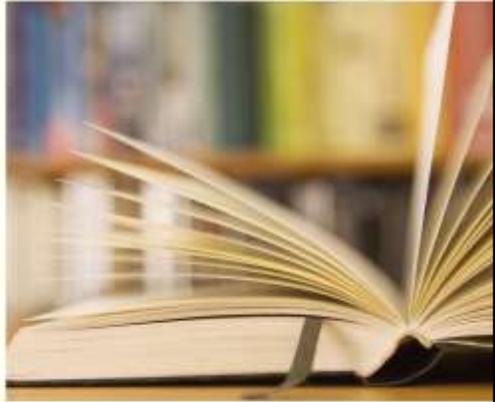




**MISSION RESEARCH:**  
GOSPEL FOR EVERY PERSON

**Sam George, PhD**

Global Catalyst for Diasporas  
The LAUSNNE MOVEMENT



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## What to Expect?

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- History of Mission Research
- People, Products and Impact of Research
- Gospel for Every Person
- Challenge of Research Today
- Researching Migration/Diaspora Missions
- Using modern tools for Missions Research



A very brief history of mission research of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and how it shaped much of the mission work in the last century. Keep your thinking cap on and stay focused. There will be lots of information to process.

## Study of Christian Missions

- Science of Missions
- Empirical, quantitative and metrical
- Biblical, Theological and Historical
- Cultural and Anthropological
- Social sciences and Informational
- Research on World Christianity



The characteristics of mission studies transformed to become science of mission, counting, measuring, statistics, forecasting and interpreting Christianity and its contours.

The inquiry of Christian mission was first Biblical, theological and historical studies.

After the Second World War, it was radically shifted to the science in general such as cultural and anthropological, resulting names of schools of world mission were changed to schools of intercultural studies.

More recently it has shifted again to sociological, informational, marketing economics and mathematical statistics.

Non-western approach to research, more holistic than compartmental or surgical.

However, legacy of Colonial mindset still exist.

Go beyond current diagnostic and clinical in approach to the history and trends of missions.

Need for more creative, anatomical approach to mission studies required.

Greater research empowerment and partnership need to be facilitated.

What is God doing in the world? Help me understand.

## 20<sup>th</sup> Century Missions Research

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- World Missionary Conference (Edinburgh, 1910)
- WCC – IMC and Ecumenical movement (Geneva, 1948)
- International Congress on World Evangelization (Lausanne 1974)
- WCC Assemblies in Nairobi (1975), Vancouver (1983), Canberra (1991), Harare (1998), Busan (2013)
- Ecumenical and Evangelical divide grew deeper
- IFMA and EFMA (Foreign vs Local Missions)
- Church and Mission agency

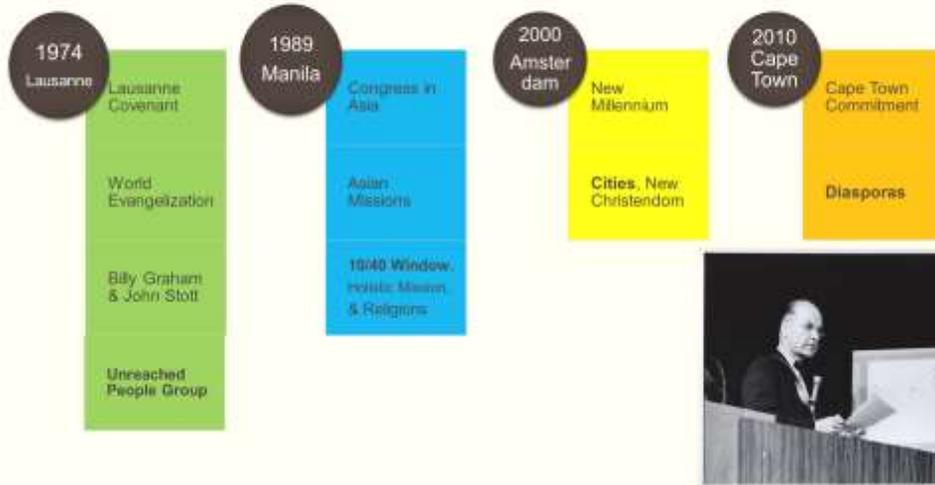


Not going back to William Carey - "An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens", published in 1792. His survey of the world, data and tables of people of the world, incredible researcher.

