



# billy graham center centerline

News from the **Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College**, Wheaton, Ill.

## Pursuing Integrity and Excellence: Effectively Witnessing for Christ through Language Learning and Teaching

LAURIE FORTUNAK

Peer inside Xilin Northwest Chinese School in Hoffman Estates (Illinois), and there you will find Mary Cerutti teaching Chinese senior citizens English so they won't be left behind by grandchildren who converse freely with fellow English speakers. Less than fifty miles away Gwen Broucek is combining her passion for ministering to people with special needs with her love for internationals through teaching English as a second language (ESL). More than one hundred miles away Diana Davis, a retired missionary with Grace Brethren International Mission, travels between two Indiana churches, teaching English to immigrants from Latin America. Five thousand miles away Peter\* and his family are deeply invested in helping westerners learn Mandarin Chinese and helping Chinese nationals learn English.

All four individuals have been trained through the Institute for Cross-Cultural Training (ICCT), a department of the Billy Graham Center which equips Christians to

meet some of the principal challenges of cross-cultural ministry through a summer school program, special workshops, publications, and consulting. Although many organizations and programs are designed to equip ESL teachers, what makes ICCT different is the extraordinarily strong emphasis on providing credible and capable teachers.

"We are facing the challenge of how to stay viable in a culture that thinks you can go in and change lives and places in two weeks," explains Dianne Dow, associate director of ICCT. "English is a wonderful tool to share your faith, but you need to be competent and credible in order to be a good witness. We must have a true passion for helping internationals. The ministry of English can help these people improve their lives, build relationships, and point them to the Lord." Through its TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language) programs, SLA (Second Language Acquisition) programs, and intercultural communication classes, ICCT provides: skills for



Each summer, dozens of people attend workshops for ESL training.

learning a new language, preparation for teaching English to speakers of other languages, and practical help for those who work with on-field language and culture learners.

### ESL in America

Every summer, the ICCT holds a three-week summer institute for individuals involved in ESL training. Cerutti helps with ESL workshops in the institute. As part of her class, students teach ESL at World Relief two evenings each week. "I am so encouraged to see students who have never taught an

*Continued on page 4*

## Torrey M. Johnson Sr. Evangelism Research Grants Available!

The Billy Graham Center Archives has started a program of travel grants for people who would like to come to the Archives to do research. The grants, named for Torrey M. Johnson Sr., a prominent American evangelist of the previous generation, are available for both scholarly and non-scholarly research.

They are especially intended to assist those who could not otherwise use the collections. For more information, visit <http://wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/TJMSrGrant.html>, the introductory page of the Archives' website ([www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives](http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives)), or email the Archives at [bgcarc@wheaton.edu](mailto:bgcarc@wheaton.edu).





# director's devotional

LON ALLISON

## Accelerate Everywhere

**WE EXIST TO:  
ACCELERATE  
GLOBAL  
EVANGELISM**

**WE ENVISION: EVERY BELIEVER,  
EVERYWHERE, SHARING JESUS  
UNTIL HE RETURNS**

Let me invite you into a discussion held recently in the conference room of the BGC. Four evangelist-scholars, two missiologists, and Wheaton College President Duane Litfin were discussing evangelism. One raised the question, "Why do the epistles speak so little about evangelism?" It was a good question. After all, the epistles were the instruction to the young Church of the first century. Surely they would be loaded with the "why" and "how" of evangelism. However, we all admitted the subject didn't receive a lot of ink in the epistles. Although there is more than one answer, the one I want to espouse here is: The epistles didn't talk about evangelism extensively, because they didn't need to. The understanding and practice of evangelism was ingrained in the "DNA" of the early Church.

One of the missiologists suggested we always read the epistles in the light and background of the Book of Acts. Acts provides the context for the epistles. "The Acts of the Apostles" (or the title I prefer, "The Acts of the Holy Spirit") abounds with evangelism.

It is the subtext for every chapter and story. Yesterday in my time of study, I recorded every time evangelism results were mentioned. By results, I mean not the practice of evangelism, but the actual results of evangelism activity. I found thirty-one unique records of God's saving activity born through the Church. In some of the records, numbers are given (e.g., three thousand were added on the day of Pentecost). Other times, names of persons converted as well as places are included. Sometimes, there is just a summary of a story with language like, "And day by day, the Lord added to the number of those being saved" (2:47).

I imagine the practice of evangelism was as common to first-century believers as holding regular worship services is for the Church today. My pastor doesn't teach much on the "why" and "how" of corporate worship on the Lord's Day. He doesn't need to. It is part of the fiber of our lives as Christians. So too was evangelism for the early Church.

I am heartened by the evangelistic example of the early Church. I am also saddened. By and large, the American Church has lost the passion and practice of evangelizing as a "way of life." Statistics abound, but one thing is consistent in all sources: the Church in the U.S. is in decline, and even where it is growing, it is not growing through conversion growth, but simply the reshuffling of saints between churches. There is not space to explore the reasons, but there is space

to tell readers that the BGC is passionately committed to evangelism both in the U.S. and abroad. We will not shrink back or slow our pace. In fact, the title of this article is our "Purpose" and "Vision" for our work for the next many years. We envision "every believer, everywhere, sharing Jesus until he returns." Our departments and ministries are committed to this dream. In fact, we've chosen a new verb to propel our purpose: we exist to "accelerate" global evangelism.

