

# Lifebyte 36

## Are You Trapped In Mission-Station Thinking?



**Restoration Ministries International**

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Dear Friends,

About a decade ago we received a phone call from a pastor in Bronx, New York. It seems his little congregation had grown rapidly from a few followers of Jesus to over two thousand. He was calling to order our book, *Pastoring By Elders*.

When we asked how this phenomenal growth was taking place he responded, "My people began using your book *Demolishing Strongholds* and were set free. Then they turned right around and helped their family members become free of strongholds. Now we have so many people desiring to follow Jesus that I want to know how God would have us lead them. That's why I need *Pastoring By Elders!*"

We marveled over this phone call. When we wrote *Demolishing Strongholds* we never thought it would be a tool of evangelism.

In *Demolishing Strongholds* we offer this recommendation:

You can make copies of pages 36 to 65 and share them with your family and relatives. They're probably not familiar with generational strongholds, so you can offer them insight into the demonic forces that have hurt and hindered their lives by sharing the results of your own survey.

It's saddened us over the years that few who go through the workbook ever discuss with their family and relatives the strongholds they found in themselves. Instead of realizing how they could bless their families by revealing strongholds that are probably plaguing them as well, those who've gone through the workbook fear being vulnerable among those who know them well.

But in contrast, this Spanish-speaking congregation was growing by leaps and

bounds because of the loving vulnerability of those who wanted to share their joy and help their families walk free in Jesus and be about His purposes! This was an exciting turn of events for us because those who had renounced their strongholds in the power of Jesus followed the Spirit's prompting and came alongside those with whom they already had a relationship.

Now, years later, we can see how the ones who straight away helped their families had the *relational understanding of God's Kingdom* in their hearts. They turned right around to bring Jesus to those they already knew. Remember this important point as you go through this Lifebyte and the next.

(For more on understanding Kingdom living, see **Lifebyte 35. *Thy Kingdom Come In My Life.***)

### **Are Your Faith Practices Biblical?**

All Christians like to believe that their faith practices are the truth in God's sight. It's difficult or even impossible for most people to acknowledge that they've ever embraced a lie in their religious walk. And, unless you were a student of both Church history and European history, you wouldn't realize how far Nicolaitan religious practices are from the Hebraic, relational responsibility the first followers of Jesus embraced.

Let's clarify this statement. Individuals and cultures tend to adapt new information by sifting it through the grid of what they already *value*. As a result, western Christendom in particular has become *syncretistic*—merging commonly held truth with various unbiblical practices. For instance:

1. Only a few centuries after the Resurrection, the role and power of Pontifex

Maximus, the Emperor of Rome, was transferred to the Roman Pontiff—the Pope—the supreme “Papa” over all other earthly fathers. An ecclesiastical hierarchy came into existence, replete with titles that violated Jesus’s command that *no one* be honored as holy “Father” but God alone (see Matthew 23:9; Mark 10:42-44). Protestants violated in substance the same command by bestowing titles on their clergy: “Reverend”, “Pastor”, “Bishop”.

2. Other heathen adaptations besides a distinct clergy class infiltrated Christendom: infant baptism; Easter observances complete with eggs and rabbits (fertility symbols); Christmas celebrations mired in multitudinous gifts, decorated trees and self-gratification. Today these are accepted as “Christian”, and you’ve most likely adopted one or more of these pagan practices at some time in your own life.

- **The real questions for you to ask yourself:**  
**Are these practices acceptable to our Lord and King, Jesus? If they aren’t, are you sinning by practicing them?**  
Please take these questions seriously.

