*Pipeline: Engaging the Church in Missionary Mobilization*

By David and Lorene Wilson

Reviewed by Marilynn Lester

Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (Matthew 9:37-38 NIV) If we pray this prayer to send out workers into God’s harvest field, are we prepared for the answer? David and Lorene Wilson show how God might answer this prayer from the perspective of the missionary, the church, and the sending agency. In their book *Pipeline: Engaging the Church in Missionary Mobilization*, they call upon over 40 authors from churches, sending agencies and cross-cultural workers to encourage local churches to look inside their own organizations to see how they might “send out workers into (God’s) harvest field.”

Often God answers our prayers through ourselves, and this prayer in Matthew 9 would be no exception. God may be calling you into partnership with him in some cross-cultural setting. If He does, would you recognize the call? And then, are you prepared for what lies ahead? The Wilsons deal with these questions through veteran missionaries addressing the issue of the call. What does the call look like? They examine various perspectives through examples from Scripture of people who received a specific call from God, examples of people throughout history who received a call to the work they did for the Lord, and examples from today’s missionaries who have had first-hand experience and followed through with the call from God. The part the church would play would be to help recognize and re-affirm God’s call in an individual’s life.

These veteran missionaries use wisdom gained from their own experiences to give prospective missionaries encouragement and instruction as they embark on the journey to cross-cultural service. The prospective missionary can expect to have obstacles along the way possibly coming from family, through money matters, and even from a person’s own church. There will be spiritual warfare when someone is answering the call of God. The well-prepared church will be able to help each person through their individual battles.

Five different churches discuss how they encourage people to consider missions and then what they do to prepare people for service. These five churches vary in size and backgrounds. In their articles they deal with issues such as mobilizing and recruiting including how to identify people who might be good candidates for global partnerships. Along with identifying individuals for cross-cultural service the church is the perfect place to train and prepare global partners for the work they are called to do. This is not to take away from the training a sending agency may require, but to enhance it. The training received at home would produce workers with experience in ministry and in building relationships. The relationships built during this training time would strengthen the global partners’ sending base and provide stability for the global partner on the field.

A part of the preparation process would be to apply to a sending agency. Sending agencies in the past have prepared and sent out workers without much input from the local church. Now these agencies are seeing the value of partnering together with the local church to give those workers the solid base they need with familiar relationships. The sending agencies like to see local churches who are engaged and active in the lives of the global partners. Together they can help assure a more productive global partner who has the strength and stamina to endure through the tough times of ministry abroad.

FEBC’s Commission on Global Partnerships is in the process of putting together a handbook that would assist the local church in preparing people for cross-cultural ministry. It will be available on the FEBC website, [www.fellowshipforward.org](http://www.fellowshipforward.org). Hard copies will be available at Convention this summer. The book, *Pipeline: Engaging the Church in Missionary Mobilization* by David and Lorene Wilson will also be available to the churches at Convention at a reduced rate.

The Commission on Global Partnerships exists to glorify God by encouraging the missionaries and assisting FEBC churches in promoting missions within the local churches. We present these resources with the hope that God’s name will continue to go forth from this fellowship of churches to worlds unknown.

Submitted by

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