Accelerate is a strong word. It has several connotations, but one has to do with "more." The driver who "puts the pedal to the metal" intends to go faster. We intend the same. God save us from getting comfortable in this task. People are dying throughout the world without the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is no time for slowing or even staying at a steady speed. As I close, please slowly, reflectively, and audibly state these words: "Every believer, everywhere, sharing Jesus until he returns." Please say a prayer for me and our colleagues at the BGC. Pray we are resourced to do our part in this vision. I/we are in your debt.

Lon Allison (dreaming of Acts of the Holy Spirit in the twenty-first century).

## From Religion to Relationship: Muslim Feels "Really Good" after Trusting in Christ

"I want to change my religion," the Muslim man told Roy Oksnevad, director of the Billy Graham Center Muslim Ministries. "Sorry, you can't change your religion," Oksnevad responded. "You are only changing one man system for another—that's not what it means to be a Christian. This is a living relationship with God. Talk to God about this." After praying silently for a few minutes, the man lifted his head and exclaimed, "I feel really good!" Since then, this man has had, according to Oksnevad, "a real hunger for the word of God." He is in a Muslim Background Believer (MBB) Bible study led by Oksnevad, where he has brought several of his family members as well.

The two met when Oksnevad was speaking at a men's retreat which stemmed from an Arab-speaking fellowship. Although sometimes interchangeably referred to as a church, the fellow-

ship is comprised of forty people, eighty percent of whom are not Christians. Began by a Muslim convert named Hicham, the fellowship is a place where those who speak Arabic can meet together, share a meal, and hear a teaching from the Bible in a culturally relevant manner. Oksnevad occasionally preaches at the fellowship. He was also one of the speakers at the men's retreat. The Muslim man had approached Oksnevad after he had spoken about "Christ the Victor."

Oksnevad and others involved with the BGC Muslim Ministries are leading Muslims to Christ faithfully and consistently—and helping them to grow in the Christian faith. One of the ways this is happening is through MBB Bible studies, held throughout the Chicagoland area. "They learn the concept of one another in these groups," Oksnevad said.

# “Being There with the Gospel” Evangelism in a Digital World

BY ROBBY RICHARDSON



In 1997, the Billy Graham Center hosted a symposium to look at the potential of utilizing what was then a fairly new medium—the internet—for evangelism. Out of that gathering grew the Internet Evangelism Coalition (IEC), a partnership of ministries, churches, and individuals united in stimulating and accelerating the use of the internet for evangelism worldwide. In 1997, there was a legitimate question of whether this emerging technology would really catch hold around the world. There can be no question now. Well over 1.2 billion people around the world utilize the internet on a regular basis, and more and more, these “digital connections” are becoming the way people communicate and keep track of their world. The recent growth statistics of “social networking sites” are astounding. Facebook is now approaching 200 million users worldwide, and Twitter, a “micro-blogging” service that allows people to “follow” what other people are doing and thinking, is showing explosive growth.

When Jesus addressed his disciples just before ascending into heaven, he gave them the Great Commission. A loose paraphrase of this would be, “As you are going wherever you are going, be there with the gospel.” Millions of Christians are using the internet and other digital media on a daily basis. What would it mean to “be there with the gospel?”

The IEC is seeking to provide the encouragement, training, and infrastructure resources to help those millions of Christians understand the opportunity for evangelism and have the know-how and support to effectively share their faith online. The IEC and its member ministries currently provide a number of online training resources (e.g., [www.webevangelism.com](http://www.webevangelism.com), [www.evangelismtoolbox.com](http://www.evangelismtoolbox.com), and

[www.internetevangelismday.com](http://www.internetevangelismday.com)), as well as necessary “infrastructure resources” such as follow-up facilitation and church locator databases. The IEC also provides digital evangelism content to a number of ministry and evangelism conferences around the world. One of the most exciting developments in recent years has been the creation and growth of new internet evangelism initiatives around the world along both geographic and demographic lines.

Based on the pace of innovation and the rapid adoption of new portable digital devices, it would be hard to make anything

more than an educated guess on where “digital technology” might be headed in the years to come. However, for the IEC and countless individuals and ministries around the world, our commitment is clear: we are going to be there with the gospel. See Allan Beeber’s article on Global Media Outreach for how you can get involved today!

**Rev. Robby Richardson** is executive director of the Internet Evangelism Coalition. Previously, he served as director of Internet Ministries for Gospel Communications International.