If you’re going to be a Kingdom person, you must become born again in your *motive, attitude and actions*. By this we mean that **EVERYTHING in your faith practice which has *no biblical basis* must be discarded.**

**In this Lifebyte we’re going to discuss unbiblical influences that may be part of your spiritual practice and way of life.**

**Like a dentist who makes sure ALL of the cavity has been removed, we want to deal thoroughly with this issue for you and your family.**

*Don't cling to a lie, no matter how long it's been around, nor how many people have believed it. Truth in your faith practice is based on the Scriptures. ALL else is a lie!*

We who are among the first contemporary generation of receiving the Hebraic foundations have undergone a lot of “churchiness” in our thoughts and experience. We’ll struggle more as we grow as Kingdom people than will our “unchurched” children who are *raised* to be Kingdom people. Face up to the fact that you probably need deprogramming! And, with God’s grace, this can happen. Just be willing to flee any faith practice that has no biblical basis.

Remember, there were *no* denominations at the time of Jesus, and people didn’t “go to church”. They knew that they *were* “THE church”, the called-out ones who embraced His Kingdom. There was no Pope or superintendent, no clergy, no Easter or Christmas festival, no infant baptism. If these *aren’t* in the Scripture, don’t let them be part of your faith practice!

## A Tale of Two Influences

### The “Mission Station Approach” and Nicolaitan Practice

Two methods stand out by which the Gospel in past centuries has been shared cross-culturally. The most widely accepted method is that which missiologists call “**The Mission Station Approach**”. The other, which is the least used yet the most fruitful, is “**The People Movement Approach**”. We’ll discuss this second approach in our next Lifebyte.

The Mission Station Approach has dominated mission strategy. This method focuses on gathering new con-

verts into “colonies”. By moving into mission compounds in which the missionary was dominant, converts were isolated from their family and other prior relationships. The convert had to forsake other relationships because these people were heathen. This pattern of removal from home and relationships not only permeates missions today, but the Nicolaitan religious system as well.

### Religious Colonies: The Product of Rome and Medieval Europe

The Mission Station Approach was birthed within the systems of the hierarchical Roman Empire and Medieval Feudalism. The Roman Empire was built upon a system of rank and prestige. Rather than following the servant/collegial leadership model of the early followers of Jesus, Christendom from Emperor Constantine onward adopted the Roman hierarchical organization pattern.

The Emperor was *Pontifex Maximus*, the political chief priest of all the state religious cults. That role then shifted to the *Roman Pontiff*—the “chief priest” of Christianity. Clergy assumed religious garb that was modeled after that of the court Praetorian Guard. This distinct costume set the clerics off from other people. Later, much of Protestantism followed suit with clergy attire that readily identified them as “men of the cloth”.

If you remember your European history texts, the Medieval age introduced a form of government called “The Feudal

System”. Feudalism was built upon a caste system of rank and privilege:

- lord
- vassal
- serf (peasant)

In this hierarchical method of government, a lord granted a vassal the use of land on which the vassal ruled over serfs who tilled that land. In return for the land, the vassal rendered homage and usually military service or its financial equivalent to his lord.

It wasn’t long before the feudal system nullified the leadership of elders within their family and clan—the *republic form of leadership* that is supported by the Bible. (For more on the biblical basis of republics, see **Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lesson 21.**)

Roman Catholicism, and most forms of Protestantism, have adapted the Roman and Feudal caste system into their ecclesiastical structure. This influence has had dire impact on both congregations and the Mission Station approach to cross-cultural evangelism.

Because of *revisionism* (which alters known truths to fit a cultural or special-interest agenda), church councils have historically succumbed to Roman and Feudal influences. The creedal “turf wars” in Christendom over the centuries have produced over 23,000 competing lord/vassal type denominations. But instead of a parcel of land, creedal allegiance has created a lord’s “domain”. And,

ordination from those who are positioned in authority provides a lord/vassal/peasant hierarchy within those denominations.

