

Who are we?



History and Background of GCM

The origins of the Global Council on Missions begin with a call by missiologist Dr. Ralph D. Winter to commemorate the centennial of Edinburgh 1910 in Tokyo, Japan. Although several other international gatherings were being planned in the year 2010, Dr. Winter felt it was important to have a gathering that followed the pattern and theme of Edinburgh 1910 but that also reflected the global leadership of the non-Western missions movement. For this purpose a steering committee was formed, and following Tokyo 2010 the organizers transitioned into a follow-up committee that now goes by the name "Global Council on Missions."

Making Disciples of Every People in this Generation

We affirm that mission is the central theme of Scripture, through which God reveals Himself to be a God who communicates and works through us by action and word in a world estranged from Him. Furthermore, we recognize that fulfilling and bringing completion to Jesus' Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:44-49; Jn. 20:21; Acts 1:8) has been the on-going responsibility of the Church for 2000 years.



In this era of missions, we of the Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Consultation value and commemorate the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, a hallmark event which stands out as an inspiration and impetus to the modern global mission movement. We celebrate a legacy of 100 years of mission that has transpired since that first world missionary conference.

However, the world has dramatically changed since that conference was convened a century ago. Missions is no longer the predominant domain of Western Christianity. Rather, the preponderance of mission activity today is being engaged by Majority World Christians outside of the West.

Christ's ambassadors are coming from everywhere around the world and going to anywhere and everywhere in the world. We rejoice that today's mission force is global in composition, bearing a diversity of thought, practice and resources that enriches and energizes Christ's global Cause as never before.

Yet, the corresponding reality is that the present day mission task is so large and complex that no one church, agency, national missions movement, or regional mission block can take it on alone or independently. Also, the understanding of the essence of what is entailed in the remaining task has altered considerably in recent years.

Declaration

We, representatives of evangelical global mission structures, being intent on fulfilling the ultimate objective of the Great Commission, have gathered in Tokyo May 11-14, 2010 at this Global Mission Consultation to make the following declaration. We set forth this declaration in obedience to Christ's final command, as a means of calling Christ-followers everywhere to whole-heartedly embrace and earnestly engage in "making disciples of every people in our generation."

Mankind's Need

We affirm that all people are lost apart from faith in Christ. The clear statements of Scripture reveal that every individual, without exception, is a sinner by nature, choice and practice (Rom. 3:9-18, 23). As such, all are under God's wrath and condemnation (Jn. 3:18) because their sin is an affront to the perfect and holy nature of God (Rom. 1:18; 2:2-5). The tragic result of sin is man's alienation from God, leading to everlasting death (Rom. 6:23), and creation's bondage to corruption, subjecting it to futility (Rom. 8:18-21).



God's Remedy

We further affirm that out of love, God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16), to reconcile the world to Himself, so that mankind's sin will not be counted against them (2 Cor. 5:19). God's justice for the penalty of sin was satisfied by the atoning death of Christ as a sacrifice on man's behalf. Through Jesus' vicarious death and victorious resurrection, mankind is brought into a restored relationship with God. God offers forgiveness and salvation to all who, through faith, repent of their sin and believe solely in the redemptive work of Christ on the cross on their behalf (Rom. 1:5,16,17; 3:21-26; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-10). Therefore the message of the Great Commission is that "repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all peoples" (Lk. 24:47). Salvation is found in none other (Acts 4:12), nor in any other way (Jn. 14:6).