Or Hudson Taylor - "China's Spiritual Need and Claims", published in 1865. Used maps, graphs and statistical analysis to show that interiors of China was largely neglected by Protestant missionaries. CIM.

Major event of the last century remains 1910 WMC at Edinburgh. It was preceded by gathering of mission leaders in Liverpool 1860, London 1888 and New York 1900.

## Strategic Mission Focus Areas (last ~50 years)



Remember, the slogan of the Edinburgh conference – “Evangelization of the World in this Generation”

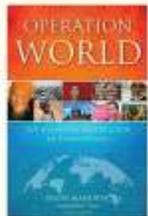
Four major events of the last fifty years that shaped mission work in recent decades. This is primarily from the perspective of the evangelical and Pentecostal world.

Also highlights some major mission thrust that came out of the events.

Of course, there were other events in Pattaya in 1980 and others. Other focus areas at 2010 like Orality, Marketplace and others.

## Contributions of Mission Research

- Operation World – Prayer Mobilization
- UPG lists, maps, images, videos & dissertations
- Joshua Project, IMB, MARC, Fuller etc.
- 10/40 Window and Cities of the world
- Missions Handbook, Journals etc.



Recent years of research significant altered the course of missionary activities. It shaped how we prayer, what we did, where we went, what we wrote, how we mobilized, mission organizations,

It brought out publications and journal articles. UPG list and adoption of mission targets, maps of 10/40 windows on our walls and adoption of regions and nations within the window. Led to creation of entities such as Joshua Project, IMB research division, MARC and Fuller seminary (Church Growth movement and other focus areas for missions worldwide)

They provided mandate for the global church and shaped all of our missionary activities.

## Field of Missiometrics

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- World Christian Database and World Christian Trends
- Centers for World Christianity
- Maps of nations, states and provinces
- Limits of Census and other data sources
- Spirit led or data driven missions
- Discerning our times (*Mission Dei*)



David Barrett & Todd Johnson. New one is under development for 2020 WCD in Boston. Atlas of Global Christianity. Geography is history now. Or at least we have known geography as a result of transnational global linkages.

Overcome distrust for numbers in religious studies since we are talking about spiritual things and we should not quantify. Some quote David's attempt to taking census in the last chapter of 2 Kings and how anger of the Lord. Sin was not taking census, but David's pride and aggrandizement. In the OT, god told many times to "take census" and we have book in the bible called "Numbers". **Men of Isaachar** (1 Chro 12;32), who knew the times and what Israel must do. Researchers are small group that decides what churches, missions and academia must do. What to focus on, what to prioritize, where to put our personnel and resources, guiding future generations, shaping the future of Christianity movement itself. At the same time, it is not to show off, triumphalism, funding diversion etc.

Math majors and engineers in mission love numbers. Let's have some mercy for folks with art, literature and history backgrounds!

## Challenges in Mission Research

- More Complex World & Missionary work
- Missions from everywhere to everyone
- More doers than reflectors or keen observers
- Limited advanced studies on Christianity
- Less resources and researchers
- Western dominance