<b>The Influence of Feudal Patterns on Christendom</b>		
<b>Roman Catholicism</b>	<b>Feudalism</b>	<b>Protestantism</b>
pope	<<< lord >>>	superintendent (bishop)
cardinal	<<< vassal >>>	pastor (denominational)
bishop	<<< vassal — lord >>>	pastor (non-denominational)
priest	<<< vassal >>>	board of elders/session
lay person (peasant)	<<< serf >>>	lay person (peasant)



Even within today's house church movement, many who have fled the Nicolaitan system are creating their own feudal pattern. They're neglecting or even forsaking their purpose as humble servants of the King who would extend His Kingdom to the ends of the earth.

- **Are you in a hierarchical religious system at this time? If yes, where do you fit into the pecking order? Describe the biblical basis for your faith community.**

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- **Is your fellowship based on Kingdom principles in loving service to the King as we described in Lifebyte 35? Or, is your fellowship/faith community a religious colony that serves you? Why are you a part of your particular faith community?**

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**Religious Colonies Rely on Education, Not on the Holy Spirit**

Missiologists have verified that Christianity in the United States has not grown since 1977. The number of conversions hasn't kept up with churchgoers who are dying or leaving the faith. Sadly, within the religious system is a slosh among congregations as the churchd seek to satisfy their desire for personal gratification. This practice has become even more pronounced in the Church Growth Movement as people are offered larger "colonies" in which they can hide out yet feel good about themselves.

Because "religious colonies" are based on creedal allegiance and religious programs, those whose lives are unrighteous can swell their ranks. Those imbued with a colony mindset have no motivation to relationally reach out to the world to bring them the true Gospel. Rather, they're content to bring the world into their own gatherings. This is both tragic and unbiblical! Over time, as surveys bear out, the ways of the world infiltrate the congregations, drawing them ever further from the truth.

**The vast majority of people within Nicolaitan colonies look for their religious enactment to benefit themselves. Their presence at a service fulfills their spiritual need. Because their spiritual life is fragmented from their daily pursuits, they disregard the Kingdom call to serve the King!**

Rather than depending on the life-changing power of the Holy Spirit to equip them to serve, "religious colonists" look to Bible *knowledge* to be their change agent. But Bible literacy in itself changes no one until it becomes a *way of life*. Just look at the ineffectual spiritual climate of "christianized" Europe and the United States in which "religion" is merely another optional choice. Paul warns against religious counterfeits that inoculate seekers from the truth: "[They] have a **form of godliness but deny its power. Have nothing to do with them**" (2 Timothy 3:5).

Contemporary religious systems, with their 300,000+ congregational colonies in the United States alone, have brought about no reformation of the spiritual and moral bent of this nation. Unbelievers see *no difference* between

*Hebraic (halakhic)*  
*Know the Bible to apply it*

*Mission Station (academic)*  
*Know the Bible to know Bible facts*

their lives and those of “Christian colonists”. Rather, those who make no claim to follow Jesus see “churches” like movie theaters. People attend for their own entertainment and are unchanged by the experience.

- **If you’re in a faith community, how do you put into practice what has been taught? Are you able to discuss the teachings as they’re presented? Is the Spirit’s power manifested among you all as your lives interconnect?**

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**The Effect of Religious Colonies on Men In Particular**

How do men in general respond to the religious colonies in which they participate? First, the cleric, that is, the male lord, is elevated above all the “lay” men. If the congregation has “elders”, these are the vassals, while the rest of the men are serfs, the peasants.

This tiered system doesn’t directly affect women, so most wives are oblivious to their husband’s response. A male, however, as head of his household has to make a choice for himself *and* his family. Those who are spiritually lethargic or complacent remain spiritual infants under their clergy tutelage. That response falls in line with the “serf” role—to attend the services and pay the tithe.

If you were able to survey all the Nicolaitan congregations in the US and

ask the adult males to list their closest friends, you’d probably discover that less than 2% would list another man within their congregation.

Why is this? Because religious system participation for men is not based on intimate relationship among those who spur one another on to serve their King. Rather, the system follows the pattern of impersonal feudal hierarchy. That’s why nationally, for every 10 adults within a congregation, only 2 are men. “Mission Stations” around the world aren’t much different in their representation!

