

It's not so different

We know context matters, but is mission really so different if we are *here* or *there*?



Ben and Petra are passionate about journeying with K people as they explore who Jesus is and what that means in their context. They have served in the Silk Road Area since 2016.

Growing up in churches in Australia, I had a very distinct understanding of what intercultural workers did. They went to far off lands, loudly and proudly proclaiming the kingship of Jesus, while also introducing people to principles of justice and mercy. Pioneers like Hudson Taylor and Amy Carmichael were the basis for this.

While I could rejoice in all they achieved for God, it also felt a little bit unattainable to be a part of that kind of work. The reality though, is that we are *all* able to be involved in God's mission. In fact I would say that we are all called to be a part of it, whether it's in Mozambique, the Silk Road Area or Australia.

Here are three foundational principles we've learnt that are applicable in whichever context you're in too.

1. It's God's Mission

As Christopher Wright puts it, "Mission is not ours; mission is God's." With this in mind, we remember that God is already at work in the places we find ourselves. One of the joys that our team has experienced recently has been a group of local K believers contacting us.

Our teammates David and Eliza have been invited to journey with this group in different ways. It is so encouraging for us all to know that there are local people here who are pursuing Jesus and seeking to get to know Him more. The Spirit has clearly been at work in this place.

There are also more subtle indications of God being at work in our community too. These are sometimes little comments that our friends make that indicate they are searching for God.

The challenge for us is to recognise where God is at work, and then to proactively partner with Him. To ask the hard questions that need asking. Where can you see God at work in your community?

2. It has to be Wholistic

We recognise that proclaiming the good news of the risen Jesus occurs in more than words. It includes our actions too.

As an Occupational Therapist, Petra has been able to use her skills to work with people who live with disability in our local community. These are people who are often rejected or ignored by their community. **By coming alongside them, showing them they have value, Petra is able to demonstrate the love of God.**

We see this in Australia as well when followers of Jesus provide breakfast to students who come to school hungry, teach English to Asylum Seekers or demonstrate the value they place on a person by committing to a weekly surfing catch up. Mission is more than just words. It's living out what it means to be a citizen of a different Kingdom.

3. It Takes Time

In an age where we like instant gratification, one of the most important principles for us to remember is that evangelism takes time.

Mrs K has been a friend of our team for many, many years. She can tell us all of the idiosyncrasies of the different Australians who have lived in our town, all of whom sought to introduce her to Jesus.

After about 10 years of this faithful witness she started to take steps towards Him.



Introducing Suzanne!
Suzanne is a candidate
and the newest member
of the Silk Road Area
team. Connect with her:
www.globalinteraction.org.au/Suzanne

In doing so, she recalled watching a former Global Interaction Team Leader wash the dishes and remembered being amazed by this counter-cultural demonstration of humility. She recalled watching the different ways in which Australian families related to each other. The steps she is taking towards Jesus now are built on the long-term investment of many different people.

The challenge to us all is to be planted, invested and alert to where God is at work. We do all these things to point people towards Jesus who is the way, the truth and the life.

