

Fourteenth Edition

The State
of
Church Giving
through 2002

*Excerpt:
Chapter 8*

John L. Ronsvalle

Sylvia Ronsvalle

empty tomb, inc.
Champaign, Illinois



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by John and Sylvia Ronsvalle
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empty tomb, inc.
301 N. Fourth Street
P.O. Box 2404
Champaign, IL 61825-2404
Phone: (217) 356-9519
Fax: (217) 356-2344
www.emptytomb.org

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*Helping Church Members to
Care Effectively:
Yoking Map® Twenty-Year Update*

HIGHLIGHTS _____

- Church members care about local and global need as demonstrated by their response to emergency situations.
- The resources exist to solve, rather than just cope with, many of the life-threatening problems faced particularly by those in other areas of the world.
- Church members want to know what their money is doing when it leaves the congregation.
- There is a need for a logical approach if church members are to be challenged to increase giving to missions.
- One strategy, first offered in 1984 and now presented in a twenty-year update, is the idea of a Yoking Map. This strategy distributes resources based on the location of physical and spiritual needs around the globe.
- Whether church members choose to increase giving to help their neighbors is a basic moral choice.

NARRATIVE _____

Church Members Care. Hurricane Andrew. Famine in Africa. Response to 9/11. Church members are part of the public outpouring of concern and financial aid when life-threatening emergencies are documented by the media.

Yet, as the analysis in chapter 1 of this volume demonstrates, giving to Benevolences as a portion of income has been shrinking since the late 1960s. The category of Benevolences

includes ongoing missions and crisis responses, as well as denominational administration and seminaries.

Although church members are generous in response to emergencies, those extraordinary needs have not been enough to encourage sustained, ongoing giving to the category of Benevolences on a par with their increasing incomes. Unlike Congregational Finances, which has been increasing as a percent of income since 1992, Benevolences continued to decline through 2002.

Various factors may explain why that decline continues. However, church members' willingness to give when the need is immediately clear suggests that the decline is not due to church members not caring about their neighbors' needs.

Resources Exist to Solve Need. The resources exist to solve, rather than just cope with, the life-threatening problems faced particularly by those in other areas of the world. As discussed in chapter 6 of this volume, if church members had given at a congregation-wide average of ten percent in 2002, there would have been an additional \$152 billion available to address domestic and global need.

As noted in chapter 7 of this volume, various sources find that giving to religion remains the largest single charitable category. The category of religion receives its support from a broad base of the American population. That fact suggests that there would be great potential if each of those members would increase the portion of income given for missions.

Yet, on the whole, the vision for such dynamic additional giving does not seem to be evident in the church. Meanwhile, other charitable categories attract large gifts. For example, in 2003, 22 living donors gave \$2.1 billion dollars to charity. The majority of the gifts went to colleges and universities. Foundations, museums, and libraries also benefited. Only one religious organization was among the recipient institutions receiving gifts from this list of largest donors.¹

Church Members Want to Know What Their Money is Doing. Church members will respond to documented crises. However, Benevolences giving in general is declining. That decline may be connected to the fact that church members like to know what their money is doing when it leaves the congregation. A corollary hypothesis is that the more information that church members have, the more they will be willing to invest a larger portion of their incomes in missions.

In *The State of Church Giving through 2000*, a proposal for a Web-based missions feedback system was presented.² With such a system, denominations could provide project-specific information to their donor congregations.

¹ Nicole Lewis and Matt Murray, "Big Giving Makes a Comeback," *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, February 19, 2004, pp. 8-9.

² John Ronsvalle and Sylvia Ronsvalle; "Two Solutions for the Vacuum of Leadership in the Church in the U.S."; published October 2002 by empty tomb, inc. in *The State of Church Giving through 2000*; <<http://www.emptytomb.org/1lscg00.pdf>>.

In *The State of Church Giving through 2001*, the argument was made that a country-by-country needs analysis could assist church members.³ Denominations could establish the need for increased giving by providing specific information on needs in other countries to their members.

In both proposals, the goal is to help the church member act on the desire to know what his or her donated money is doing once it leaves the congregation. Negative giving trends could be reversed if church members were asked to invest in the goals they understand, and also perceive to be consistent with the tenets of the religion they practice.

Need for a Logical Approach. The fact that only one religious organization received any portion of the \$2.1 billion given by 22 major donors in 2003 suggests that church leaders do not have a large enough vision in which major donors can invest. Church buildings and administrative endowments are always available, but did not attract any of these large gifts. In addition, the church's support from its broad base of members shrinks as a portion of income.