Please be clear on this: many “unbelieving” men aren’t adverse to Jesus. They’re just leery of serfdom within the system, especially among congregations that value religious knowledge that’s separate from a way of life that exemplifies Jesus. Again, women don’t seem to be as affected by this pattern, but men who are firmly persuaded about what they believe can sense it.

Many of the unbelieving men we’ve encountered, who have “believing” wives, would gladly follow a man whose life courageously displays Kingdom values (see 1 Corinthians 11:1). But to use a previous metaphor, these guys need to see a male follower of Jesus jump on a hand grenade instead of parading their Bible knowledge.

Men who yearn to earnestly walk daily in their Covenant with their Father find themselves forced to leave the religious colony and its hierarchy in order to follow Jesus and serve in His Kingdom. Only after they’ve left the colony behind have many of these men realized the demeaning and inhibiting nature of the Nicolaitan system, and how it has hindered their maturity in

Jesus. The most painful realization for many has been that Jesus is *not* Lord and Head of His people in the colony; another “lord” has been exercising powerful influence over the religious domain they’ve fled.

- **If you’re a man, describe your relational experience with other men in your faith community. Would people commend you for your Christ-like courage to serve your King at ALL cost?**

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### **The Mission Station Appeal: “Reject Others and Join My Colony”**

As a result of Feudalism, the breakdown of elder leadership in family and clan created an emphasis on *individualism*. This overwhelming focus on the individual has been adopted by much of Protestantism. And, the over-emphasis on *individual converts* has plagued the Mission Station Approach for decades, mainly from a misuse of these words:

*“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple”* (Luke 14:26).

Jesus isn’t commanding anyone to reject their family and friends! Rather, He’s underscoring the intensity of love He calls for toward Himself in comparison to earthly affection. This verse was never intended to be a weapon by which a child of our Father should pit himself against another person, especially his family. Keep in mind an old wise saying,

**“You can never win for Jesus those you’re *against*.”**

The Mission Station Approach has prompted converts to *reject* their parents and family—quite the opposite of Jesus’ intent! The followers of Jesus may *themselves* be rejected and even persecuted, but they can reject *no one* who is made in the image of God and for whom Jesus died.

We must allow unbelievers to reject us if they’re so inclined, but we can’t reject them. **WE MUST LOVE THEM!!!** Jesus’s commands never contradict other biblical commands. If an individual’s (or system’s) interpretation or over-emphasis of one command in Scripture nullifies another, that’s error.

The religious leaders in Jesus’s time erred this way by nullifying personal responsibility to honor parents (see Mark 7:7-13). Yet notice His conclusion:

*“Their worship of Me is useless, because they teach man-made rules as if they were doctrines”* (7:7, apperceiving Isaiah 29:13).

That God affirms family relationships is supported often in Scripture. For example:

*But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to **put their religion into practice by caring for their own family** and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God* (1 Timothy 5:4).

*If anyone does not **provide for his relatives**, and especially for his **immediate family**, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever* (1 Timothy 5:8).

*If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need (1 Timothy 5:16).*

In light of these admonitions, how can anyone command a follower of Jesus to reject their family responsibilities?

- **If you had unbelieving relatives when you became a follower of Jesus, how did they react to you? How did you respond to them?**

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### **Mission Station Emphasis On Individualism Overshadows Relational Connectedness**

The Mission Station focus on individualism was further supported by the Industrial Revolution. Unlike a large part of the world which still honors and clings to family and clan relationships, those who have been controlled by the industrial and technical revolutions have pursued the path of personal benefit and appeal. Large rural family groupings have been broken up through migration as the job market in cities have lured individuals to relocate.

The continuing trend to move from place to place has brought about a dissolution of longstanding relationships. Many don't want to make the effort to get close to others because one or the other might move! People have grown accustomed to unilateral decisions made without input from family or friends—yet they wonder why they're so lonely and isolated.