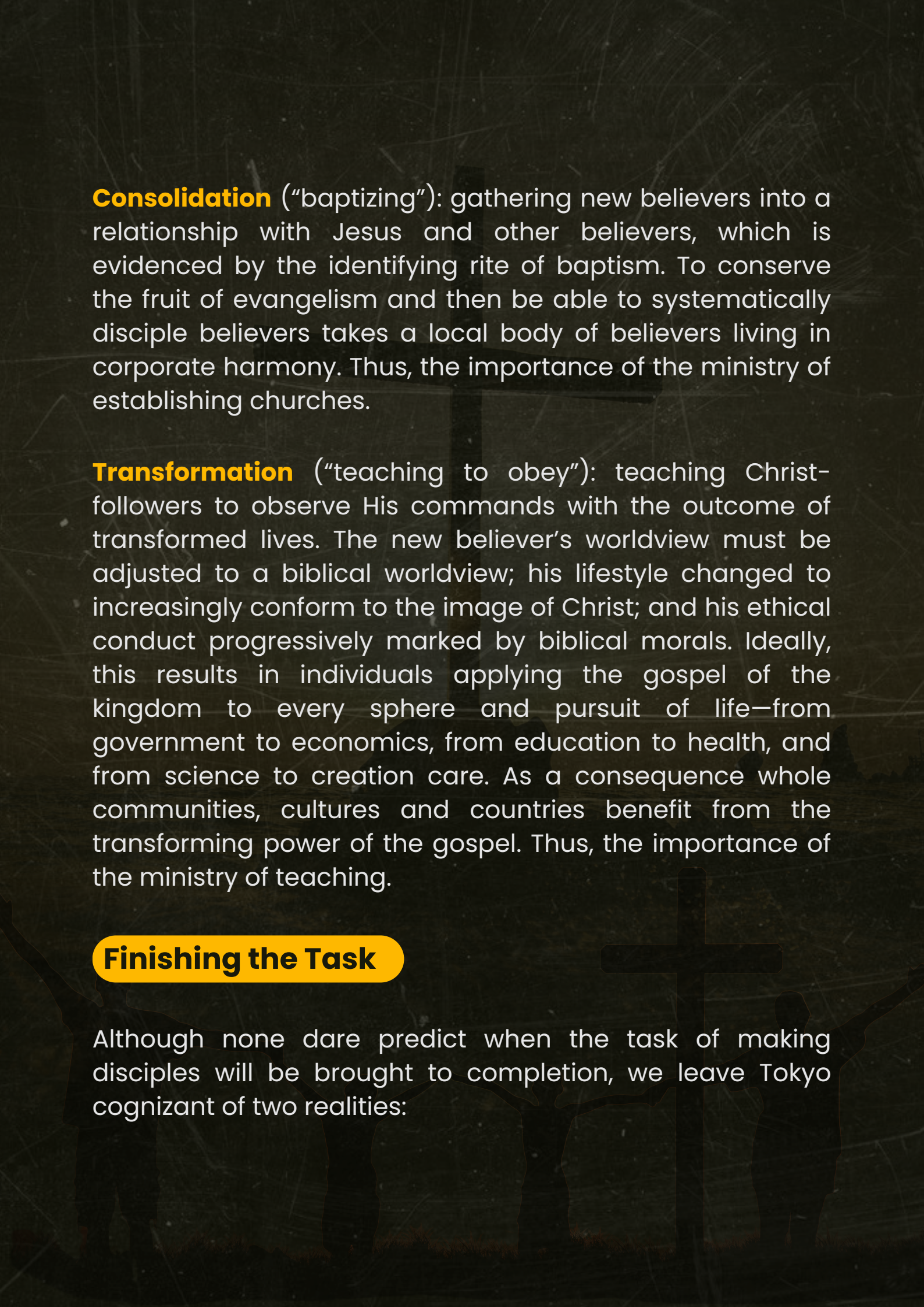
Our Responsibility

Because of the reality of mankind's dire need and God's gracious remedy, Jesus left with His followers the missional priority of making disciples of every people (Mt. 28:18-20). By this mandate we acknowledge both the breadth of the unfinished task – *all peoples* – and the depth of the task – *making disciples, as its focus*.

We recognize the breadth of our task as geographical, by going "into all the world" (Mk 16:15); as ethnical, by engaging "all peoples" (Mt. 28:19; Lk. 24:49); and as individual by proclaiming the gospel to "every creature" (Mk. 16:15).

Furthermore, we recognize that the depth of the task contains three essentials that comprise aspects in discipling peoples (Mt. 28:19-20):

Penetration ("go"): making a priority of going to those who have had little or no exposure to the gospel. Messengers go and encounter non-believers by way of personal encounters, broadcasts, podcasts, printed material, recordings, electronic communications, or any other innovative means used as a channel of penetrating witness. Thus, the importance of the ministry of evangelizing.



Consolidation (“baptizing”): gathering new believers into a relationship with Jesus and other believers, which is evidenced by the identifying rite of baptism. To conserve the fruit of evangelism and then be able to systematically disciple believers takes a local body of believers living in corporate harmony. Thus, the importance of the ministry of establishing churches.

Transformation (“teaching to obey”): teaching Christ-followers to observe His commands with the outcome of transformed lives. The new believer’s worldview must be adjusted to a biblical worldview; his lifestyle changed to increasingly conform to the image of Christ; and his ethical conduct progressively marked by biblical morals. Ideally, this results in individuals applying the gospel of the kingdom to every sphere and pursuit of life—from government to economics, from education to health, and from science to creation care. As a consequence whole communities, cultures and countries benefit from the transforming power of the gospel. Thus, the importance of the ministry of teaching.

Finishing the Task

Although none dare predict when the task of making disciples will be brought to completion, we leave Tokyo cognizant of two realities:

1. We are closer now to finishing the task than at any time in modern history.
2. God has entrusted this generation with more opportunities and resources to complete the task than any previous one. We have more mission-minded churches, more sending structures and bases, more missionaries, more material resources, more funding, more and better technology, more information and data, a deeper understanding of the task, and a clearer focus of our responsibility than previous generations. God will require much of our generation.

However, we caution that all these advantages must be matched with a corresponding will to serve and sacrifice, coupled with genuine reliance upon the Holy Spirit. We acknowledge that we are engaged in spiritual warfare in which the presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit is essential (Acts 1:8). We give evidence of our reliance on God and His Spirit through frequent and fervent prayer on behalf of the world, the work and the workers (Jn. 17:20-21; Col. 4:3-4; 1 Th. 5:17).

Our Pledge

Therefore, as representatives of this generation's global mission community, we pledge to obey the Great Commission. We covenant together to use all that God has entrusted to us in this obedience. We will seek to know where people are unreached, overlooked, ignored, or forgotten. We will pray for the Holy Spirit to give strength and guidance as we join with others in changing that neglect, to love and make disciples in the way of the Cross.

We confess that we have not always valued each other or each other's work. We repent of those wrongs and will endeavor to bring an end to competition where it exists, and reconcile where there is hurt, misunderstanding and mistrust. Furthermore, we will endeavor to recognize that each part of the Body has its very own purpose, whether risking their very lives to show God's passion for the salvation of others, or supporting those who lead us forward,

or caring for those who quietly support, or fervently pray that His will be done throughout the whole earth. We will respect all mission-engaging individuals and groups as special vessels for God's glory, each endowed with abilities that extend His Kingdom in multiple ways.

Finally, we recognize that finishing the task will demand effective cooperative efforts of the entire global body of believers. To facilitate cooperation and on-going coordination between mission structures worldwide, we agree to the necessity of a global network of mission structures. With this in mind, we leave Tokyo pledging cooperation with one another, and all others of like faith, with the singular goal of "making disciples of every people in our generation.