To date, in spite of the affluence that has spread throughout American society for over 50 years, and the demonstrated willingness of church members to respond to defined needs, there has been no broad-based national movement launched to impact global needs in a logical fashion. Part of the problem in confronting church members about the integration of their faith and money is that national church leaders do not have a plan for success.

For example, most denominations are still committed to the idea of the unified budget, as discussed in chapter 6 of this volume. Over the last half of the twentieth century, as general affluence increased so that the majority of the U.S. population had more than required for basic needs, no plan was developed by denominational leaders to supplement the foundational unified budget with a successful effort to mobilize expanded mission giving on a par with church members' increased resources.

The numbers suggest that congregational and denominational leaders do not really expect to reach the tithe. A congregation-wide average of ten percent would provide both congregations and denominational administrations with far more money than they could reasonably need. Few if any congregations or denominations make clear statements about the level of their administrative needs, with a promise that anything above that defined amount will be given to mission outreach. Without a stated plan for success, members continue to give at a maintenance level, limiting congregations and denominations to present levels, since no greater need has been defined. If extra money is given, members give it for a specific purpose, such as a building campaign, a particular endowment, or a special offering with limited goals. Since the vast majority of members give a limited amount, rather than an amount in keeping with their increasing incomes, the church loses market share. The basis for that statement is the continued decline in giving to Benevolences as a portion of income.

³ John Ronsvalle and Sylvia Ronsvalle; "Reversing the Decline in Benevolences Giving: A Country-by-Country Needs Analysis."; published October 2003 by empty tomb, inc. in *The State of Church Giving through 2001*; <<http://www.emptytomb.org/scg01chap8.pdf>>.

Church leadership could serve members by providing a broad strategy to carry out Biblical commandments to love the neighbor as oneself.

A 20-Year Update of the Yoking Map. One logical approach to global need was developed in 1984. The basis was rather straightforward. The details and sources of information can be found in Appendix D of this volume.⁴ Following is a brief overview.

One can know the number of historically Christian church members in each county in the United States, as well as the per capita income in that county. With this information, the difference between present giving levels and potential giving levels can be calculated for each U.S. county. The result was defined as Resource Units.

Need Units can be calculated for every nation that posted less than the global average per capita Gross National Product (GNP), and/or less than 50% self-professed Christians as a percent of population. Because of the greater expense associated with addressing physical needs, the per-capita GNP factor was weighted ten-to-one with the percent Christian factor.

The resulting Need Units in other nations could be matched with the Resource Units among church members in the U.S. The result was first published as the Yoking Map® in 1984.⁵

The first 1984 version of the Yoking Map has now been updated in the present volume, based on more recent information.

Figure 22 presents the Yoking Map: The United States, with the names of the nations yoked with each county printed in or near each state. Appendix D-1 presents a U.S. county-by-county listing, including the Yoked Country for that county.

Figure 23 presents the Yoking Map: The World, with the names of the yoked states printed in or near each nation's border outline. Appendix D-2 presents a list of each nation and the U.S. state(s) yoked with that nation.

Twenty-Year Changes. Global reality changed somewhat from the 1984 Yoking Map to the 2004 update. Table 24 compares the Need Unit allocations in 1984 and 2004.

The following observations can be made from Table 24.

The allocation of Need Units place the word and deed need of each nation and region into relative relationship with the rest of the globe. The percentage of Need Units allocated to each nation was based on how the percentage of Christians, and the per capita GNP factor for that nation compared to other nations defined with needs. It is not being suggested that the potential Resource Units of Christians in the U.S. are adequate to solve every problem in every nation. Certainly, the continued and expanded missions involvement of Christians in other nations is of vital importance as well. What the allocation of Resource Units of U.S. Christians among the Need Units of nations around the globe is meant to accomplish is a fair distribution of the potential additional Resource Units that could be available if Christians in the U.S. chose to increase giving to a congregation-wide average of 10%.

⁴ The Yoking Map and U.S. county and nation mapping is also available online at <<http://www.emptytomb.org/yoking.php>>.

⁵ John and Sylvia Ronswalle, *The Hidden Billions: The Potential of the Church in the U.S.A.* (Champaign, IL: C-4 Resources, 1984).