#### Nicolaitan Congregations & Mission Stations

*"Come to my church"  
"Come live in my Colony"*

Hebraic Relational Approach  
*"Would you be my friend?"*

This singular sense of *personal disconnect* has fed the individual "decision for Christ" plea offered by most of westernized Christendom. While Evangelicals may proclaim they're eager to "see salvations", their methodology has missed the reality of how people groups around the world really become true followers of Jesus.

The pervasive concept of individualism is supported by a "freedom of conscience" mentality that is so cherished in the Western world. This means that within certain legal limits you're free to do whatever you want, whether it's inherently right or not. Freedom of conscience and democracies go hand-in-hand. Neither is based on firm biblical standards. Rather, the underlying thought is, "I can pick and choose what I want to do if it *benefits me.*"

During the period in which the biblical foundation of the Founding Fathers permeated society, freedom of conscience was framed by biblical boundaries. However, when an individual has no grounding in the righteous standards of God's Word, he is dominated by his sin nature. A society which has been influenced by its individual and collective sin nature has led to the moral decadence and decline of the United States.

Your sin nature may have been appeased when you uninhibitedly exercised whatever you chose to enjoy under the freedom offered you. But you're still responsible to both God and to those around you for the actions and outcomes that that freedom has produced.



## The Church Growth Movement Offers A Comfortable, Individualist Colony

We've warned previously about the popular Church Growth Movement and its inoculation against the true Gospel Covenant. The Church Growth intent to attract as many unbelievers as possible any way it can relies heavily on the Mission Station approach to entice the individual. Its widespread success in drawing numbers appeals to the individualist, Atomistic mindset of this nation.

In **Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lesson 3**, we draw from Carle Zimmerman's study on the Atomistic culture in the US:

When the ties within the family unit disintegrate, an obsession with individualism develops. This marks the atomistic family stage. Each person perceives himself as a *distinct unit*, disconnected from the family. *Individual rights* are emphasized, while family responsibilities are neglected. Complete and unabashed selfishness characterizes the atomistic family.

Americans lead the world in exalting individual rights at the cost of family and social responsibilities. And, as we've already shared, this egotistic worldview has permeated the Nicolaitan religious system, producing fertile soil for the Church Growth Movement.

Church Growth congregations offer a vicarious sense of belonging, with minimal personal responsibility. First, you come to the BIG colony to be entertained by professionals who showcase various aspects of their expertise during the service. The presence of all those people alongside you in the pews gives a false sense of affirmation and unity.

Then you may be invited to a smaller

### A Native American observation

*Hebraic/People Movement Approach:  
humbly shares God's truth and resources  
palms up as an offer.*

*Nicolaitan/Mission Station Approach:  
dominates by presenting facts and resources  
palms down as control.*

colony through affinity groups that further appeal to your individualist focus. Affinity groups are artificially-contrived relationships, attracting those of like interests even though spiritual growth is not a parameter. Those who take part in these smaller colonies generally have *no other contact* during the week with others in the group, such as workplace, same schools for their children, or neighborhood interaction.

Affinity colonies offer a narrow appeal as people are isolated into an activity-based framework. This approach is devoid of the holistic, extended spiritual family connectedness that Scripture reveals as God's relational plan.

(For more on affinity groups, see **Discussing How To Restore The Early Church, Lessons 23 and 33**; for more on activity-based relationships, see **Jesus In Your Home — Section 2, Segment 1: Restoration Ministries Diagram**.)

## Unbiblical Evangelism: Crusades to "Convert" the Individual

With the proliferation of the individualist mentality and the freedom of conscience to excuse sin, the Nicolaitan religious system has promoted the conversion of single individuals apart from an intent for the entire family to enter His Kingdom. This method has been used for so long that it's been taken for granted within modern Christendom. The individual is encouraged to respond to

their plea and to separate him- or herself from unbelieving family influence. But isolating oneself from family members who love that new believer can hinder spiritual growth and determination to walk “with a difference” that will be noticed by his or her family.