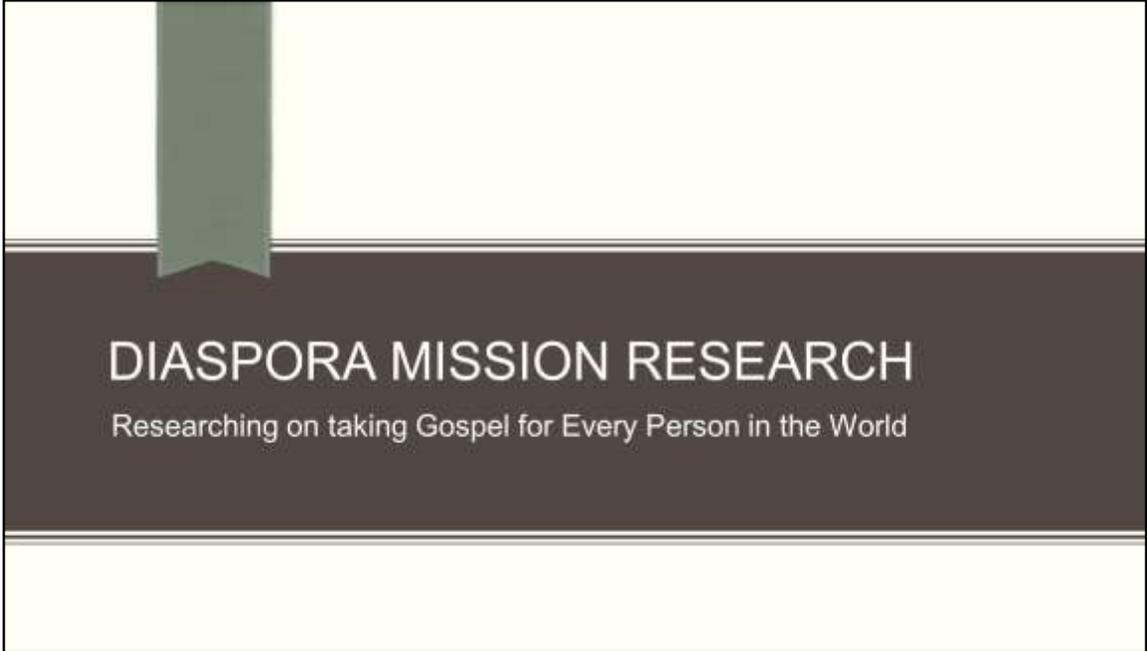
Keen eyes, sharp minds and discerning heart to see what God is doing in our world and where we should focus our limited resources, nurturing young scholars,

Stewardship of God's resources for God's work

Most research and publications still coming out of the West

Global south and majority world must set aside resources and personnel for mission research.

Write about mission work being in your part of the world and what God is doing. Overcome the reluctance to ongoing research and publish your works. Develop publications and distribution of resources. Leverage oral history and make it online. Asia and Africa need not follow the western model to establish printing press or publishing houses with lots of overheads. Just go online, use free tools and other platforms to distribute. But don't just publish for the sake of it or name recognition, but do really good research and train others.



# DIASPORA MISSION RESEARCH

Researching on taking Gospel for Every Person in the World

## Diaspora Research

- People on the Move (Megatrends of our times)
- Unreached people are out of the window
- Fast growing field of migration – war, famine, climate, economic disparity, marriage, opportunity, etc.
- Launched at 2010 Cape Town congress
- Students, Economic Migrants & Refugees
- Shooting a moving target!



Why is diaspora research so crucial and so challenging?

Just as in the first century, Jewish diaspora changed the nature and trajectory of Christianity, today's diasporas will redefine Christianity as we know it and who belongs to it in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Unreached people are no longer confined to any window... cat is out of the box. It is like shooting a moving target.

At the Cape Town Congress, diaspora was launched as a major focus area for the global church. Five years later, UN declared 2015 as the year of the migrant.

## Chinese Diaspora Project

- Chinese Christians in Chicagoland
- 100 years of the Chinese community
- Association of Chinese Churches
- Yearlong research with 4 researchers
- Survey, Interviews & Ethnography
- Thick description of the community
- Ministry strategies for coming decades



Chinese established their first church in Chicago in 1917 and I was part of their centenary celebration. Last year, the association of Chinese churches in Chicago (about 40 evangelical churches of various denominations) asked if I could help them to research the community and provide recommendations to their pastors and leaders.

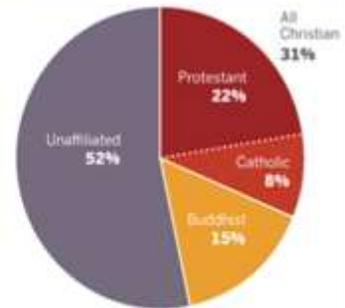
I am using US census, American Community Survey data  
Conducting my own online survey and hope to interview about 60 leaders in the community.