## Online Ministry Is Only a Click Away

BY ALLAN BEEBER

With over 1.2 billion people worldwide using the internet (and a projected 3.5 billion by 2012), new opportunities for evangelism and discipleship are emerging every day. And whereas print, radio, and television are “unidirectional” technologies, digital communications now allow Christians to immediately communicate back and forth with seekers on a global scale. According to Google, there are over two million daily internet searches occurring on spiritual terms like “Jesus” and “prayer.” Many of those searches lead people to one of Global Media Outreach’s (GMO) evangelistic websites, such as [www.WhoisJesus-Really.com](http://www.WhoisJesus-Really.com). The “high-tech” seeker can fill out a simple comment form connecting them with one of 2,200 “high-touch” online volunteers distributed globally.

Since the volume of responses to the gospel exceeds over twenty-one thousand indicated decisions for Christ daily (one every five to six seconds), GMO developed the ability to quickly train prospective evangelists to answer questions and follow up with seekers, often within twenty-four hours. Wheaton College, for example, has some fifty students responding to seekers from all over the world—right from their dorm

rooms—as part of an evangelism class. The evangelism department is partnering with GMO to train students to share the gospel and disciple new believers through weekly online ministry. Volunteers can decide how many emails to receive per day or week and can stop receiving emails during times away from home. Response templates, a “secure” communication environment, an “answers database,” and an assigned community leader safely guide the process.

Ultimately, the goal is to help people come to know Christ, grow in their faith, and get connected to a local church. This opportunity for believers is especially attractive to returning missionaries or lay people nearing retirement age who want to share Christ. GMO’s greatest need is for “biliterate” volunteers—those who can write both in English and in another major world language. To learn more of this free opportunity, visit [www.gmojoinus.com](http://www.gmojoinus.com).

**Rev. Dr. Allan Beeber** is the Orlando director of Global Media Outreach, the largest digital evangelism ministry in the world and a ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ International.

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ESL class leave with a lot more confidence in their teaching abilities," she says. "These workshops provide tools, techniques, and theory to be effective ESL teachers. If we are effective, students will trust us and we can begin to share our lives and our faith." Davis agrees. Last year was her first time attending the summer institute. "Although I realize how much more I need to learn to be an effective teacher, I have been able to begin with what I learned," she shares. "I look forward to many years of using the skills I acquired to build relationships with my students."

Years ago, Broucek received a special/regular education teaching degree from a state university that she says, "didn't teach me a thing about how to teach!" The TESOL program, however, taught her "more about the theories and practices of teaching than [her] entire undergrad program." As a teacher for World Relief, she admits to returning home from teaching at night only to lay awake for hours thinking of more activities to do with the students. "My training somehow unlocked a creative streak in me that I didn't know I had for teaching!" she explains.

### SLA Abroad

More than a decade ago Lonna Dickerson, ICCT director, and her team began holding Language Coach Workshops (LCWs) on the Wheaton College campus and in several overseas locations, most recently Thailand, Hungary, and Bolivia. This year marked the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh workshops. The goal is to train language trainers to be more effective in what they do. The workshops are on a four-year rotation of topics: program development; learner assessment; listening and speaking skills; and culture and worldview.

When Peter and his wife moved to China in 1993 they took two years of Chinese language study in a university program. Still not feeling their language was good enough to teach, they went to Taiwan for two more years of study. They now help others in the language learning process. In 2002, upon the recommendation of a friend, Peter went to his first LCW. He has now participated in six workshops. "Before I attended the workshops I knew

little about learning Chinese," Peter explains. "Learning languages and cultures is a very complex job. If we are really going to reach the lost and unreached people of this world, then we need to be very good at learning languages and crossing cultures. We can recruit willing workers to serve in the field, but unless they get training, support, and encouragement, they are not going to be effective. The ICCT Language Coach Workshops are one of the best ways to provide training and support for the people who help others learn languages."

### ESL, Relationship, and Evangelism

Whether those taking the ICCT courses are ministering in ESL or teaching SLA, relationship and evangelism must go hand in hand. Local vision and global thinking must be paired together. Of DuPage County in Illinois, where Broucek lives, she explains, "Since there are hundreds of refugees pouring into this area, ICCT and the TESOL program answer the crying need to teach them how to communicate with their 'fellow Americans.' These people are full of courage, coming to America and starting from scratch, and need to be given a chance to learn English and the U.S. culture. They'll never get to first base in our society without a good working knowledge of our language."

However, Cerutti reminds her students that it does not stop with the individual: "ESL is a great tool for developing relationships with people who are only in the United States for a short time and will eventually go back to their native country where maybe only one to two percent of the population is Christian."

So what is the impetus for English language teachers to pursue excellence? Broucek sums it up well: "While we are teachers, we are the only 'Bible' they can read, the only Christian 'movie' they can watch, the only 'book' about Jesus they can understand. What a privilege it is to teach them so that they might one day be introduced to him!"

\* Last name withheld for security reasons.

# Newly Released Short-term Mission Book!

## Engaging the Church: Analyzing the Canvas of Short-term Missions

Edited by Laurie A. Fortunak and A. Scott Moreau

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The Billy Graham Center stimulates global evangelism, partnering with Christian leaders to develop strategies and skills for communicating the gospel. The Center serves the church in evangelism and missions through leadership training, research, and strategic planning.

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