For the most part, individuals in both the US and Europe can convert without being ostracized by their unbelieving family. That’s because current Western thought generally holds Christianity to be valid even among those who don’t profess it themselves. But as intolerance increases and identifying yourself as a Christian costs you relationships and even certain freedoms, so will increase the number of those who deny their shallow, individualized, disconnected faith.

The individualist emphasis has also been fostered for decades by the practice of “revival meetings”. Accompanied by arousal of strong emotions, these gatherings urge individuals to “go forward” in the context of a crowd of mostly strangers. Yet when they return to their daily surroundings, they revert to their old ways.

As we addressed earlier, Evangelism Crusades also appeal to the individual’s disconnected sense of self. But today’s evangelist who acts as a drive-by speaker presenting an invitation to “come to Jesus” has no basis in Scripture. In fact, the fruit of impersonal crusades is decidedly short-lived. Studies verify that less than 10% of individuals who go forward at evangelistic crusades remain in the faith. The other 90+0% go on in their lives having been *inoculated against* a life-giving relationship with the biblical Jesus. (By their own admission, the most popular of these evangelical crusade organizations has a 96% loss rate of those who “go forward”.)

So keep this in mind when you hear that “1,000 people went forward at a crusade”. What they’re really saying is:

**“We’ve inoculated 900 or more people against Jesus!”**

This is the sad truth about the impersonal approach to sharing the Gospel. Lives aren’t changed because these individuals drift away, rootless and shriveled. Determining that “coming to Jesus” has made no difference in their life as they plod on alone, they close their mind to any other encounter with the Gospel. Mission Station approaches turn far more people *against* Jesus than they attract into His Kingdom.

The reason these ungodly methods continue to be used is because their “fruit” is measured by the *number of individuals* who go forward, regardless of whether they press on in their faith. Now that studies are revealing the paucity of “lasting fruit”, the above statistics are surfacing.

Hebraic evangelists in the Bible such as Paul, Timothy and Titus understood the importance of *relational connectedness*. They used “*The People Movement Approach*” which we’ll discuss in our next Lifebyte. These true evangelists shared the Gospel with whole families and people groups. And, just as important, they *stayed on to disciple them* until a faith community came together and elders (*zakens*) could be appointed to shepherd the extended spiritual family (see Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).

Examples in the Bible indicate how the Gospel went forth through relational connectedness. For instance, in Acts 16:13-15, Paul and Luke encountered a group that habitually gathered by the

river on the Sabbath. One woman in particular as well as those with whom she was in close relationship responded to the Good News: “*When [Lydia] and the members of her household had been baptized*”, she prevailed upon these men to stay at her home—presumably to disciple the new believers!

In Acts chapter 10, a heavenly messenger stirs the Roman centurion Cornelius to send for Peter, who was staying two days’ journey away. The righteous soldier didn’t just look to his own interest, but gathered together in eager anticipation his family and friends: “*We are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord*” (Acts 10:33).

Peter’s pattern of evangelism encompassed not only addressing this interconnected group. He also commanded their baptism and disciplined them together! In this way the new believers would have spiritual bonding for future one-another responsibility after the apostle left:

*Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people... While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message... So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days”* (vv. 27,44,48; see also Acts 16:30-34; 18:7,8; 1 Corinthians 1:16).

Several years ago we received an e-mail from missionaries in Rwanda who had investigated the Hebraic method of outreach from our article, *Hebraic Foundations to Trans-Cultural Ministry*.

These biblical evangelists didn’t follow the old Mission Station approach of entering a village and establishing a colony to reach the women and children

first. Instead, they respectfully asked to speak with the elders of the village. For three days the missionaries talked with these elders, sharing from their heart their loving concern for the people and the good news they wanted to bring to the whole village.

