



Correct me if I'm Wrong

*The quarterly bulletin of the Global
Community of Mission Information Workers*

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Methodologies

From time to time, our editorial team enjoys highlighting the specific methodologies that shape our understanding of God's work globally. In this edition, we explore diverse approaches to research: from World Vision's initiative to measuring the experience of God's love in children to Gordon Bonham's practical steps for planning a research project. We also celebrate the legacy of Patrick Johnstone and look at new metrics from the Joshua Project. Each contribution underscores that. Whether through complex theological frameworks or clear-cut data gathering, the methods we choose are vital to bringing clarity to the Great Commission.



HOPE & LOVE MEASURE: Measuring the Experience of God's Love

The *Measuring the Experience of God's Love in Children* initiative was a first of its kind research effort to understand how children, across different cultures and faiths, experience and understand the love of God. Developed by [World Vision](#) in collaboration with theologians, psychologists, and researchers from Harvard University, Duke University, and Claremont Graduate University, this project affirmed that children are not just passive recipients of care but moral and spiritual beings whose capacity to feel loved and hopeful is foundational to their well-being.

This initiative was formally launched in 2024 with the aim of revising World Vision's existing measures of God's love to better reflect Christian theological values across diverse contexts. The research focused on several key areas:

- Crafting a narrative about hope and God's love that accurately captures World Vision's Christian ethos and technical expertise.
- Understanding the internal changes in children's hearts as they grow in hope.

- Assessing whether sponsored children and other beneficiaries understand that they are loved by God.
- Evaluating the contributions of various actors, parents, World Vision staff, sponsors, and community partners in nurturing children’s experiences of God’s love and hope.

The central study question was: To what extent is World Vision contributing to children’s experience of God’s love, using hope as a key indicator of transformation?

What method(s) could be employed to measure a child’s experience of God’s love? It was imperative that the project focus upon the development of a biblically grounded framework apt for diverse religious contexts. Integral to the project was a qualitative exercise, which was formational and took place before the theological reflection, and a quantitative exercise, which was to validate a survey tool. This was accomplished through a working group of subject matter experts, including theologians with deep expertise in child spirituality. Their collaboration not only ensured that the measure would reflect sound theological principles but also resonate with the authentic spiritual experiences of children. World Vision thus convened a multi-disciplinary coalition of theologians, child psychologists, monitoring and evaluation specialists, and frontline staff. Through a series of workshops, focus groups, and Delphi rounds, stakeholders co-created narrative vignettes, refined item wording, and defined thresholds for meaningful change. This collaborative process ensured that the resulting measures were theologically robust, culturally resonant, and practically useful.

WHAT DID WE DO?

The Journey Towards Defining and Measuring a Love-Fueled Hope

THEOLOGIANS

A diverse body of theologians answering the question:
“How do children of all different faiths experience ‘God’s’ love in the context of a humanitarian or development programme?”

ACADEMIC PARTNERS

Empirical measurement in 8 countries with
 600+ children/country, representing
 4 major religions and none



CHILDREN

Their understanding and lived experiences of Love and Hope
 658 children across 8 countries (Sri Lanka, Thailand, Albania, Iraq, Uganda, Senegal, Lesotho, Bolivia)

Surveys and interviews then occurred with strict adherence to ethical guidelines. Informed consent was obtained from parents/guardians, and assent was secured from child participants. Cultural sensitivity and respect for diverse religious beliefs were intentionally ensured. Confidentiality and the right to withdraw were maintained throughout the study. This research had particular ethical considerations due to its international nature with data collection taking place in eight different countries and led by local World Vision offices in each country (Albania, Bolivia, Iraq, Lesotho, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Uganda).

Furthermore, participants were children ages 10-18. To mitigate risk, World Vision used existing data protection protocols developed locally to address contextual dynamics, and all participants were either directly involved in World Vision programming or their family members were. For the qualitative data, consent/assent was written in all instances, for the tool validation exercise consent was either written or thumbprint.

