



PATHWAY TO MISSIONS

Connecting, training and resourcing your missionary journey

The Great Mission Challenge

Leader's Guide

PAPA BARRY

On a Missionary Journey

Prepared by Jeremy Steel

CRC Young Adults: The Great Mission Challenge

Introduction:

This is a 7 session study guide that can be used to challenge young adults in your local church to greater mission involvement. It is based on the book *Papa Barry* by Pastor Barry Silverback²- Chapters 1 to 7. Our prayer is this - 'may you be inspired to be a missionary...and be open to the Holy Spirit speaking and challenging you about your own life'³

A guide for leader's in facilitating each session

Each session involves participants pre-reading the chapter of Pastor Barry's book if possible.

Groups are encouraged to read through the key comments made by other youth who have read the book, before exploring the key themes.

Each session is designed for a 45mins - 1 hour time frame.

The structure for each session is:

- Short team building exercise **or** any feedback from previous session **or** what was a standout for you in the chapter you read this week.
- Prayer for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
- 7-8 min overview of key points on the topic (using written comments on the content for each chapter).
- Discussion/reflection on some of these key thoughts. You might not have time to discuss all the questions, so choose those you think most relevant to the group.
- Close in prayer for the Lord to speak to us about all that he wants for our lives.

² *Papa Barry* by Pastor Barry Silverback, CRC Churches International Seaton, South Australia: January 1, 2014

³ Quoting Pastor Bill Vasilakis in the Preface *ibid* p3

Session 1: His Master's Voice

1. Lead in with a game as a team builder/icebreaker.
2. One thing I'm hoping to gain from this mission challenge is ...?
3. Prayer for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
4. Read through the following comments that some others thought were significant from this chapter of the book.

Comments on content:

- Just loved that, even when Ps Barry didn't know Jesus, God was planting a seed (emotional response). Jesus is pursuing people everyday, and He is stirring and working in people's hearts and spirits before we even know it. Who knows what Jesus has been preparing?
 - God is at work - there's a sensitivity and softness to the Gospel. Sensitivity to the spirit of God.
 - Even if Ps Barry didn't understand who the lyrics were about in *The Stranger of Galilee*, there was something in his soul that knew about God. God saw goodness in him (and sees it in all of us). The things of this earth will grow strangely dim - understanding that nothing else can truly satisfy you other than Jesus.
 - It is God who initiates; the first move starts with Him. God uses people to speak about Him - we just need to be sensitive and humble to give up our self-oriented goals. It is not until we acknowledge we are broken that we become whole in Jesus. If I want to be in the mission field, I need to die to myself. It's not about me, it's about Jesus who saves me from the darkness of sin.
 - Pastor Barry talked about **transformation**, which is the outward evidence of inward change. There was an immediate change in Barry's life through Jesus. He gave up smoking, swearing, and drinking.
5. For discussion:
- How do these comments compare to your initial thoughts from the chapter you have read?
 - **God is calling, will you respond?**
 - In what ways have you heard/experienced God calling you to be on mission?
 - Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
 - What does this tell us about our unique mission in life as Christ followers?
 - **The challenge to follow.**
 - Read John 6:60-68 - Peter's response to Christ, when many others were leaving.
 - What does it really mean to be a disciple of Jesus?
 - **Share your story. Everyone has a story.**
- What is your story of responding to Jesus and how could you share it with others? How has Jesus changed your life?

Discuss in pairs and practice sharing your story - giving feedback to each other.

6. Close in prayer for the Lord to speak to us about all that He wants for our lives.

Study Questions that can be used to continue discussion or for further study between sessions.

- How can we make more time for God to be the main focus in our lives - being filled by Him and then having the capacity to reach out and support others?
- Papa Barry said 'I enjoyed the adventure of the unknown and the unexpected". Does this statement resonate with you? Maybe explore why /why not?

Chapter 2: The Broken Biscuit

1. One thing I did in response to last week's session was ...?
2. Something I'd like to share about this week's reading is ...?
3. **Pray** for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
4. Read through the following comments that some others thought were significant from the chapter.

