

## *Making Disciples in the 4-14 Window*

### Needs and Opportunities

No Children, No Future – If the church does not seriously consider ministry to children, we will lose them. Consequently, there will be no population in the church of tomorrow. The 4/14 Window is a project to reach the billions of 4 through 14 year olds around the world, and raise them up to take the responsibility of transformation of the world. Every local church leadership realizes that children are the future generation of the church; however, they have concentrated on maintaining adult-centered ministry to utilize resources for local and global ministries. This present focus of ministry to adults leaves no room for the future generation.

Since outer influences affecting children are ever increasing, the seriousness of children's ministry is obvious, even in the mission field. In the midst of such church ignorance regarding child education within the church, other religions, especially Islam, has been more aggressive with its strong religious identity.

In Jesus' parable of the four different types of soil (Matt 13:3-8) the good soil might be an illustration of children's hearts. Before Satan contaminates the good soil of youth, the seed of the gospel message should be planted. Before it is too late, churches of the world must take serious consideration of holistic ministry to children; otherwise, the "Evil One" will plant his weeds in their hearts.

There are a few areas to be seriously considered in order to make things happen, and at the forefront is proper education ("5 S").

1. School Establishment: School Education with a Christian worldview
2. Sunday Schools Revitalized : Sunday Schools in the local church
3. Social Concerns Extended: Holistic concern targeting various problems experienced by children
4. Sample Programs Introduced: Various educational sectors in the mission field
5. Stimulating Programs Popularized: Design of campaign to bring children's interest to the spiritual realm

### Reasons for Ignoring Children in the Local Church

1. Lack of consideration as being resources benefiting churches
2. Children are not counted in the population of the church in view of church growth.
3. Lack of awareness of establishing the future population for the "Kingdom of God".
4. Education of children is costly

5. Ignore the people who are involved in children's ministry
6. Full concentration on current matters with no room for projection of the future of church ministries.
7. Ignorance of the possibility of the spiritual growth of children

#### The Need for This Movement

1. No more delay in taking action for children's concerns both on the mission field and in local churches.
2. Looking for partners around the world who have the same vision networking
3. Bring the attention of local churches to children's ministry in prayer and involvement
3. Awakening Christian educators to the need for aggressive outreach to children by a Christian world view

#### Potential in Children's Lives

##### Biblical Perspective:

1. The Bible clearly shows the possibilities of spiritual growth of children through Jesus' childhood (Luke 2:40-52)
2. Jesus accepted children in order to teach and train His disciples (Mat 18:2,3)
3. Jesus identified himself with children (Mat 9:36-37, 48, 18:5)
4. Jesus fed people through a child's dedicated item (John 6:9)
5. God recognizes children as the potential to transform the world (Mat 21:16)

##### Psychological Perspective:

1. 4/14ers are most receptive in spiritual impact
2. When a child accepts Jesus Christ the fact will remain his/her whole life
3. Piaget's theory for kids aged 4/14.
  - a. 4-7 years old: Intuitive stage – Thinking in this stage is more logical, although governed more by perception than logic
  - b. 7-11 years old: Concrete Operations – Local thought can now be applied to specific (concrete) situations which involve real objects
  - c. 12-15 years old: Formal Operations- Local thought can be applied using abstract concept and examples with symbols substituting for real objects.<sup>1</sup>

##### Social Perspective:

1. Outer influences in the environment and society interrupt them to draw their attention to the Christian faith.
2. Children who lost their human rights around the world
3. Children can be potential resources to transform the world when proper educational opportunities are given.

---

<sup>1</sup> Anthony, Michael J. Foundations of Ministry, Baker Books (1997), P.77

## 5 Areas of Possible Ministry

1. Founding of Educational Institutions (School Establishment)
  - a. Surveying model schools with excellent Christian worldview
  - b. Manual design for the establishment of schools
  - c. Indigenous principles apply to national schools and Christian curriculum design
  - d. Establishment of Teachers Colleges
  
2. Stimulation of Sunday School Movement (Sunday Schools)
  - a. Recognition of model churches and children's ministries
    - Brooklyn children's church in USA
    - Garden Flower Church in Korea
  - b. Conducting Sunday School teachers' seminars
  - c. Challenging Seminary Curriculum focused on children's ministries
  
3. Holistic Care of Children of the World (Social Concern)
  - a. Recognition of model organizations with holistic approaches to children
  - b. Survey of prospective holistic ministry models
  - c. Seminars directed at successful holistic ministries
  - d. Investigating possible indigenous means of support
  
4. Outreach to Children on the Mission Field (Simple Programs)
  - a. Equipping Missionaries for Children's Ministries
  - b. Research development of various kinds of children's ministries
    - Model presentation of preschools and kindergartens located in church buildings or model of establishing a church for preschool
  - c. Developing specialized schools for children (English, Tae Kwon Do, etc).
  
5. Stimulate A Child Evangelism Campaign (Stimulation Program)
  - a. "Ariba Ninos" and "Ariba Jovenes" movement in Spanish communities
    - Model campaign of Rev. Yang Chang Keun in Paraguay
  - b. "Power House" model - 4/14 Window New York, New York.
  - c. Child Evangelism Campaign in Timor, Indonesia.

Eun Moo Lee, Ph.D.  
Gen. Director/Global Educational Network, Inc.