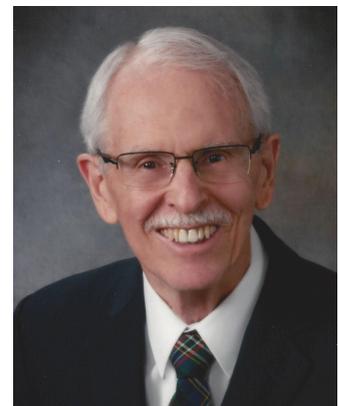
The study followed international best-practices for child protection, informed consent, and data privacy, ensuring that the voices of children were engaged with the utmost care and respect. The principal investigators of the project included Dr. Kathryn Kraft, representing World Vision, and Dr. Jennifer Wortham of Harvard University's Human Flourishing Program. *To learn more about the ups and downs and subsequent phases of this research project, along with its results, please visit:*

<https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/Measuring%20the%20Experience%20of%20God%27s%20Love%20Final%20Report%206.6.25.pdf>

Planning a Research Project

By Gordon Bonham, Ph.D.

Associate - One Challenge Global Research Team



How does one plan a research project? What methods should be employed? These are the steps I have taken during my 50 year career in applied social research. Trained as a sociologist with an emphasis on survey design, I began my career in the US National Center for Health Statistics, moving into applied social research centers at two universities. I started my own consulting business and then “retired” to the One Challenge Global

Research Team. Below are my recommended steps with illustrations from a recent project, “Muslim Background Believer Attrition Study” (MBB Attrition). The results will appear in [Global Missiology](#) January 2026 and in [Mission Frontiers](#) later in 2026.

1. Identify the research question. What is the primary question that research is designed to answer? Ideally this can be stated in a single sentence.

Attrition Study: What is the rate of reversion to Islam by Muslims who make decisions to follow Jesus?

2. Who wants to know? Who wants to know the answer, and how much effort are they willing to contribute to obtain it?

Attrition Study: A leader in the Communio Messianica and the International Internet Strategic Alliance (IISA).

3. Use of research findings. How will knowledge of the answer help the organization, group, or individual use the findings to enhance their ministry?

Attrition Study: Span, in his 2020 article, “Reversion: Why do ‘Christian converts’ from Islam return to their old religion?” (*Global Missiology*, 17(17)) suggested a reversion rate of nearly 90%. A rate that high would discourage efforts to take the gospel to the Islamic world. Initial findings of our study were reported to IISA in September 2024. Additional analysis was shared at the 2025 IISA annual conference. Final reports were submitted to journals for wider dissemination.

4. Research time frame. How much time is available until the findings are needed? Research to learn about the momentary status of something can be completed more quickly than research to study change over time.

Attrition Study: The need for this research was raised informally in 2023. Findings could be presented at the September 2024 conference if an English draft of an online survey were developed by January, translations by April, and data collected by August 2024.

5. Source of information. Where is the best source of information: Existing records, personal observation, or asking questions of others with knowledge and opinions?

Attrition Study: The best source of information would have been Muslims who had come to faith in Christ, regardless of their status. No such lists were available. Even if they were, it would be unlikely for those who had reverted to Islam to be willing to participate. The next best source would be leaders of churches and ministries who know and work with MBBs.

6. Data collection. What is the best way to collect reliable and valid data?

Attrition Study: The time frame suggested a short online survey in the most common languages of the churches and ministries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). These languages were Arabic, French, and Turkish, and English (for international communication) would be best. (Note: the Turkish version was not used). No single list of names and email addresses of leaders working with MBBs was available. Our partner organization agreed to disseminate the survey link to leaders attending summer regional meetings in the MENA area and through its IISA network. Almost 100 leaders responded with good distribution by language, gender, years working with MBBs, and religious backgrounds. This was large enough to suggest that quantitative findings would be reliable. We also planned follow-up interviews to ensure validity and asked for contact information from those willing to participate. Semi-structured interviews with 13 leaders in Arabic (with a translator), or English, provided additional qualitative data and helped establish the validity of the quantitative data.

7. Information presentation. How best to present the findings in ways that can be understood and used?

Attrition Study: A slide presentation of the key information from the online survey was presented at the 2024 IISA gathering, receiving the highest session rating in the conference evaluation. A second presentation, which included findings from the follow-up interviews, was made at the 2025 conference. The complete report was made available to those who wanted more details. Wider distribution will occur through publications in 2026.

8. Next steps. Research is valuable only if used and often raises additional questions that suggest the value of new research projects.

Attrition Study: The report ended with three prayer points and three recommendations for further study regarding MBB reversion. Two papers have been prepared for journals with different audiences. These include suggestions that the survey be repeated in other regions to see how much reversion levels may differ in different contexts.

From Flat Data to Three-Dimensional Insight

By Bud Houston

For decades, mission researchers have relied on two primary metrics: Engaged/Unengaged status and Evangelical percentage. These served us well, but they flatten reality. Two people groups can look identical on paper, while one has multiplying churches and the other has sporadic gospel conversations. We need better resolution.