Comments on content:

- Love the idea of the broken biscuit, yielding to Jesus and understanding I can achieve nothing without the power and strength of Jesus.
- The picture of the alabaster jar in Mark 14 - it needed to be broken for something to come out.
- Our best work comes out of surrender. Having sensitivity to the slightest touch and whisper. Anything we say and do matters.
- We need to surrender to God's plan for our lives and surrender to the things of this world to be truly fruitful and happy.
- Brokenness and surrender are needed for God to mould us.
- Stay hungry and stay humble.
- Heart- allow God to break our hearts with what breaks His.
- The dealings of God in my life break me - through circumstances and difficulties - and bring me into brokenness. This is needed in order to be poured out for others.
- Could achieve nothing in my life without God. "I needed to be a broken vessel". (Mark 14:3)
- Ps Barry's realization that Ps Leo Harris was just a normal person - anyone can be used by God and filled by the Holy Spirit; God doesn't have favourites.
- Ps Barry was able to do so much good in PNG as a result of humbling himself before God and being broken. Because he was broken, he continued to give praise to God instead of his own strength.

5. Discussion:

- Do you have any comments on these comments, for example: which comment is a stand out for you, or are there any comments you have trouble understanding?
- In what ways was Pastor Barry 'broken'?
- How do you think being broken might relate to the *New Creation* message and being a blessing for others?
- What do you think 'humbling yourself before God' might mean?
- 'We can achieve nothing without the power and strength of Jesus'. What do you think this actually means?
- Reflect on these verses Ps 127:1a TLB and 1 Peter 5:6 TLB - how are these evident in Ps Barry's experience?
- In what ways does Ps Barry's story challenge you?

6. **Close in prayer** for the Lord to speak to us about all that he wants for our lives.

Study Questions that can be used to continue discussion or for further study between sessions.

Do a scripture study on 'brokenness'. There are many scripture verses about brokenness. Do a search and reflect on what 4 or 5 of these scriptures tell you about brokenness.

Do a scripture study on 'humility' and reflect on what 4 or 5 of these tell you about how the Lord sees humility.

Think about the stories of missionaries who gave it all - Watchman Nee and Jim Elliott and the team. How do the stories of these people's lives inspire you? What do you find challenging about their stories? What do you find encouraging?

What would you like Jesus to break or change in you? (Pray for the Lord to reveal what He would like to change within you).

What does the way you live your life reveal about what is most important to you?

"If you can't see very far ahead, go ahead as far as you can." Does this statement have any meaning for you in your current circumstances?

Chapter 3: If this is Missionary Work... (resilience)

1. Any feedback from your reflections last week?
2. Something I'd like to share about this week's reading is ...?
3. The thing that has impacted me most so far during this study is ...?
4. **Pray** for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
5. Read through the following comments.

Comments on content:

- "I didn't become a pioneer because someone prayed for me or because I had a special gift. It came through hard work..." (p 37)
- Ecclesiastes 9:10 "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your strength."
- God is always with us when things are hard. "God - if it cannot be easier then please help me to be stronger". We need to take the opportunities which God gives us.
- I never said no to any job that was offered to me, and if I did, I knew I needed spiritual attention - the work needed to happen, but it was just a means to an end. It's all about attitude. People are more likely to listen to what you have to say if your words back it up.
- Pastor Barry trusted in God's protection including dealing with difficulties such as not having hospitals when they needed them. He showed us that there can be reality checks in mission work. Just because God is guiding you, it does not mean it is going to be easy. It is so important to keep going; God does provide, but as a missionary you need to be doing all that you can for God. The rough conditions he was living in was secondary; the goal and priority of saving souls was the priority that kept him going.
- Missionary work is very hard, but God reveals his presence when we are pushed to the limits. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 12:9 "My grace is sufficient for you. For my power is made perfect in weakness." But it is worth it!
- Just because it hasn't happened yet, doesn't mean He won't do it.
- It showed the importance of prayer and intercession.
- He recognised that he needed to listen to God - really listen.
- Just because God is with you does not make it easier - we need to ask God to make us stronger and trust in HIM.

6. Discussion:

- Pastor Barry said "I'm going Home" – Look at this story on p39 of the book.
 - *What happened that stopped him from giving up?*
 - *Have you ever felt like giving up? What did you do/what did the Lord do?*
 - *Why might people give up and walk away from being a disciple of Jesus?*
- Why would anyone get involved with missionary activity if it is filled with difficulties?

- Read Isaiah 40:28-31 - Have you ever used these verses as 'a go to passage' when faced with difficulties? Or are there other passages that you go to for encouragement?
- What connections might there be between hard work and growing as a disciple of Jesus?
- How might we fan into a red hot flame this passion for others to know God?

7. Close in prayer: Maybe pray together in pairs for anything that was raised for each one in this session.

Study questions that can be used to continue discussion or for further study between sessions.

