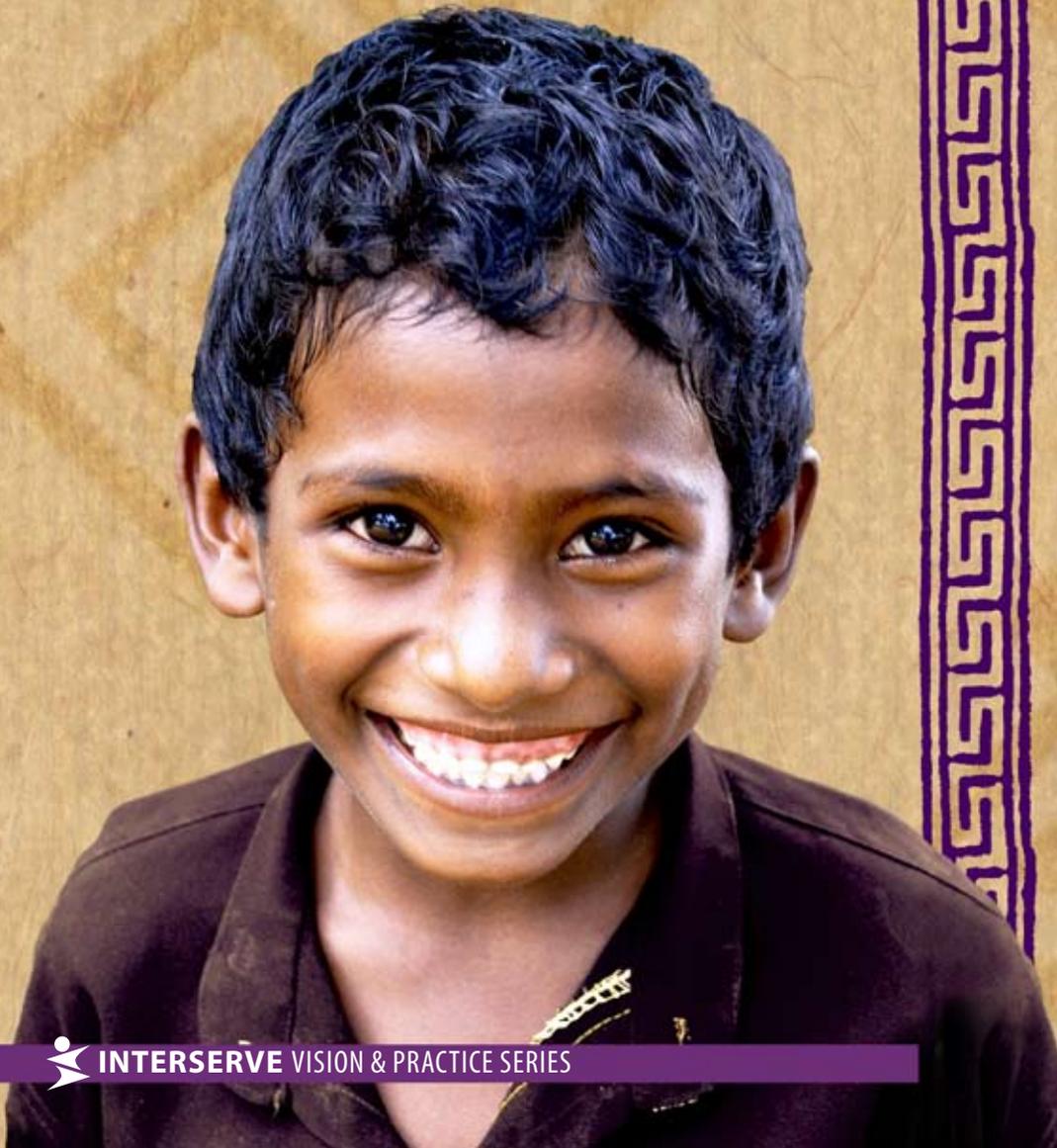


STUDY GUIDE

GOD'S BIG IDEA

wholistic mission



INTERSERVE VISION & PRACTICE SERIES

Interserve is an interdenominational and international community of Christians, bringing God's love to the peoples of Asia and the Arab World through word and action. Wherever we work, we do so in partnership, serving the global church and encouraging newer mission movements. We serve in some of the hardest places in the world in obedience to Jesus' commission to "go and make disciples of all nations".

The purpose of the Vision & Practice Study Guide series is to promote and build a greater understanding of Interserve's ethos and direction through reflection, guided questions, discussion and Bible study.

Vision & Practice Series:
Study Guide for God's Big Idea: Wholistic Mission
© Interserve International 2012

PUBLISHED BY
Interserve International
www.interserve.org

INTRODUCTION

This study guide aims to stimulate thinking about mission, to examine a Biblical paradigm for wholistic mission, and to reflect on Interserve's involvement in mission. It can be used by individuals, or by groups who want to improve group dynamics and create a common platform for building ideas on.

