

Cross-Cultural Perspectives



Meeting at the Waters of Global Missions

One of the main tourist attractions of Manaus, Brazil (just because they have not seen our fabulous church there) is the “meeting of the waters.” The dark, black-colored water of the Rio Negro intercepts with the sandy-colored Amazon River. For nearly four miles the waters run side by side without mixing. This merging together reminds me of the coming together of the various generations and how they view missions. We are on a ship named “global missions” and we are getting very close to the meeting of the waters. An understanding of all generations and how they view missions is vital to our future and to casting a vision in reaching the world.

Recently, I was privileged, along with several members of our Global Missions personnel, to be part of the UNboard meeting. This is a brainstorming session with young men to try to assist them in “buying into” missions. Some of the points that came out of the meeting include the use of new technology to promote missions through stories. We also want to involve young men in taking trips to mission fields. Exposure breeds a burden. There seems to be a low level of understanding of how global missions ministry operates and we need to work on enlightenment. We are asking that each participant this year bring someone with them to our meeting next year.

One thing that came out of the meeting was a desire to see more of the humanitarian side of giving. My desire is to plan a trip for them that will incorporate meeting humanitarian as well as spiritual needs.

A book entitled *The Meeting of the Waters: 7 Global Currents that Will Propel the Future Church* (Fritz Kling) identifies trends having a major impact on the church around the world. New technology, marketing, and generational trends are making an unavoidable mark on the global Church. Fritz spent two years interviewing 151 church leaders in nineteen countries.

I will briefly introduce the seven trends that emerged from Klitz's conversation with church leaders. Perhaps, some of these will apply to global missions within the United Pentecostal Church International. These points were written by George P. Woods in his evaluation of the book.

Mercy	The church must address the physical and material needs of humanity, not just their spiritual needs.
Mutuality	The church in the developed world must interact with the majority world as peers, not as patrons who seek to control the use of their patronage.
Migration	The church must minister to populations that are increasingly multinational, multiracial, and multiethnic.
Monoculture	The church must realize that globalization is making local cultures increasingly similar to one another, and this face presents both challenges and opportunities.
Machines	The church must utilize technology (especially computers) to accomplish its mission.
Mediation	The church must take the lead in making peace and resolving the conflicts that increasingly characterize global culture.
Memory	The church must take into account the fact that memory (especially of tragedy and oppression) shapes the way that people respond to the gospel.

I may not totally agree with all of the above points. I don't expect you will agree with all of them either. However, there is one thing we can agree on and that is there is a meeting of the waters in global missions.