When things go wrong in your life or difficulties arise, what is your most common first reaction? (e.g. anger, blaming others, procrastination, despondency, depression, hopelessness).

How do you move beyond these initial responses?

Look at the lives of George Muller, William Carey and David Livingstone. *How did they trust God despite the difficulties of following God's call on their lives?*

Chapter 4: Beginning of Bethel (God gets the Glory)

1. Last session was pretty heavy going, any feedback from your reflections last week?
2. Something I'd like to share about this week's reading is ...?
3. **Pray** for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
4. Read through the following key comments on this chapter & discuss as you go.

Comments on content:

A. The priority of prayer

Pastor Barry relied greatly on prayer and his influence teaches us to trust the Lord. Pastor Barry taught us the following key points about prayer.

- Prayer undergirds everything that we should do.
- Prayer shows your dependence on Christ. Where there is little or no prayer, self-reliance and self-sufficiency will develop.
- Strategic prayer is greatly important. We need to pray and wait on God.
- You can never pray too much!

Pause & discuss: Which of the above statements challenges you most right now?

B. Waiting on God is important as we do not always get what we want in our timing.

Pastor Barry's example also shows us this. Prayer and waiting on God's deliverance was his compass. He trusted deliverance would come in time and just kept working. He worked while he waited. He didn't beg God to deliver him but thanked him that the answer was on its way. He was always sure of God's provision. Prayer and waiting was what matters.

Pause & discuss:

- *In what ways is it difficult for people when they don't get what they want in the time frame they want?*
- *Can you think of any characters in the Bible who struggled with waiting on God or who demonstrated this life lesson of waiting on God?*

C. Trusting the LORD is a key to your faith and ministry.

- He was able to church plant with so little; no people, no money - just sat by the fountain and just made connections. A man and his wife just went and started something.
- God is so faithful and does so much with us - with a long journey - God can do anything.
- Rather than being resentful that they had to start with nothing, they just applied what they started with and what they learnt to build the church and build up other churches.
- Spiritual oppression will come when we stand up for God - we need to be aware of it and be praying into it.

Pause & discuss: *Discuss the above points and how they relate to your story and experience.*

D. Building connections with people.

Pastor Barry used the following steps:

- He spent time sitting around waiting for people to talk to.
- He was prepared to be humble in the service of God - not just wanting the big things.
- He was prepared to do the small things.
- He recognised the importance of building relationships.

Evangelism was a passion for him - building relationships, making connections, taking the time, and sowing the gospel.

He saw the Ministry as simply 'serving'- serving Christ and serving people.

He was prepared to wait, but also continuing to sow without expecting immediate reaping. He continued to cast the bread upon the water, even when you don't know the direction. He demonstrated the importance of not letting our own assumptions and prejudices get in the way of relationships.

Pause & discuss *your thoughts on these points raised*

- *How do you go about building connections with others?*

E. Never despise small beginnings.

We need to know His voice and promises and step into it. We all have an opportunity. As Pastor Barry stated "we were just an ordinary group of people who believed in Jesus."

Pause & Discuss: *How willing are you to start small? Can you give any examples?*

6. Close in prayer for the Lord to speak to us about all that he wants for our lives

Study Questions that can be used to continue discussion or for further study between sessions.

What do you think it means to pray strategically?

Billy Graham, Gladys Aylward and Polycarp are a few missionaries who prayed and committed themselves to the work of God.

- *What can you find out about their lives and the influence prayer had on their journey in serving God?*

Can you share when you might have experienced opposition to yourself or others when being faithful and relying on God?

Pastor Barry was prepared to do the hard work and the “small” things for the kingdom, not just the glorious ones but the cleaning and the driving of the bus.

- In what ways does this challenge you?
- How does this reconcile with the expression “that’s not my gifting”?

In what ways is worship so important in keeping us strong when we are ministering to others?

People often can’t handle God’s silence. When have you had to wait for a promise from God or an answer to prayer? How did you respond to that?

How do all of these matters result in God getting the glory?

Chapter 5: Trust and Obey - God's purpose and the miraculous.

1. Something I thought more about from last session's study was ...?
2. Something I'd like to share about this week's reading is ...?
3. **Pray** for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
4. Read through the following key points people raised from this chapter.

Comments on content:

A. Understanding your part in ministry

- The privilege of partnering with God in His wonderful work.
- God does his part, and we do our part. Don't mix it up. Let God do what only God can do and you do your part. "Can God grow potatoes?" Yes – But man does his part."
- So many miracles - and spiritual warfare - but God has the victory!