Table 24: A Comparison of 1984 and 2004 Yoking Map Need Unit Allocations

Region/Nation	1984 Need Unit Allocation	2004 Need Unit Allocation
Africa	13.67%	16.54%
Asia East, without China	1.75%	0.87%
Asia East, China	35.07%	28.08%
Asia, Southeast	11.38%	9.72%
Asia, South Central, without India and USSR/CIS nations*	8.40%	8.36%
Asia, South Central, India	24.43%	23.91%
Asia, Western	0.75%	2.14%
Europe and USSR/CIS	0.43%	5.80%
Latin America	4.01%	4.47%
Oceania	0.11%	0.12%
Total	100%	100%

* CIS is an abbreviation for Commonwealth of Independent States, including former USSR countries.

In the 2004 Yoking Map update, compared to the 1984 allocation, the two largest allocations of Need Units continued to be to China and India, the nations that had the two largest populations on the globe. While China decreased in the proportion of its Need Units, India stayed about the same.

Africa received the next largest allocation of Need Units, increasing from 1984 to 2004.

A large change occurred in Europe, and former USSR nations, now formed into the voluntary Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In the 1984 Yoking Map, Albania, Portugal, and Romania were the only European countries that qualified for the Yoking Map. Based on the information at the time, the entire USSR had 0.31% of the Need Units.

With the breakup of the USSR, and the freer flow of information, the picture was quite different in 2004. Russia alone received 1.81% of the 2004 Need Units, more than the entire USSR in 1984. Many of the Eastern European countries that were formerly within the power sphere of the USSR qualified for Need Units in 2004. The other former members of the USSR, now voluntarily part of the CIS, also were included in 2004 as individual nations. Meanwhile, Portugal no longer qualified for inclusion in 2004.

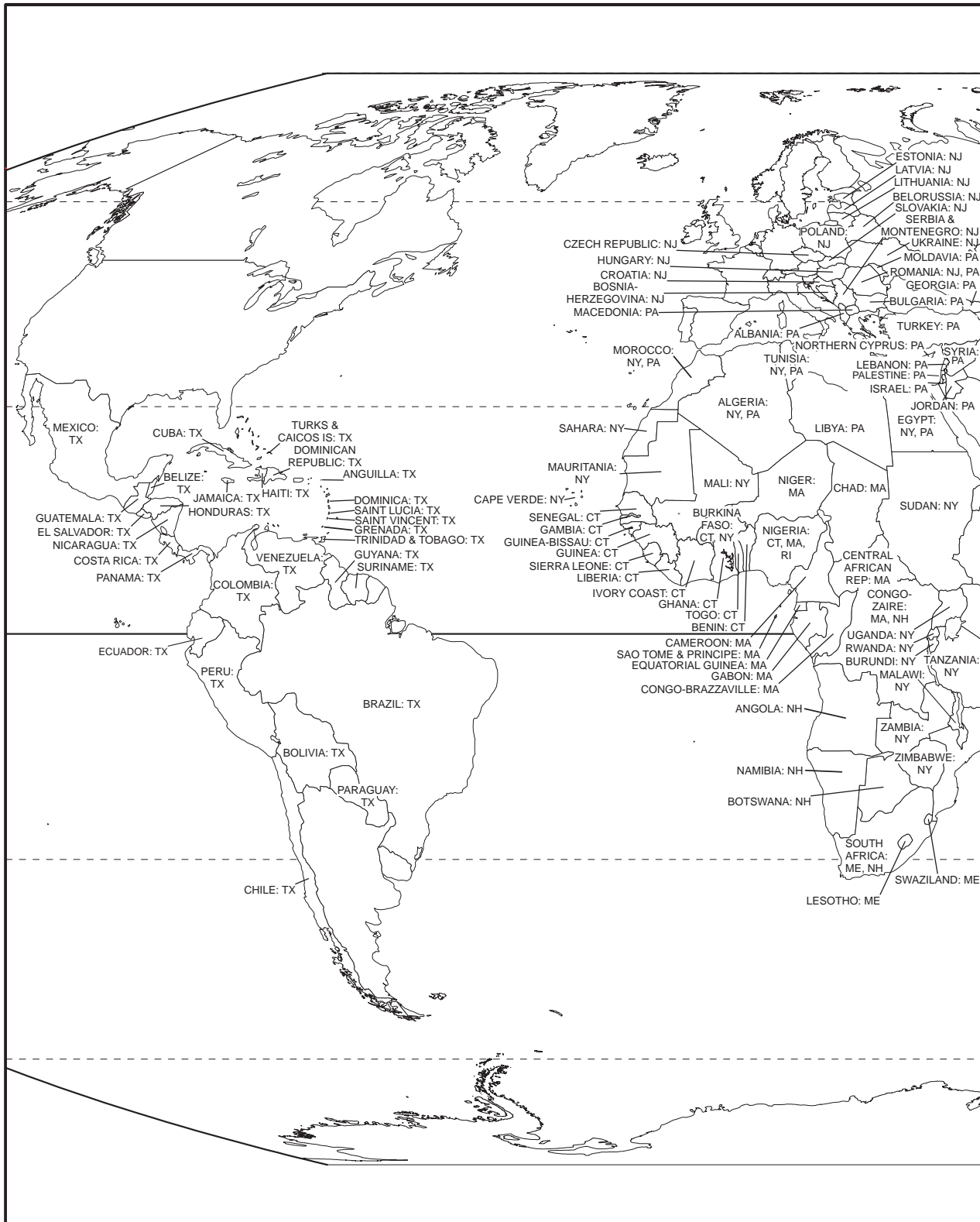
Why the Need for a Strategy? The allocation of Need Units among various nations is intended to provide an outline for a fair distribution of potential additional giving among Christians in the U.S. Why would such a system be necessary?