When the elders determined that the missionaries had come for the good of the tribe, they gathered the *entire village together* and told them to listen to the missionaries. We call this the “front door approach”. It’s direct, honest, and allows those in authority to open or close access to the people for whom they are responsible.

#### **Mission Station Approach: Use The “Back Door”**

We met with some YWAM leaders on the Hopi Reservation several years ago who used the Mission Station Approach. At the time of our visit they were conducting a conference for Hopi believers. It was immediately apparent that, outside of the congregation’s pastor and the YWAM leader, only women and children were present.

We were sadly dismayed. At lunch I asked the YWAM leader about their process for getting onto the reservation. He replied, “We bought the building and started doing evangelism with the women and children.”

We asked if they’d approached the elders of the tribe first for permission.

“No, why should we?” he responded defensively. “They’re not believers!”

I reminded him that the elders had been chosen by the tribe because of their overall concern for the well-being of all the people. Because of their responsibility

*The Mission Station Approach makes peasants out of other cultures.*

ty to and for the people it would have been appropriate and good protocol to have talked with these elders first.

The YWAM leader grew antagonistic toward us and tried to discredit our work as we traveled among Native peoples. But as we traveled through various reservations in 2000, we made sure we met with the elders first. Then we found ourselves welcomed back because we treated them with the respect they were due and offered that which we shared with our “palms up”!

By this point you’ve probably realized that the western religious system relies on methods of outreach that *separate* individuals from their relational surroundings. This approach, especially in cross-cultural missions, rouses antagonism against Christianity and builds barriers to the further spread of the Gospel.

Both the Mission Station Approach and the Church Growth Movement negate values which are represented by a person’s family and friends. Religious systems discount a *holistic* view of people that places them in their relational context. Instead, systems evaluate individuals by the way in which they might benefit the system. But this unbiblical approach repels those who are truly seeking the Kingdom. Only those who are willing to accept shallow religious expression as their “spiritual life” are willing to participate in hollow corporate performances.

The individualist Mission Station approach among Native Americans has resulted in less than 3% of the people embracing Christianity. Missionary disdain for the values of Native cultures and any redemptive ideology they may have, as well as reliance on young, educated and inexperienced missionaries,

has contributed to minimal conversions.

By viewing the Native converts as individuals who need to be removed from their family and friends, the missionaries have sacrificed much of the convert’s own evangelistic potential he could have had with his own people. Thus, attendance in Mission Station congregations on most reservations is sparse, and generally represented by women and children.

Few Native men are leading these congregations, and even fewer of these congregations are living in spiritual fruitfulness. Even worse, most congregations are dependent on the missionaries and/or on the parent mission for support.

We’ve met with a number of leaders of mission organizations that serve Native Americans. Each one sadly admitted that their decades of work had been “fruitless”. Yet, they continue to appeal for money to perpetuate their way of “doing missions”.

The reasons they refuse to change are as revealing as they are grievous:

1. The Mission Station mentality is often arrogant in its approach to other cultures. Their intellectual knowledge *about* God can cause them to believe they are superior to the very people whose ways and values differ from their own. Rather than loving the ones with whom they interact as Jesus would love, they suppress the other cultures into a Europeanized, Hellenist “Christianity” that none from the earliest Church would recognize.
2. Mission Station proponents desire (and intend) to remain dominant among other cultures. Many missions use charity to control target cultures. Ongoing dependence on the mission



produces “rice Christians” who “believe” as long as food or other benefit is forthcoming.

This methodology becomes self-perpetuating. The dependent believers are like children who are never given the responsibility of maturing in their faith and trusting Jesus to answer their prayers.

- 3. Mission Station advocates fear embarrassment if they admit they’ve been wrong in their method of outreach. This response in particular is what the mission representatives with whom we met had in common.