Semi-structured interviews with pastors, elders and key community gate keepers

## Chinese Americans

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- Largest Asian ethnic group in America
- Recent surge of students, educated professionals and business leaders. Eg. UIUC
- High conversion those who come to US
- Returnees and Missionary fervor
- Growth of Christianity in China
- Reaching new immigrants, but losing ABCs



A brief profile about the community

There are nearly 10K Chinese in UIUC

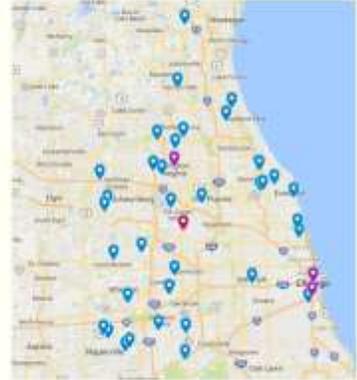
Chinese make up largest international students in the US, over 300K. Last year over 6000 of them came to UIUC, more than half of all intl students in the college and fivefold increase since 2010.

Five Chinese churches in Chicago have already decided to partner together to establish a new church in campus.

## **Scope of Research**

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- City of Chicago and surrounding 7 counties
- Over 100K in Chicagoland/80 churches
- Restaurants, businesses, Mandarin
- 20 schools, 1 seminary, TV, newspapers
- Rising students & economic migrants
- ABC and Generational divide
- China connections



## Research Plan

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- Approved Plan of research (Jan 2018)
- Leading a team 5 researchers
- Demography and Mapping Report (May 2018)
- Field work (Apr – Jul 2018)
- Coding and Data analysis
- Preliminary Report (Oct 2018)
- Final Report (Jan 2019)



12 month long research project

I am leading the project and being help by 5 researchers, four of them from the community itself.

We are using diaspora missiology framework as developed by the Lausanne Movement Diaspora team.

Advising Chinese leaders about what to focus on and what to prioritize for the next few decades.



Last year in 2017, was a turning point that is going to dramatically transform global trade. Trade routes are important to human migration.

These are trains arriving in Europe from China. One Belt One Road project of China to build high speed rail network that stretches across Eastern coast of China to all the way to Western Europe. A few trillion dollar project, largest infrastructure project on our planet. Save 8-10 days to transport good from factories of China to showrooms Billion of dollars to be saved, millions of new business will be created.

Migration scholars estimate by the middle of this century, OBOR will bring 100 million Chinese will land up in Europe. Out of which, nearly 60 million will be Christians and new 250K churches will need to be established.

In reasearching global migration and iaspora communities, we track human mobility, connectivity and fluidity, which tend to accelerates movement of people. So we keep track of technology and economies of transporation, communication and human interactions of every form all over the world.



# NEW TOOLS IN MISSION RESEARCH

Leveraging every means to understand and serve every person

## Modern Tools for Missions Research

- New Research Challenges
- Multidisciplinary approaches
- Shift from Quantitative to Qualitative
- More subjective and nuanced
- Computers and software
- New tools & Visualization
- New Research Methods



Good research provides much clarity and lead to development of effective strategy and ministry implementations

Results in new visions, birth and growth of new leaders and organizations

Multidisciplinary approaches,

Mission researchers borrow heavily from statistics, demography, social sciences

To or not to use latest Marketing research techniques and gimmicks

## **New Paradigms**

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- Migrants as Missionary, UPGs Everywhere
- Data driven approach to Missions
- Smart Phones, Social Media & Big Data
- Complexity, Heterogeneity, Scale, Timeliness
- Data Privacy, Collection, Aggregation & Reliability
- Data modelling, interpretation & Insights
- Old skills do not translate well



Empirical approaches. Do we need to measure and manage things... or leave it to the Spirit?

Harvard has a new Quantitative Social Sciences institute? Computation biology, bioinformatics,  
Insurance companies track heart rate, sugar levels, dietary and workout schedules to predict health risks?

Need for wisdom, make sense of large and complex data  
Human are better in pattern recognition than computers.

## Ethnography

- Ethnography is the systematic study of people and cultures.
- Qualitative & Mixed approaches
- Direct, sustained interaction in context
- Detailed, in-depth and richer description
- Understand culture from emic perspective
- Ministry insights and strategies emerge



It is designed to explore cultural phenomena where the researcher observes society from the point of view of the subject of the study

Participant observation and immersion. Traditionally anthropologist going to live among remote communities and studying them closely.

