

On Mission 2019

*The State of the Global Gospel:
Present and Future Trends*

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Hi! My name is Jonathan Hall and I have the privilege of leading our Business as Mission network in our church family. And it is a great joy to make this short video today on the topic of Creativity and Innovation. What a great topic, especially in relation to missions and our mission. It is a wonderful topic and an important one. Not only because the business world says it's important and they would say that nowadays you hear increasingly that, 'Unless a business creates and innovates, it will die'. And it is important for those reasons as well. But I think it's important for the reason that it is embedded in our DNA. We are designed with creativity and innovation in our DNA. We were created in the image of a creative and innovative God. And we see evident evidence of it all over creation. We see evidence of it all throughout the Bible from Genesis chapter One, where there's an explosion of creativity that brings this universe into being. All the way to the end of the Bible - Revelation. You have John struggling to describe the incredible things he was saying, he was seeing. You have John trying to describe the new Jerusalem with color and gemstones and precious metals. What an incredible place is being prepared for us! Incredibly creative and innovative. And so, we have creativity and innovation embedded in our DNA and that is why we appreciate and enjoy beauty so very, very much. We enjoy creativity. We appreciate it in such a great way. And it is because it is important, and needed, because it is truly designed in our DNA, in our identity.

And I also -considering the Bible- possibly, the greatest -I would propose that the greatest expression of creativity and innovation is the ministry of Jesus. What an incredible three years, the way he communicated, the way he did miracles, the way he challenged people. You have this constant creativity in every situation, and I want to draw your attention to Luke Chapter 13 that I think has three very important reasons why, if we use, Simon Sinek's book "Start With The Why". Why is it that we should be innovative and creative? And why should we give room in our leadership and in our organizations, and in missions to creativity and innovation? I believe Luke Chapter 13, starting in verse 10. Jesus gives us three great reasons. You remember the story. There was a woman with incredible suffering. She had been suffering for 18 years, incredible pain and difficulty. And Jesus crosses all barriers and all lines - religious, cultural, social, economic. He crosses all these barriers to minister to her and at the end of the process, it says God was glorified.

So, I would propose to you, these three very important reasons why we must be innovative and creative. First of all, I believe, I propose to you that it glorifies God when we create and innovate. Secondly, I believe that we need to be innovative and creative to cross all the barriers that are in the way of taking the Gospel to the unreached. There are all kinds of barriers, all kinds of challenges, and lines in the sand that we need to cross in order to take the Gospel and to take the Kingdom. So, I propose to you that Jesus gives us this example in doing so. It is the second reason why we need to be creative and innovative. It is to cross every barrier in the way of taking the Gospel. And thirdly, the third reason why we create, and we innovate is, just as Jesus touched her and took her from pain and suffering to flourishing. And from chaos to the Shalom of God.

I believe our creativity and innovation needs to be in line with the purposes of God to take people from pain and suffering to flourishing. To take people from chaos to experiencing the Shalom of God and I would be amiss if I did not draw attention, of course, and mention the fact that, that religious leader - there was great rejection. There was great resistance to the innovation in Luke 13. Jesus immediately bumped in to this religious leadership that was just in crisis mode because of his innovation. And I want you to know to expect that. It is normal. It is part of the process. Anywhere there is creativity and innovation, you will also find resistance and rejection. So, I propose to you that we would create and innovate, especially in the way we do missions in regard to arts and sports and global cities. When we enter into urban environments, we need to be creative and innovative. It is especially the next generation wants to see art and creativity. They want to see sports. Sports is a wonderful tool in order to reach people with the Gospel. A business and entrepreneurship, and incubators, and accelerators - all these are incredible tools for us to innovate and create.

And I'll finish with the story of Ryan, who recently went through our global incubator that we have for young leaders. And he is on the island of Palau, in the middle of the South Pacific, about as far away from me as you can get. And he is a part of our church there, church family. And he and other young people have developed a project in this incubator that is just astounding. They will be getting the old tires on that island, that are a real issue. And they will be transforming old tires into flower pots and pots for plants that are colorful and creative. And you can imagine, not only is this project going to bring sustainability to them, as a small business to him and the other young people in the church, but it is also going to be a great tool to communicate creativity and beauty, and art, and innovation in -on that island- in their town. So, what a great example of a project and innovation and creativity that will glorify God, that will cross barriers, and that will take people from chaos to the Shalom of God. From suffering to a point of flourishing.

May God bless you as you increasingly invite and find space for people to be creative around you and under your leadership and in your organization. God bless you.