

## *Cross-Cultural Perspectives from the Director*

### *Twenty-one Tips for Healthier Missionary Relationships*

#### **Part Two**

Ron Blue in *Evangelism and Missions* said, "Interpersonal relationships may be one of the most overlooked areas in world missions." Whether working with other missionaries within a nation, or across geographical boundaries, it is imperative to cultivate quality relationships. Last time I shared ten tips and today will provide the other eleven.

1. Choose battles carefully. Make big deals, big deals. Pray through over the smaller ones. There are some things you can look over, and others you can overlook.
2. God can take care of each missionary. Wives should avoid defending their husbands, and vice versa. Hubby or Honey can handle themselves.
3. Working with others can be like dancing with porcupines. Understand personality types.
4. Every one is different. Don't sweat it. Celebrate it! There is strength in diversity. It provides varied gifts to use. Don't concentrate on how different you are. Concentrate on what you have in common.
5. A common, understood vision decreases problems and avoids everyone doing what is right in his sight. Cast the vision!
6. Pray for one another. It's difficult to hold grudges and disunity in an atmosphere of prayer.
7. Understand the symptoms of culture shock. Fellow missionaries may feel isolated, inferior, depressed, irritated, challenged and confused.
8. Be involved in advanced planning. When things are left to the notorious last minute, stress levels are high, and responses to situations could be less than desirable.
9. Communicate. Consider the Tower of Babel scene. They had a common language, goal, and unity. They could accomplish whatever they set out to do. Nothing could stop them! God messed with the language, and we've had confounded communication problems ever since.
10. Don't criticize or make caustic, cutting comments. People have feelings! Be respectful.

11. How depressing! I wanted to be like Dr. John Maxwell and come up with the "Twenty-one Irrefutable Laws of Missionary Relationships" but have come up lacking. What can I say? Oh yes, one more! When all else fails ask, "What would Jesus do?" Whew, I made it!