[Joshua Project](#), in collaboration with Frontiers, IMB, Engage Network, Vision 5:9, and Accelerate, has developed a new framework launching in 2026 that transforms one-dimensional tracking into three-dimensional insight. It combines Phases of Engagement, Engagement Strength, and evangelical percentage to give researchers and field teams a clearer picture of where gospel work actually stands.

Phases of Engagement tracks progress through eight stages, from Phase 0 (Waiting, no known engagement) through Phase 7. Each phase describes specific milestones: entry, evangelism, discipleship, local church formation, reproducing churches, multiplying movements, and sustained presence. A sub-indicator (0-R) flags groups where previous efforts have ceased or where data are over 3 years old.

Engagement Strength adds a second axis. A five-level scale (Unknown, Initial, Growing, Active, Flourishing) captures how vigorous current efforts are within each phase. A group at Phase 3 (Discipleship) could have flourishing evangelism but weak discipleship structures. The strength assessment, drawn from field surveys and activity-tracking apps, reveals where energy should be directed.

Engagement Accelerators serve as diagnostic tools, not a measurement, for field teams. Twelve strategic domains, including prayer, Scripture access, multi-node engagement, and collaborative engagement, help teams identify gaps and catalyze movement toward the next phase. These are not prescriptive checklists but prayerful planning aids.

The real breakthrough lies in the volume of data. Through partnerships with organizations in which field workers use activity tracking apps, we are moving from periodic updates to near-real-time data flows. Thousands of missionaries now report ministry activities, from felt-needs projects to church health metrics, through secure systems that protect field security while providing aggregated, anonymized intelligence. This represents roughly a thousand-fold increase in data inputs.

This exponential increase enables triangulation. Rather than relying on single-source estimates, we can cross-reference multiple data streams to assess confidence and track trends.



When independent sources report similar engagement patterns, our confidence grows. When they diverge, we know where to investigate.

We are also examining people group boundaries more strategically. Recent work merged two Fulani subgroups in Nigeria based on language assimilation, while we added Alevi Turks in Turkey as a distinct group. The Alevis face marginalization from Sunni Turks and require different contextualized approaches. These adjustments reflect our commitment to identifying boundaries that require separate church planting strategies.

We are piloting these tools with select partners and building reporting structures that accept data through simple forms, API connections, and spreadsheet submissions. Phases of Engagement is straightforward to track and easier to calculate than the percentage Christian, which is why we expect adoption to accelerate once the framework launches.

For mission information workers, the invitation is clear: Consider how Phases of Engagement and Engagement Strength could become metrics you track or help others track. If you want to learn more or find ways to participate in tracking these new metrics, write us at info@joshuaproject.net.

Introducing Lausanne's Co-Catalysts for the Research and Strategic Information Network

Larry Kraft, who has served since 2006 as a Network Catalyst for the Lausanne Movement, is delighted to announce the confirmation of his two new Research and Strategic Information Lausanne Co-Catalysts: Lara Heneveld and Chris Maynard.

Lara and Chris are no strangers to this community. Here are some details about their lives and work:

Lara, married to Jon, began acting upon her passion for research and mission information work in 2007. From 2007 to 2019, she developed and directed DART (the data, analysis, and research team) for Finishing the Task Coalition (<https://finishingthetask.com>). In this capacity, she also served as Global Research Strategist for the Issachar Initiative (<https://refreshedmag.com/the-issachar-initiative/>). In 2022 Lara joined Team Expansion (<https://teamexpansion.org>) to promote the cause of the unreached through supporting cooperative international missions projects. She is the Technical Spearheader for the iShare integrated mapping system (<https://cotw.global/ishare/>), a visualization product for Coalition of the Willing (<https://cotw.global/>). Most recently she took on the role of Registrar for the Harvest Information Standards (<https://hisregistries.org/>). She has been a contributor to the CMIW bulletin and served on the Mission Information Worker Virtual Conference planning team. Jon and Lara live in Kentucky USA and are the parents of two adult sons.



Chris, married to Judy, is a founding member of this Community of Mission Information Workers. A Christian professional with over 40 years of experience in information management and over 20 years in global mission data, Chris has served a variety of international networks including Vision 5:9, the Global Church Planting Network (GCPN), the Global Mobilization Network (GMN), the Global Alliance for Church Multiplication (GACX), the Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI), and the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission (WEA MC – where he serves as a Mission Synergist). He is a member of OC International’s Global Research Team. Chris serves as leader of the Strategic Sending Team, a Lausanne Collaborative Action Team jointly supported by the Ministry Collaboration and Research & Strategic Information Issue Networks. Born in Scotland, Chris and his Irish wife Judy have lived most of their lives in England but now enjoy life in rural Wales. They have two daughters and one granddaughter.