First, some strategy is necessary to assist Christians in approaching global need. For example, when the Episcopal Church decided to embrace the 0.7 percent solution discussed in chapter 6, leaders of that movement came to another awareness. While leaders became convinced that the church structure had the relationships to provide a network of development in partnership with poor parishes, they began to realize that they had little information

Figure 22: Yoking Map: The United States



Figure 23: Yoking Map: The World



Yoking Map Twenty-Year Update



Source: This volume, Appendix D

about their partner churches on other continents. Further, many of those who were involved in development activities were not communicating their goals among themselves. The Rev. Jay Lawlor was part of the “Cambridge Consultation” that helped design the Episcopal initiative. He said, “Without a concrete way to show capacity and link the efforts of various concerned individuals and organizations it would not be possible to organize coordinated development efforts that could effectively include individuals, the Church and development visionaries.” The response of the leaders was to work on a “capacity mapping” project to outline relationships between those in the U.S. and specifically those in Africa.⁶

As this communion decided to increase its investment in global need, leaders realized there was also a need for coordination and specific information in order to make the most effective impact.

A letter received by the authors expressed a similar perspective, from an individual point of view. A reader, who was introduced to the Yoking Map concept through a book by the authors, wrote, “This was the first time that I have heard of a plan to eradicate poverty around the world which assigns responsibility in a rational way.”

Facing a world of need can be both frustrating and overwhelming. A system in which each person and congregation, in coordination with the denomination, can do their part may provide church members with a rational reason to increase giving in order to impact need through their churches.

Comparing Missions Allocations. A review of current mission allocations also demonstrates a value of coordinating efforts. In addition to the Yoking Map Need Units analysis, two other sources of information about mission allocations are available. These figures were compared with the Need Units developed for the Yoking Map in an effort to see if resources were being applied effectively to the needs.

One source was the *Mission Handbook* published in 2004 by the Evangelism and Missions Information Service at Wheaton (IL) College.⁷

The other was a Catholic News Service report of a survey of Roman Catholic parishes by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.⁸

In the *Mission Handbook*, information for 690 Protestant ministries in the U.S. was available. The *Mission Handbook* provided information about the focus of these mission agencies, and in what nations the missionaries they support were serving. However, the *Mission Handbook* noted that 28.7% of the missionaries were sent to “Unspecified” areas. “It is apparent that agencies are becoming increasingly reluctant to indicate countries, and in some cases even regions, where they deploy their personnel. Security concerns are the primary issue . . . ”⁹

⁶ Jan Nunley; “Episcopalians Resolve to Embody Gospel Values through Millennium Development Goals”; published by Episcopal News Service, 1/5/2004; <<http://www.edow.org/news/ens01052004.html>>; p. 3 of 4/12/2004 3:19 PM printout.

⁷ Dotsey Welliver and Minette Northcutt, eds., *Mission Handbook, U.S. and Canadian Protestant Ministries Overseas, 19th Edition* (Wheaton, IL: Evangelism and Missions Information Center, 2004), pp. 13, 31.