B. Trust and Obey

- Ps Barry looked back on the series of challenges in his life, and he could see that these were tests.
- He was willing to undergo physical discomfort for the sake of God's work.

C. Faith

- "Stories are simply the miraculous workings of God and not of me. My part was trusting and obeying God and stepping out in faith. He did the rest."

D. The Supernatural...

- There was an expectation in Biblical days of the miraculous and Pastor Barry saw this in his ministry as he leant in and relied on God.

E. God Heals today.

- A lot of miracles led to first time decisions to follow Christ. Ps Barry had doubts with the chief in the fierce village - but God was so gracious with his doubt and fear, and God could do so many things through him.

F. Deliverance

- This chapter highlighted the prevalence of spiritual warfare - the provision of resources and humanitarian work is important, but people need release from spiritual bondages.
- Pain travels: the lady had scales on her eyes because of the curse. Ps Barry prayed for the curse to be broken.

5. Discussion

- From the above key points, what impacted you most?

- Which of these areas do you struggle with most: Understanding your part in ministry? Trust? Obedience? Faith? Believing for miracles? Healing? Deliverance? Why might this be?
- What do you think it means to step out in faith? What do you think might prevent people from stepping out?
- How might we live more in the zone of 'expecting the unexpected' in our daily walk with God?
- Daniel 11:32 says in regard to attacks from the enemy
 - "... but the people who know their God will display strength and take action" (NASB).
 - "But the people who know God will firmly resist him" (NIV).
 - "But those who know God and obey Him will be strong and fight back." (ERV).

What does this verse tell us about surviving spiritual warfare and helping others to be released from bondage?

6. **Close in prayer** for the Lord to speak to us about all that he wants for our lives.

Study Questions that can be used to continue discussion or for further study between sessions.

- Jesus instructs us in Matthew 6:19-24 about storing up treasures in heaven and treasures on earth. Why might it have become so difficult in the western world to obey Jesus teaching on this?
- How do you use God's truths revealed in scripture in regard to having faith, trusting and obeying, expecting the supernatural, deliverance, & spiritual warfare?
- "Whole Villages and Communities came to Christ at the same time" Can you imagine what revival is like? Think about the work involved in harvesting the fruit and not letting it fall to the ground to rot! In what ways can we seek after this and commit to the harvesting?
- What a place to be in, where you have to trust God entirely! Do you know and believe that God can handle all situations and is in control, even when you cannot see it?
- What do people perceive as the cost of following Christ in the 21st century?

Chapter 6: Knowing Him in difficult times

1. Any feedback from your reflections last week?
2. Something I'd like to share from this week's reading is ...?
3. **Pray** for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
4. Read through the following key points people raised from this chapter.

Comments on content:

In this chapter we see **how to stay strong despite opposition.**

Tough times will happen - we can have confidence that God is good even when we cannot see why things happen.

- God is good all the time.
- Dealing with difficult times.
- Having wisdom which comes from God.

Every believer needs to strengthen their inner world to be able to handle the outer world.

A. Firmly convinced that God is Good

Read the following verses.

Hebrews 12:2 *"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

2 Timothy 2:3 *"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus."*

James 1:12 *"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him."*

1 Peter 4:16 *"For if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear the name."*

- that's the attitude Ps Barry had. He knew he was blessed. It was so moving, it would have been so easy to want to go home.
- When you go through difficult times, you go back to what you know. Go back to what you know - God is good, faithful, just, etc.
- Strong on the inside, you'll be strong on the outside.

God is good and fair, true, and right, All-Knowing, just, loving, caring and kind- even when we cannot see all the evidence of this. God is our strength when difficult times come.

B. Expect to face difficult times.

Proverbs 10: 25: 'Storms come and the wicked are blown away but honest people are always kept safe'.

Parable of the Seed/ Sower - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

- Proverbs 4:23 *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”* Guard your heart above all else - ultimately what is in us will come out, and that will help us either be victorious or not.

Strengthen your inner world!

- Being able to properly grieve but also being able to praise God.

C. Trusting God’s timing is a sign of wisdom.

- Ps Kila’s wife (Geua) still preaches in the church - the losses of all these other preachers and pastors are in this story. So much tragedy and loss, yet they are still there.
- When you know people’s stories - the pastors and people in PNG - you can see why they are so wise.

God’s timing is always right - even if we cannot tell this at times - press in with God and look to Him. Stay grounded in the truths of God.