Larry will step down from his role as a co-Catalyst in December 2026, when the second of his two five-year terms will end. He is glad and grateful to leave the future development of this important network in the capable hands and hearts of Lara and Chris.

Click here to learn more about our Network, and all the Lausanne Issue Networks:
<https://lausanne.org/network/research-and-strategic-information>
<https://lausanne.org/issue-networks>

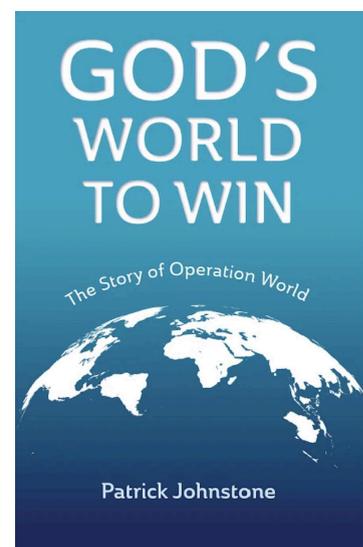
See you there!

Registration is now open for the first **Latin American Congress on Bible Translation and Use (CLATUB)**, taking place from April 14–16, 2026, in Guatemala City. Under the theme “Your Word Is Truth,” this unique event brings together those passionate about learning, connecting, and growing around the use and translation of the Bible in Latin America. CMIW will be present. See You There! Register: <https://clatub.comibam.org/es/registro-y-pago/>. More information: info.clatub@gmail.com

How Six Sheets of Paper became Operation World

Patrick Johnstone expected to spend his life serving as a tent evangelist in the slums of South Africa. God had a different plan.

Working in a small mission with a strong emphasis on prayer, Patrick began to organize intercession for the nations. Sadly, the information needed to pray meaningfully for every country was unavailable. So, Patrick gathered a few facts and prayer requests for various nations and wrote them on six sheets of paper. In 1964, he shared these pages during a three-week prayer gathering in Victoria Falls, Rhodesia. As he watched



more than one hundred African believers kneel and intercede for nations many had never heard of, he realized he was witnessing something powerful.

Upon his mission's urging, Patrick compiled the information into a booklet. In doing so, Patrick produced the first *Operation World*, a thirty-page global prayer guide. Now in its seventh edition and spanning more than a thousand pages, it has inspired millions of believers to pray for every nation on earth.

If you are interested in reading more about how God used one man's obedience to birth a global movement of prayer, get a copy of *God's World to Win: The Story of Operation World*.

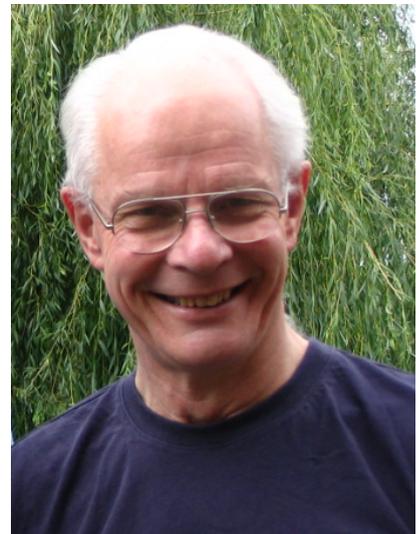
<https://missionbooks.org/products/gods-world-to-win?srsId=AfmBOoqYAWGtt-XDwEhhS5r7zciUCnCxYz73wNGaXKpA4nnt3xE1zHli>

Read about what God can do with solid research and a tender heart.

Special Profile: Patrick Johnstone

1) [CMIW] Please tell us about yourself and your family.

My Johnstone ancestors of the distant past were a clan of infamous reivers (notorious clansmen who raided, plundered, and terrorized the lawless Anglo-Scottish borderlands for centuries) in Dumfries in Scotland before the 1600s but, in the reign of James I, crossed the Irish Sea to be part of the Ulster Settlement. My Netherlander mother met my father in Lapland on a skiing holiday in 1936. Her ancestry can be traced back to both a Viking chieftain in North Holland and the Emperor Charlemagne (as can half of Northwest Europe!). I am the son and grandson of immigrants. Is it surprising that factoring in migration has been a major part of my research ministry?



