

Indigenous Missions:

To produce something that is native; not exotic.

INDIG'ENOUS, a. [L. indigena, supra.]

1. *Native; born in a country; applied to persons.*
2. *Native; produced naturally in a country or climate; not exotic; applied to vegetables.*

The average missionary today believes an indigenous mission is merely starting a church that gets a local leader when he walks away. While this has the appearance of being indigenous, is it really?

What makes an indigenous work indigenous?

A work is indigenous

- when the work is viewed by those who are local as being their own.
- when a missionary is seen as one who gathered and trained instead of gave and sustained.
- when the people have been trusted, trained, and loved to a place of dependence on God instead of America.

How do we get to have indigenous works?

I. The answer depends on our thinking;

A. Our national pride and political placement in the superpowers of the world affects us.

1. We believe that we are superior to all in education, culture and background and we must go and train the poor nationals in heathen lands.
2. Our culture of self-reliance, independence and organization naturally gets imposed upon the people to whom we serve.

B. We must begin with the thinking

1. these are my brethren, not my slaves.
2. I am here to bring them the gospel like someone brought it to me.

C. We must avoid:

1. Planting works that are dependent on outside help.
2. Our typical racial and religious pride. We believe we are superior.
 - a) We have approached missions from the point of the wealthy man who pitches a dime in the cup of the poor.

b) We should have approached it from the husbandman who casts seed for the dependence of his family.

II. The answer depends on my listening to God for a location to serve:

A. Consider the places Paul went:

1. The Holy Spirit led. Acts 16:6,7
2. Paul spoke of regions more than cities.
3. By reaching 2-3 centers of influence Paul had stated he had reached a province. Romans 15:19,23
4. It seems that the places Paul went were centers of
 - a) Roman administration,
 - b) Greek civilization,
 - c) Jewish influence and
 - d) Commercial importance.
5. Summary: He was led as God opened the door. Wherever he was led he found a center of influence.

III. The answer depends on my leadership:

A. Doing everything for them and do everything with them.

1. We have taught, baptized, and shepherded them.
2. We have managed their funds,
3. We have ordered their services,
4. We have built their churches,
5. We have provided their teachers.
6. We have trained and ordained.
7. We have done everything but offer them equality.
8. We have done everything for them but not with them.

B. If indigenous churches are our goal, then we ought not to use slavery to be the training for liberty and autonomy.

IV. The answer depends on my outlook:

A. The way I see my calling: Romans 10:1

1. He had an undeniable priority.
2. He had an undying passion.
3. He had an undiminishing prayer life.
4. He had an understanding of people.
5. He had an underlying purpose.

B. The way I see others: (those in my commission)

1. We have treated them as children and not the brethren.
2. We have made ourselves indispensable.
3. We have taught our converts to turn to us, and not Christ for guidance and finances.
4. We have become the Holy Spirit to them. Does he only speak to us and then us to them?

5. We shelter them from disaster or ruin and think we are doing the best thing for them.
6. We have become enablers in missions instead of emancipators.
7. Paul's terminology:
 - a) Fellowhelpers
 - b) Fellowlaborers
 - c) Beloved
 - d) Brother
 - e) Saints

C. The way I see my commission:

1. Make all your teaching simple so those who are your learners can grasp it, practice it and pass it on.
2. When you organize keep it such manner that it can be understood and maintained. The test of any organizing is naturalness and permanence.
3. In matters of finance, the church must control and maintain their business.
4. Instill a sense of mutual responsibility. The church is responsible for itself.
5. Believe in your people, allow them to make mistakes and learn from them.