Surveys, Focus groups, research firms, questionnaires, field interviews etc

Present the insider's view on how life is done. Go beyond merely counting them. What do they think, how do they feel about something, what do they believe, how do people related to each other etc. We must get a closer and deeper understanding of people and their cultural contexts.

# ETHNOGRAPHY

(ethno = people; graphy = writing)

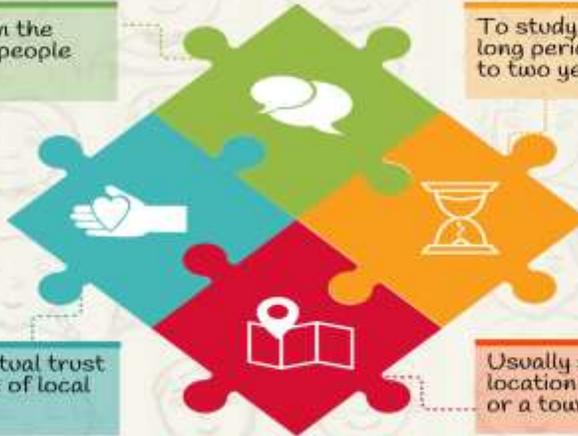
Writing about people

Must be fluent in the language of the people we study

To study daily life over a long period of time (one to two years)

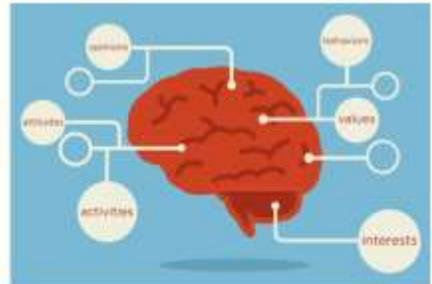
To establish mutual trust with a full range of local people

Usually stay in a specific location such as a village or a town



## Psychographic Analysis

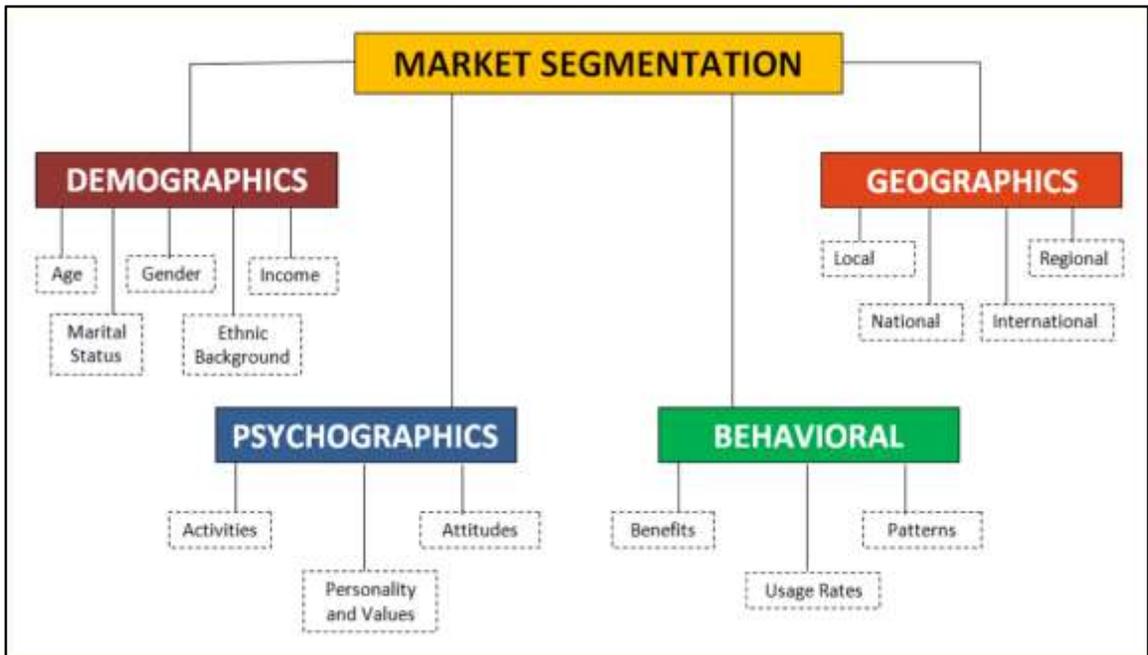
- The study and classification of people according to their attitudes, aspirations, interests and other psychological criteria.
- More complete profile of people
- Geography to Demographics to now Psychographics
- Proactive engaging with audience
- Privacy concerns