My grandfather was a GP (family doctor), and the surgery (examination room) was situated in our large house. My father also became a GP and joined his father in the country practice in Gloucestershire in the West of England. When he married my mother, it became their home too. I was born in September 1938 as Neville Chamberlain futilely negotiated with Hitler to head off World War II. I knew nothing of a personal faith in Jesus until I went to university to study chemistry. My mother long saw my work as a missionary in the slums of southern Africa as a waste of my degree, but it was this that armed me with the tools for researching the world for Jesus.

The death of my father by drowning when I was eighteen shook me out of complacency to seek meaning in my life. At university I was led to Jesus by a theological student and then well disciplined by him. Soon after I heard a representative of the Dorothea Mission speak of its ministry of prayer, evangelism, and discipling in the slums of southern Africa. That call was confirmed when God spoke to me through Psalm 2:8: **“Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.”** This was a promise God gave His Son, but Jesus then passed this on to us in the Great Commission. I saw it as confirming His call to me to go to the end of the earth that was South Africa. It

was only later when God further called me 16 years later to the other ends of the earth to become a missionary researcher and strategist with WEC International as part of its international leadership. I have been so grateful for the two missions of which I have been an accountable part – all my research was geared to participating in intercession, evangelism and reaching the least reached peoples on earth and then discipling those I led. The aim was always to prepare other leaders who would multiply the ministry in successive generations. I rejoice that I have been privileged to see in my lifetime the fulfilment of a fourth generation of leaders to follow me in accordance with 2 Tim 2:2! As I look back, I am overwhelmed by God's goodness and grace to me with all my failings and deficiencies to see a measure of fruit from ministry.

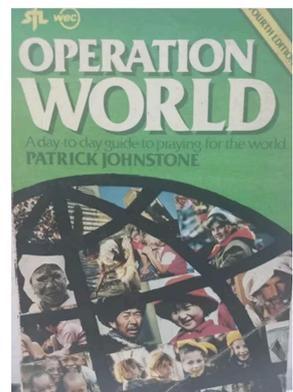
2) [CMIW] What is your current ministry?

I am working with refugees and asylum seekers in my present home city of Derby, England (which is where the Rolls-Royce aero-engines and nuclear power systems are built). More recently my wife Robyn and I became deeply involved in a local church nearby as the COVID pandemic was ending. This is a church re-plant – starting with about 12 individuals four years ago, but we are now nearly 300 – mainly young marrieds, working class and beyond, and conversions every month. I feel as if I am returning to my original calling as an evangelist and discipler in Africa. I am a member of a table tennis club, and this has proved a wonderful place of friendship and speaking about Jesus – and at least one has become a believer!

3) [CMIW] What are the contributions you have made to world missions that have brought you the greatest satisfaction?

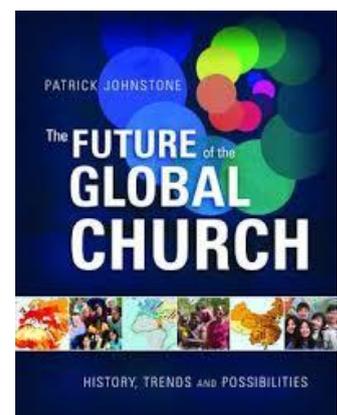
1. People's lives impacted – souls won, intercessors motivated, disciples made, leaders prepared and missionaries sent. My research with databases designed, articles written, thousands of maps drawn and country profiles written was all with this in mind.

2. *Operation World* (OW) was sparked off by Andrew Murray's challenge in 1900 for churches to hold Weeks of Prayer for the World and Hans von Stade, the leader/founder of the Dorothea Mission who implemented this vision in 1960. I was asked to organize and lead several such weeks in 1963 and was burdened to begin compiling prayer information to help the intercessors. The first three editions were written in Africa, where there was virtually no information or financial resources available. We did not know at the time that no real written evangelical survey of the spiritual needs of every country of the world with statistics had been done since William Carey's obligation book of 1792. It went global – largely through the ministries of Ralph Winter and George Verwer. We have limited data on how many copies of OW were printed in the 18 languages and eight editions over six decades – but I reckon it is well over two million. It became the go-to book for churches and missions for info on countries. We can never know here how many were impacted.



3. The relatively limited criticism of the contents written in OW was a relief and comfort! This is remarkable considering that most who pick up the book judge the entire volume from reading first the coverage of the country they know best!