Many Mission Station colonies have been in the same place following the same course of action for decades, with few nationals in leadership. Again, this method demeans the dignity of the native people as they remain dependent on outside leadership and aid. And, they are hindered from developing spiritually mature men who would be prepared to lead their people.

We’ve shared this anecdote before, and it’s worth repeating:

In 2000 we were invited by an elder woman, Norma Blacksmith, to visit the Lakota Sioux reservation. She had been using our book, *Demolishing Strongholds*, with some of her tribal family. It’s one thing to meet white people who wrote a useful book, but what kind of people were we? she wondered.

Norma took us to meet the principal of a Christian school on the reservation. The “anglo” man bragged how he had quadrupled the enrollment during his five years as principal. I asked him, “How long has this school been in operation here?” “Seventy

years,” he replied.

“How many Lakota do you have on staff?” “None,” was his answer. I pointedly asked him, “Don’t you think you have a *problem*?” “I don’t think so,” he declared.

As we left him, Norma grabbed me by the elbow and looked deeply into my eyes. “*You see the problem!*” A year later the principal was removed, and we found out that Norma had become the principal of that school. Hallelujah!!!

ALL people want to be treated justly—just as *you* want to be treated. Charity *without* justice is demeaning. Justice takes into account both the needs of the people and, more importantly, their *dignity* (see Matthew 7:12).

- **How would you feel if you had to rely on charity and the leadership of outsiders, and were never treated as an equal?**

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- **Where do your tithe and giving go? How much of it goes to help people in *real need* versus keeping a religious system going? Does your money go to mission organizations that use the Mission Station approach and have been in the same place for decades with little or no native leadership?**

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**Do you know? If you don’t, ask and be a good steward with God’s resources!**

## Does God Believe In The Separation of Church and State? Do You?

The Nicolaitan emphasis on individualism and freedom of conscience that allows people to live unrighteously while calling themselves “Christian” has contributed greatly to the widely accepted maxim of separation of Church and state. So many duped Christians have accepted this separation as a God-given norm. But what they *need* to do is ask Him for His perspective.

*Democracy is the supreme testimony to individualism. Man rather than God is in control.*

Have you ever stopped to consider that what’s really being accepted within Christendom is not “separation of Church and State”, but “separation of God and State”? The God of creation, the God of all that is, has been told that He has no rule over governments. What unbiblical bunk! Think about this...

If you believe that the Pledge of Allegiance is valid, consider what you’re pledging:

I pledge Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and **to the Republic** for which it stands, **one nation under God**, indivisible, with **Liberty and Justice for all**.

### Is The US A Republic? No, We’re Not!

This nation has devolved into a *democracy* in which the human sin nature rules. In a way, democracy is the supreme testimony of individualism. This nation has become that which our Founding Fathers warned against—and no democracy in history has survived!

### Are We One Nation Under God? No!

By our own laws, our God has no rule

in this nation. Yet denial of either His reality or His rule only reveals the stubborn hardheartedness of fools:

*The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good (Psalms 14:1).*

### Is There Really Liberty and Justice For All? No!

Courts consistently deal more favorably with the rich than with the poor (see Isaiah 59:4; Amos 2:7a; Luke 11:42).

As the separation of church and state has been acknowledged by much of the religious system, the unrighteous among them are free to satisfy their sinful worldly desires because God has no rule in the State. *And*, they can “go to God’s house” on Sunday and sit in His pew, free to ignore both their conscience and His Word’s standards.

The fruit of this evil way of life? Christian pollster George Barna has found *no difference* in the moral values of those who attend services and those who don’t profess relationship with God.

This is no surprise if you’ve fled Nicolaitanism and live in the Kingdom! The importance of communal righteousness is clear to you. Jesus’s requirement to represent Him to *all people* is His gift to you, not a burden. Love for our Lord and for all those He died for compels us to reach them so that His death on their behalf will not be wasted.

• **What is your opinion about separating God and government? God and democracy?**

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