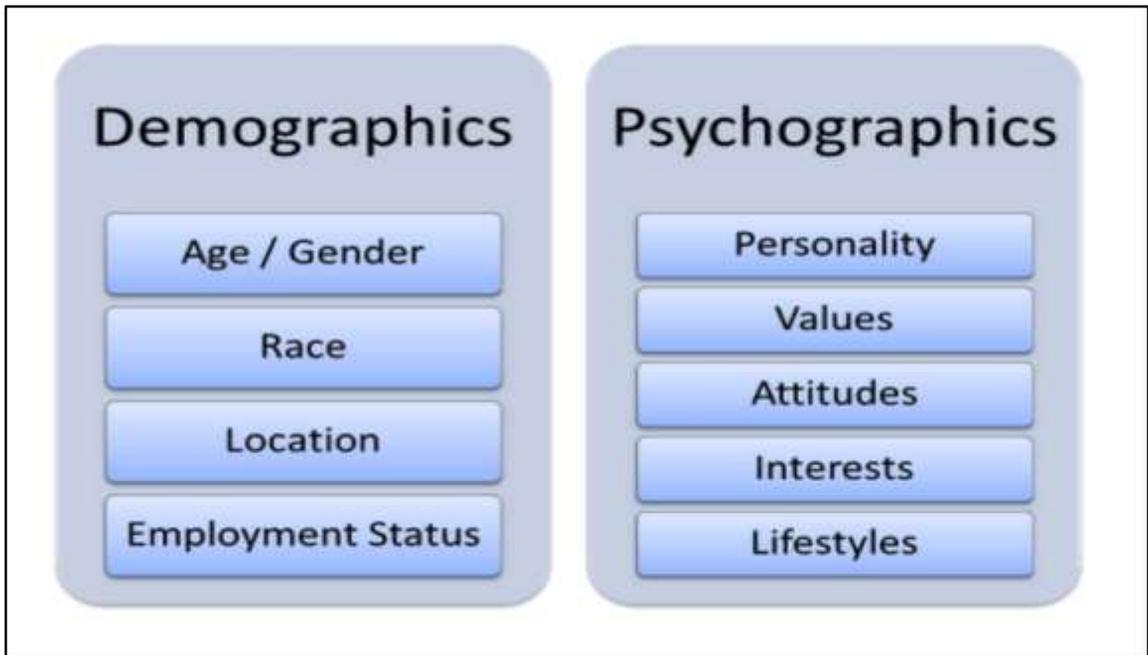


A new field of study

Recent controversy over Cambridge Analytics using Facebook data to determine political leanings of every adult in the United States and seems to be used by Trump campaign and used by Russian hackers to interfere in the US election process.

Some of the technology and social media companies like Google, Amazon, Facebook and others track our online activities...