⁸ A Catholic News Service article appearing as “Hundreds of Parishes Help Poorer ‘Twin’,” in *The* (Peoria, IL) *Catholic Post*, April 25, 2004, p. 1.

⁹ Welliver and Northcutt, p. 32.

Therefore, the region focus of the 690 agencies was considered the most meaningful comparison available for the present purposes. The sum of the “agencies per region,” with some of the 690 agencies reporting activity in more than one region, was 1,528, including the 42 “Unspecified.” In that case, 97% of the agency activity was attributed to a specific region of the world.

The survey of Roman Catholic parishes about “twinning”—the supportive relationship between one parish in the U.S. and another parish in either the U.S. or in another nation—provided an overview of Catholic parish-based focus. Of 5,831 parishes in the survey, 1,350 responded that they assisted another parish financially. The survey provided a summary of the global regions for the parishes that “twin” with parishes in other nations, which may serve as one measure of Roman Catholic mission focus.

Table 25 compares the allocation of Protestant agency focus, the Catholic twinning focus, and the Yoking Map Need Units.

The following observations can be made from Table 25.

The Yoking Map Need Units were defined by a per capita GNP factor, and the percent Christian in any given nation’s population. The largest area of need was Asia, with 73.08% of the Need Units present in those nations. In contrast, 20% of the Protestant agencies and 6% of the Catholic twinning parishes focused on Asia. Thirty-one percent of the Protestant agencies were active in Latin America, and 25% in

Table 25: Allocation of U.S. Protestant and Roman Catholic Mission Resources and Yoking Map Need Units

Region of World	As Percent of Total		
	Number of US Protestant Agencies Per Region	Number of Roman Catholic Parish “Twinning” Per Region	Yoking Map® % of Need Units Per Region
Africa	15.38%	8.00%	16.54%
Asia	19.63%	6.00%	73.08%
Latin America	30.89%	83.00%	4.47%
Europe and CIS*	25.33%	3.00%	5.80%
Oceania	6.02%	**	0.12%
Unspecified	2.75%	—	—
Total	100%	100%	100%

* CIS is an abbreviation for Commonwealth of Independent States, including former USSR countries.

** Oceania is included in Asia.

Europe and the CIS nations. The largest focus for the Catholic twinning parishes was Latin America, with 83% of the parishes involved there.

Africa represented 17% of the Yoking Map Need Units. Fifteen percent of the Protestant agencies were active there, while 8% of the Catholic parishes had “twinning” relationships with parishes there.

Allocation of missionaries presents a different picture, as seen in Table 26. The information for the Protestant agency-supported missionaries is listed in two columns. One column includes U.S. personnel, and the next lists the total number of missionaries supported by the U.S. agencies, whether the missionaries are U.S. citizens, from the country served, or from another nation. This information is again from the *Mission Handbook*.¹⁰

¹⁰ Welliver and Northcutt, p. 32.

The *U.S. Catholic Mission Handbook 2004* is the source for information about the location of Roman Catholic missionaries in regions around the world.¹¹ The numbers were developed by the U.S. Catholic Mission Association through a survey sent to 668 mission-sending organizations, combined with other sources of information. The numbers in Table 26 include only missionaries from the United States serving in other countries, although the report itself also included numbers for missionaries who serve in the U.S. as well.

The allocation of Protestant missionaries, both U.S. personnel and the combined percent of U.S., national and other personnel, to “Unspecified” does not allow a clear measure of focus for the assignment of these missionaries. However, even if all the missionaries in Unspecified areas were active in Asia, the percentages would still be below, although closer to, the Yoking Map Need Units for that region. That is, instead of 20% of the U.S. missionary personnel being active in Asia, the figure would be 44%, combining the Asia and Unspecified percents. For the category of all missionaries supported by U.S. agencies, instead of 33% of the U.S. missionary personnel being active in Asia, the figure would be 62%, combining the Asia and Unspecified percents. That number is closer to the 73% figure for the Need Units for Asia. In this case, the Protestant personnel assigned to Latin America, Europe and Oceania would still be at higher levels than the Yoking Map Need Units would suggest for those regions, with the allocation of personnel to Africa lower than the Need Units would suggest.

The Roman Catholic personnel were present at a higher level in Africa than the Yoking Map Need Units would suggest. While the Roman Catholic personnel allocation in Asia was lower than the Need Units would suggest, the personnel assignment was higher in Latin America and Oceania than the Need Units would suggest for those regions. The Roman Catholic assignment of missionaries was on a par with the Need Units level for Europe and the CIS nations.

