or ideas. Also, if needed, I can translate some documents into other languages, as I'm fluent in French and Kiswahili.

Pastor Désiré Kajabika Bisimwa

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Information from the Word

The risen Jesus is enthroned, interceding, and poised to return. The Scriptures reveal him as directing and empowering his people by his Spirit, all for mission and service. Christ by his Spirit gives wisdom, knowledge, and prophecies for people's "*upbuilding and encouragement and consolation*" (I Corinthians 14:3), gifts that help "*equip the saints for the work of ministry*" (Ephesians 4:12). How does mission information integrate with the Spirit's gifts of "wisdom," "knowledge," and "prophecy," as Spirit-dependent workers assemble data that leads to wise and informed mission and service? Moreover, how should we pray for the Spirit's use of mission information?

Final Details:

- This bulletin is produced by the Community of Mission Information Workers Task Force comprised of Larry Kraft, Stephanie Kraft, Chris Maynard & Nelson Jennings. Please send any suggestions of issues to discuss or any other ideas to "info@globalcmiw.org".
- Back issues can be found at: www.globalcmiw.org.