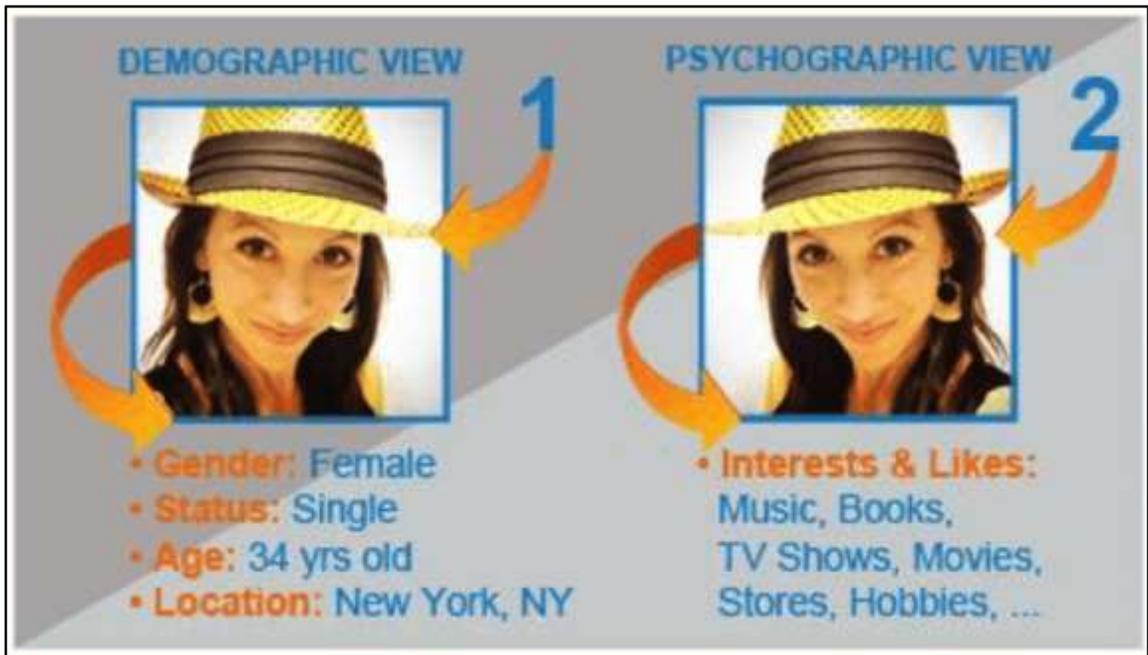




Demography provides factual information about a person – age, gender, race, household income etc.

But Psychographic – lifestyle choices, musical preference, personality traits, opinions, political leaning, brand preferences, restaurants, hotels, repeated interactions

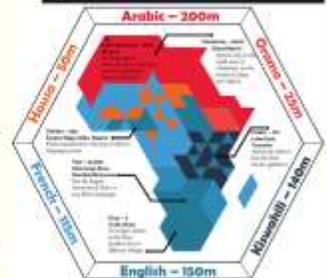
Social media and smart phones also track when do you wake up, what you do every day, where you shop, friends network, cumulative buying behaviors, spending habits, travels etc. Much more than you know about yourself.



Two different profile description of the same person

## Infographics

- Creative representation & visualization tools
- Mapping tools (Google Mymaps)
- Word Clouds, Tree maps, Cluster analysis
- Dendograms & Bubble charts
- Flows & Networks
- Storytelling with Data
- Missiographics.com



Power of images to communicate mission ideas and narratives. Translatable and far reaching An image is worth a thousand words.

A visual narrative that draws us into the realities of our world and God's global Church. Stunning graphics to illustrate the best available data on the spread of the gospel or work yet to be done or resources that need to be mobilized.

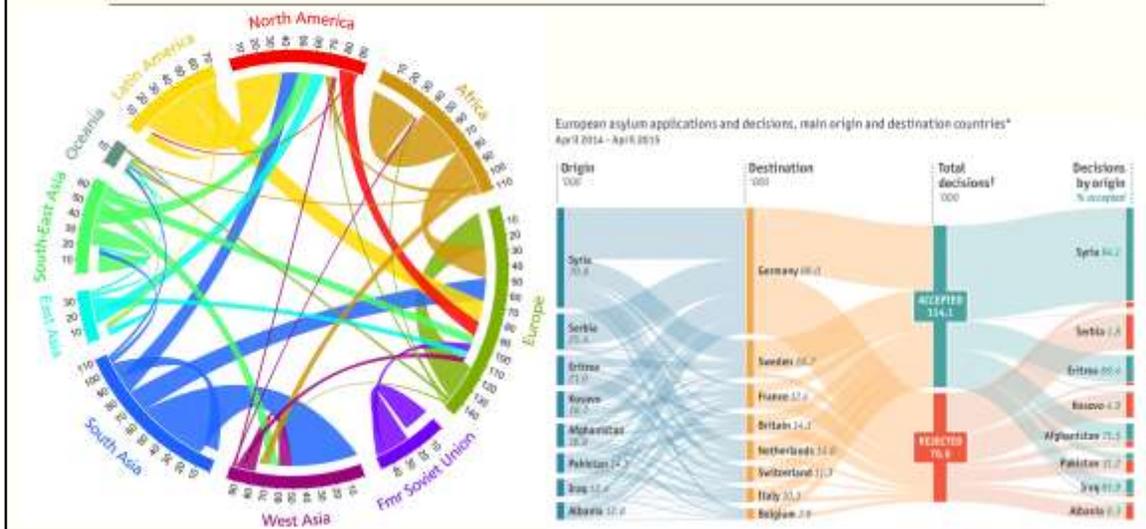
Get through overloaded clutter in the minds of our audience, effective communication tools. 30 or 50 times more effective than an article.