Table 26: Allocation of U.S. Sponsored Protestant Missionaries, Roman Catholic Missioners, and Yoking Map Need Units

Region of World	As Percent of Total			
	Number of US Protestant Agencies' US Missionaries Per Region	Number of US Protestant Agencies' Supported Missionaries Per Region	Number of Roman Catholic Missioners Per Region	Yoking Map® % of Need Units Per Region
Africa	14.72%	11.78%	20.30%	16.54%
Asia	20.39%	33.14%	22.82%	73.08%
Latin America	20.65%	13.51%	46.54%	4.47%
Europe and CIS*	15.10%	10.35%	5.65%	5.80%
Oceania	4.79%	2.50%	4.69%	0.12%
Unspecified	24.35%	28.72%	—	—
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

* CIS is an abbreviation for Commonwealth of Independent States, including former USSR countries.

¹¹ *U.S. Catholic Mission Handbook 2004* (Washington, DC: U.S. Catholic Mission Association, 2004), p. 54.

Applying Additional Mission Funding. The present level of activities among both the Protestant agencies and Catholic parishes and agencies should certainly continue uninterrupted. There would be no reason to suggest that current mission activity should be curtailed or redirected.

However, based on the Yoking Map Need Units, any additional resources that develop through increased church member giving for mission needs should be systematically focused as a whole by church members in the U.S. on areas with the greater need, particularly Asia and Africa.

One additional piece of information for church members in each county in the U.S. is provided in Appendix D-1. That is, church members could choose to increase giving and apply a suggested amount to the task of helping, in Jesus' name, to stop the preventable deaths of children under five around the globe. The potential levels of giving, and the number of child deaths that church members in a given U.S. county could prevent, are presented. While it is difficult to imagine how one could help stop over ten million child deaths each year, the task might be more accessible if the goal were a smaller number within a given nation. Information on how the child-death-prevention numbers were calculated is included in the Appendix D introduction.

The Yoking Map would not only provide for a logical distribution of resources. It would also allow a regional synergy to develop among church members. Consider that people generally root for the team where they live, whether on a professional or college level of sports. In the same way, Christians from different congregations and even traditions in a geographic area could begin to develop a camaraderie as they focus more of their mission attention on a shared region of the globe.

Further, the idea of the Yoking Map could be combined with other strategies to engage church members at a level on par with their potential. One example of a dynamic challenge that church leaders could present to a group of very wealthy individuals, that would also encourage the church's broadly based membership, is the denominationally-led matching idea presented in *The State of Church Giving through 2000*.¹² A group of wealthy Christians could be asked to donate \$1.25 billion a year. These funds would be available to match increased missions giving through congregations, shared, in Jesus' name, for international needs. With the doubled money, church leaders could have an additional \$2.5 billion available annually to help, in Jesus' name, stop two-thirds of global under-five child deaths. That amount is half the estimate figure needed to stop some 20,000 child-deaths a day.

The additional funds could be applied in the areas of most need through a strategy such as the Yoking Map. With a logical map for success, church members could better navigate the journey of faith.

Increased Missions Giving Is a Basic Moral Choice. In a 2004 report, Bread for the World asserted that hunger both in the United States and the world are "political because solutions are attainable with the proper leadership."¹³

¹² Ronsvalle, 2002, pp. 98-101.

¹³ United Methodist News Service article appearing as "Beating Global Hunger Requires Political Leadership, Report Says," in the Illinois Great Rivers Conference *The Current*, April 30, 2004, p. 4.

The lack of political will may be a function of the lack of personal investment on a voluntary basis. It is poor political science to ask people to vote to do something that they will not also do voluntarily. If church members were investing increased portions of their incomes, through their congregations, in domestic and global need, there would no doubt be an overflow effect that supported a demand for supportive political leadership for those goals as well. Great social movements in the U.S., including women's rights, child labor laws, prison and mental health reform, and abolition, began among committed religious people and then spread to the society as a whole.

It may not be a coincidence that what is perceived by many as a decline in the general morals of American society has been accompanied by a general lack of engagement, on the part of church leadership, of the relationship between faith and money.