4. The birthing and discipling of Brazilian, African, Indian, Korean, and other missions. I was personally involved in coming alongside one African mission CAPRO for over 40 years. This is also a joyful realization of dreaming of African missions to the world while in apartheid-crippled South Africa.
5. Jill, my first wife, had a vision in the 1980s of writing an OW for children. She began writing this in 1989 but died of cancer in 1992, just after completing the book. This became a bestseller and went all over the world and was published in over 20 languages as *You Can Change the World*. This has gone through a number of updates and is still being published.
6. Using research to reinvigorate international missions. When we came to WEC in 1980, there was a general air of discouragement and planning for consolidation. We were collectively able to re-launch WEC as a pioneer mission to the least reached, and over the next 12 years we doubled our size to 2000 workers and fields to around 65. One of the aspects of this was emphasizing the need to think globally and develop structures for trans-national teams and fields to reach both homelands and diasporas of major peoples. A number of other missions followed our example and my prompting to re-focus on people clusters rather than countries. It was in the *Joshua Project List* we further expanded the concept of 15 major affinity blocs subdivided into over 250 people clusters of which the 17,000 people groups were comprised.
7. Giving focus to the AD2000 Movement vision for a church for every people by providing the first limited list of 10K+ people groups led to the birth of the Joshua Project – for which I was the supervising part-time editor for a number of years.
8. Developing a methodology for counting evangelicals within the various denominational and six Christian Megablocs that is both verifiable and transparent. This was later extended using the same methodology for Charismatics from 1960 to the present.
9. The 100% rule – that every body of people counted must have every component of that body adding up to the total – whether that be country, people list for a country, religion, megabloc, etc. Only this allows the reader to make objective assessments.
10. Developing transparencies for the 20 years in which overhead transparencies (OHTs) were the main means for displaying the world's needs. This inspired Bob Waymire to launch Global Mapping and, with Pete Holzmann, pioneer computer mapping. At the turn of the century, the quality of images produced by computer technology made OHTs obsolete! This instrument became a vital tool for the peaking of the Great Awakening and the biggest decadal ingathering of people into the Church in the 1990s.
11. *The Future of the Global Church* was the last major research book I wrote. It was the hardest yet one of the most satisfying. My years of research had given me a broad sweep of history and geography, and I wanted to deploy our extensive OW databases to project into the future what might be the challenges we face in fulfilling the Great Commission. 2050 was my final projection point. The book took me six years to compile, and I had to familiarise myself with mapping programs and the Adobe Suite for handling diagrams and layout. I had no team on site to help me, and I often looked at my screen in despair, not knowing how to master a



mapping technique or compile an Excel formula, or even how to get the data in a form that could be meaningful. Although the whole book is future-oriented, I spent three years covering the whole of imperial and church history over the previous 2000 years in a compact, two-page cover for each century – I think this is unique!

4) [CMIW] What dreams do you have for your next ten years of ministry?

Mainly hand-overs, encouraging next generation leaders, and leaving a minimum of unfinished business and unsorted possessions. Travel and insurance since COVID has become prohibitively expensive at my age, so I do not expect any international travel but am more local ministry focused.

Anything I can do to encourage any vision for research for relevant 21st century ministry, I would be delighted to contribute!

Overall, my longing is to be at my closest to Jesus by the time I am promoted to Glory!

5) [CMIW] Is there some way you'd be willing to help the CMIW community?

Anything I can do to encourage any vision for research for relevant 21st century ministry I would be delighted to contribute!

Information From the Word

By Lara Heneveld

*"For the LORD gives wisdom;
from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."
Proverbs 2:6 (NIV)*

Isn't it wonderful? The source of the wisdom we're always seeking is a literal gift from our LORD. James 1:5 says not only is it a gift, but He gives it generously. Let's remember to come to Him over and over and seek His wisdom. He's a good Father Who loves lavishly!

Note

CMIW bulletins include links to important websites related to the bulletin content. The CMIW Editorial Team is vigilant about security concerns. While most hyperlinks are spelled out, extremely long links are embedded in the text. We encourage readers to always examine embedded links before clicking as a habit of secure electronic reading.

Final Details:

- With the help of God, this bulletin is now produced quarterly in English, Portuguese and Spanish.
- The editorial team comprises Bert Hickman, Jennifer Poling, Larry Kraft, Rodrigo Tinoco and Stephanie Kraft.
- Please send any comments, suggestions or ideas to us at info@globalcmiw.org.
- Back issues can be found at www.globalcmiw.org/cmiwbulletin.