5. Discussion:

- **Share some of your responses to the above key points and scriptures.**
- What do you think are some keys to “knowing Him” more and more?
- How are you building strength for difficult times?
- Why is not giving up in difficult times so important?
- Some people do not stay the course. What can get in the way of what is important? How might we avoid this?

6. **Close in prayer** for the Lord to speak to us about all that he wants for our lives.

Study Questions that can be used to continue discussion or for further study between sessions.

Do your actions show trust in God even when your circumstances are tough, or do you want to ‘spit the dummy’?

Good and bad things happen to all people - how do we respond to this and how does this affect our faith?

‘Every believer needs to build and strengthen their heart and mind to be effective in helping others’. Why is this so?

Why is it that daily prayer and a focus on what I know rather than on what I don’t know can be helpful for our faith?

Pastor Barry gave examples of riots, death of people, churches burnt, false accusations in his life. How did he stay calm even when accused wrongly? What can this teach us?

Chapter 7: Seek to Sow

1. This our last session together. What has impacted you most from this series?
2. Something I'd like to share from this week's reading is ...?
3. **Pray** for the Lord's presence and guidance in this session.
4. Read through the following key points people raised from this chapter.

Comments by others on content:

A. Be outward looking

- It is not all about you.
- Pastor Barry was always looking to plant churches. He ensured the church in PNG was radical, not just centric. Bethel Centre's love for reaching others was such a sign to God's powerful work.
- His constant communion with God enabled him to show such love and compassion. I can start to learn to do that now.
- Ask not what God can do for you but what you can do for the Lord - giving is better than receiving. (*Have you ever asked the Lord this question?*)

B. God works with all people – including you.

- With all the places Ps Barry went to, God set out the right person before he even got there. Ps Barry was so obedient to what God was doing - trusting in God fully.
- It's not about what you bring to the table - it's that you come! God will bring the provision.
- One man's involvement has drawn a level of deep engagement - drawing others into that.
- The body of Christ - the people in these countries were also so obedient to God's promptings.
- God can use all people.

C. Ask God what is next.

- 'I would often pray strategically' - pray with a searching heart. We can ask God to show the plan, instead of just worrying about it.
- God spoke to Ps Barry about what is impossible - not about how you start but continuing and expanding the word of God.
- Pastor Barry listened to the voice of God - word for PNG and then wider in the world.
- Do what God has placed within your heart to do.

5. Discussion:

- Share some of your responses to the above key points.
- What do you think 'seeking to sow' involves?
- What do you think it means to pray strategically?

- **Taking your next step – developing a heart and a vision for the nations.**

Read slowly through The Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20

- What does Jesus Great Commission tell us about the purpose of the church and your role in that purpose? (break it down and explain each part of the statement).
- Now link this to the latest CRC 5-year strategic directions.
 - EACH ONE REACH ONE
 - EACH ONE TEACH ONE
 - EACH ONE RAISE ONE
 - EACH ONE CONNECT ONE
 - EACH ONE PLANT ONE

6. PRAY together, expecting to hear from the Lord as you reflect on this...

Your mission challenge:

What is the Lord saying to you about your next steps (both individually and as a group) in partnering with what God is doing:

- in your life - at your school/work/in family - sharing/caring, being available.
- in the church - serving/ministry development.
- in the wider world - showing and sharing God's love.

Maybe during the next week, continue to pray and write down on the enclosed sheet what you think the Lord is saying to you.

7. Conclude:

Go around the group & share:

- One step I'd like to take next is ...
- One step I'd like to see us as a group take is ...

Ever thought about?

- Going on a mission's trip? (Overseas or cross cultural).
- Participating in Pathway to Missions? (seminar or intensive).

Talk to your pastor or youth leader about it & contact Pastor Jeremy Steel.

My next step (s): For personal reflection and response

Pray for God's will to be done in my life.

This is not meant to be a one - off prayer but ongoing prayer regarding the following matters. As the lessons from Pastor Barry have shown, waiting for God to move, not leaping ahead and taking things into our own hands is an important part of learning to be a disciple of Jesus. But at the same time playing your part and continuing to sow.

Think in terms of the CRC 5-year strategic directions and how you can outwork this.

- EACH ONE REACH ONE
- EACH ONE TEACH ONE
- EACH ONE RAISE ONE
- EACH ONE CONNECT ONE

This is what I think I am hearing from the Lord about my mission challenges:

About my life	Sharing/ caring/ being available to others
• At school/work	
• In my family	
• The future	
• friends	
In the church	
• serving	
• ministry development	
In the wider world	
• community	
• other nations	
Anything else?	

Date.....