James Dobson, nationally recognized founder of the Focus on the Family ministry, wrote in 2004 that "Barring a miracle, the family as it has been known for more than five millennia will crumble, presaging the fall of Western civilization itself."¹⁴

In a Catholic News Service report of a 2004 visit in Rome with U.S. bishops from Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin, John Paul II was described as saying "A firm foundation in faith must lead to living a holy life, which in turn must lead to a credible, public witness of the Christian faith and its moral demands." The same report quoted Chicago Cardinal Francis E. George, as talking about the need "to affirm our profound commitment to the mission Christ gave the church and to do so at a time when the church in the United States is in great danger." The report stated that Cardinal George described increasing difficulties for Catholics in light of the sex abuse scandal in the U.S. The report went on, "Cardinal George also said the church 'is further weakened by her inability to share a public conversation that would enable people to understand the Gospel and the demands of discipleship.'"¹⁵

One national Southern Baptist Convention leader launched a "national voter registration drive called 'I Vote Values.'"¹⁶

All these leaders recognize that church members are being confronted with significant moral choices, and that the church ought to help guide them as they choose. What religious leaders in general ignore is that church members are already voting their morals with their dollars. Lifestyle expenditures, including what is or is not given to the church, represent choices being made by church members. Giving as a percentage of income is really the equivalent of a thermometer that measures commitment to certain values.

Further, giving to the church is one of the few moral behaviors that the church can document about members. Most other personal morality choices are done away from church

¹⁴ James Dobson; "In Defending Marriage—Take the Offensive"; published 2004;

<<http://www.gospelcom.net/actsi/dobson.htm>>; p. 1 of 5/26/2004 10:19 AM printout.

¹⁵ A Catholic News Service story by Cindy Wooden appearing as "Pope to U.S. Catholics: 'Speak Courageously'," *The (Peoria, IL) Catholic Post*, June 6, 2004, p. 1, 8.

¹⁶ Eileen E. Flynn; "Religious Battle Lines Drawn Over Election-Year Politics"; Cox News Service article published July 27, 2004; <http://www.news-journal.com/news/content/shared/news/stories/HOLY_WAR_0727_COX.html>; p. 4 of 7/29/2004 2:48 PM printout.

premises, and often in private settings. In contrast, most churches keep records of donations. So whether a person gives a lot, a little, or at all can be documented as a reflection of moral commitment.

However, church leaders have most often chosen to ignore the moral dimension of giving. In the present Age of Affluence, when materialism and consumerism have been more dominant than ever before, the church has been generally silent on the personal ethics of money and faith. With giving at 2.6% on average, whoever is able to attract the other 7.4% of the not-yet-given tithe will be able to command the imaginations and the very hearts of church members, defining their view of morality.

In 2004, well-known pollster George Gallup raised some concerns about the state of religion in the United States. “Surveys reveal an unprecedented desire for religious and spiritual growth among people in all walks of life and in every region of the nation,” he was quoted as saying. Gallup expressed surprise that “few pastors ever ask members—person to person, face to face—about the status of their faith and their personal lives.” Although surveys show that people continue to express interest in religion, Gallup observed, “If we don’t talk about the whole dimension of sin, repentance, grace and forgiveness, what is the faith all about? What are we doing?”¹⁷

Is it reasonable to expect people to practice moral behavior away from church if church leaders are silent about a lack of personal moral behavior, evidenced in giving patterns, while members are at church? If the church opts to ignore or be silent about giving patterns, will members feel it is necessary, or learn how, to integrate their faith and behavior patterns in other areas of their lives?

A Strategy for a Large Goal. The value of a plan like the Yoking Map is to establish how additional resources can be applied most effectively. However, in the absence of a vision among church leaders, such a plan remains an academic exercise. A tool like the Yoking Map has the most value if it is accompanied by a commitment on the part of national and local church leaders to challenge church members to greater faithfulness on behalf of a hurting world through increased missions giving.

If church leaders will not work to challenge church members to increase giving to a congregation-wide average of 10%, and direct that increased giving to missions, then the potential Resource Units will never be available to apply to the current Need Units. In that case, mission activities will likely stay at their present maintenance level, or perhaps even decrease.

As 20,000 children die each day around the world from preventable poverty causes, many in areas where they have never had an opportunity to hear of God’s love through Jesus, and as evidence mounts that the church in the United States weakens, one conclusion will have to be drawn. Without a vision, the people will perish.

¹⁷ Terry Mattingly; “Gallup on Statistics and Discipleship”; published July 28, 2004 9:31:03 AM; <<http://www.t matt.net>>; pp. 2-3 of 7/29/04 printout.