Six most widely spoken language in Africa (elearning project in Africa) and unreached people group

How do we tell amore compelling story

How to create soul stirring Art or music about some facts your found out of your research?

## Examples



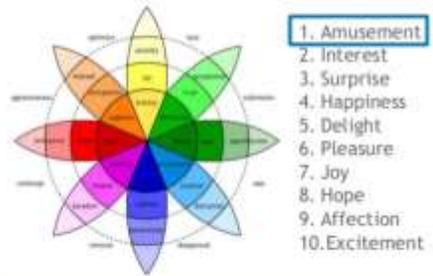
Origination and Destination of world's migrants

Who is seeking asylum in Europe and where do they come from. Who is accepted and who is rejected?



## Analytics Tools

- Tracking online activities
- "We all work for Google now!"
- Amazon knows more about me
- Power of Data and Social Media
- Analytic Software (Google/FB)
- Intelligence



Top 10 emotional drivers

IOT, access to mobile, new markets

Asoriba – is a Ghanaian mobile app for church administration and communications. An Award winning mobile app for church leaders and members.

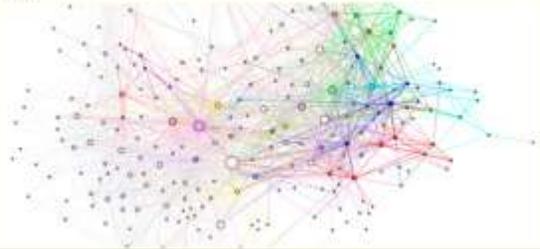
Daily devotionals to prayer requests... short teachings and videos streamed throughout the week, not just Sunday sermons.

These mobile devices are fundamentally disrupting everything we do as church. How we learn, how we interact, how we communicate, how we grow spiritually, how we serve, how we give etc.

## Network Analysis

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- Facebook - Cambridge Analytica
- Nodes, Links, Clusters, # of connections
- Effective Collaboration & Resource Mobilization
- Communication & Impact analysis
- Organization effectiveness



We are all working for Google & Facebook knows more about me than I do about myself.

Bridge, Broker, Closeness, Between, Path, Ties, lines, transactions, profiles

## Social Networks in Church & Missions

- Cell phone users
- Access to Websites and Platforms
- Social media & Cloud computing
- Targeted Messaging and Virtual communities
- Learning and training resources
- Historical interactions, preferences, leanings ...
- Artificial intelligence, Big Data



Examples – Asia-Africa partnerships (Linking Global Voices)

Unleashing the power of data to help Christians to solve

New 400 million mobile phones in the next three years.

Lending, saving and financial management

Entrepreneurs

Use it for good.

Evils of technology and media

## Calvary Temple, Hyderabad, India

- Largest church in India
- Swipe Card for members
- Pastoral care and prayers
- Smartphone Apps for content
- Member services and tracking



Remember the article by David Barrett in IBMR – Count the Worshippers in mid 1990s.

Largest and fastest growing church in India – in the tech city of Hyderabad  
About 180,000 in 2016.

[www.Calvarytemple.in](http://www.Calvarytemple.in)

## New Life Church in Taipei, Taiwan

- Smart Church
- Extensive use of technology and social media
- Virtual communities
- Leverages Youth Culture
- Draws celebrity stars and seekers
- Integrates visitors into online groups



Newlife.org.tw



## TWR-Vienna

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- Refugee Bridge
- Tracking people on the move
- 80% refugees in Europe have smartphones
- Contents in Arabic, Farsi, Pashtun, Dari
- Bible, counseling, guidance



TWR – app for refugees tracking need for Pashtun audio contents and tracking refugees where they are going.