BASIC DEFINITIONS

- 1] Take a couple of minutes to reflect on, and then write down, what the word *mission* means to you.
- 2] What do you think of when you hear the phrase *wholistic mission*? Is the idea the same, or different for you?

[GROUP] *Discuss 1] and 2] then summarize together. Especially note words, phrases or sections where your definition matches that of Interserve's (see below).*

INTERSERVE'S DEFINITION OF WHOLISTIC MISSION

Wholistic mission, as defined by Interserve, is "intentionally bearing witness to the whole character of God and his mighty acts of redemption through proclamation, service and fellowship."

- 1] How do you feel about this definition?
- 2] What are some of your initial thoughts on it or questions about it?

[GROUP] *Discuss 1] and 2] briefly. Do not go into them too deeply, as the topic will be covered in more detail further on in the study.*



HOW WE SEE MISSION IN INTERSERVE

Since its small beginnings in the Zenanas of India over 150 years ago, Interserve has been involved in wholistic mission.

Interserve's early pioneers set up schools and hospitals because they realised discipleship concerns the whole person. Along with education and medical care, they brought the liberating power of the Gospel of Jesus to the women in the Zenanas.

“Wholistic mission is intentionally bearing witness to the whole character of God and his mighty acts of redemption through proclamation, service and fellowship.”

1] What do you think is more important: proclamation, service or fellowship?

Imagine you have 100 “value points”. Now divide these points between the three areas based on what you think is more important (e.g. proclamation: 50, service: 15,

fellowship: 35). If you want to add another area in, divide the points between the four (or more) areas.

2] Ask yourself why you rated each one as you did?

[GROUP] *Discuss your answers briefly.*

3] As you seek to be involved in God's mission of making disciples, how do proclamation, service and fellowship integrate currently into your life and ministry? Is God putting on your heart other ways he wants you to integrate these in the future? **Write your thoughts in the table below.**

[GROUP] *Share your thoughts about these questions.*

4] Read pages 1-5 of God's Big Idea.

Write down questions you would like to talk over with an Interserve Partner or worker.

[GROUP] *Discuss questions raised by these pages.*

	CURRENT INTEGRATION	FUTURE INTEGRATION
PROCLAMATION		
SERVICE		
FELLOWSHIP		



“ **WHOLISTIC MINISTRY
INTEGRATES THE GOSPEL
INTO OUR WHOLE LIFE
WITNESS AS JESUS-
FOLLOWERS.** ”

INTERSERVE PARTNER
EAST ASIA

WHY IS INTERSERVE COMMITTED TO WHOLISTIC MISSION?

Because we believe wholistic ministry is biblical! Work through this four-part biblical framework for wholistic ministry:

THE WHOLE AND PERFECT BEGINNING

Read Genesis chapters 1 and 2:

- 1] List the characteristics of God you see here.
- 2] What is the nature of human beings here?
- 3] In what ways are God and human beings related? Human beings and creation? God and creation?
- 4] What is the overall picture we get of creation?

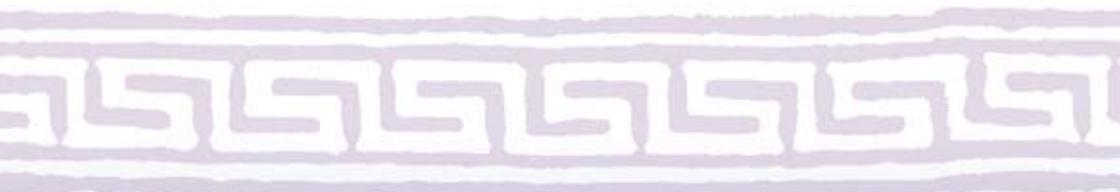
THE IMPACT OF THE 'FALL'

Read Genesis chapter 3:

- 1] In what ways did the 'fall' impact human beings and creation?
- 2] What effects of the fall do you see in your own life and around you?

Look at Genesis 1:27, 2 Peter 1:4, 1 Corinthians 3:9 and Matthew 11:28-30.

- 1] Why is it possible for us to relate to God in spite of the fall?



THE AMAZING POWER OF THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION

Read Colossians 1:19-20, 1 Peter 3:13, and 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

- 1] Reflect on and make a list of the scope of this reconciliation. What practical implications does it have for us?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, Matthew 28:18-20 and Matthew 16:24-26.

- 2] How does wholistic mission relate to your own journey as a disciple?
- 3] In what ways do you see discipleship and wholistic mission as being related?

THE HOPE OF THE GLORIOUS REIGN OF GOD

Read chapters 21 and 22 of Revelation:

- 1] What picture of hope do you find in these two chapters?
- 2] How do these verses relate to Matthew 6:10? (See also Revelation 11:15.)
- 3] How does Interserve's vision of *Lives and communities transformed through encounter with Jesus* relate to the Kingdom of God and the hope with which we serve?
- 4] God's kingdom of righteousness and justice was also the message of the Old Testament prophets. How can/should the church be involved in bringing about the reign of God on earth?

Read pages 6-11 of *God's Big Idea*. Write down questions you would like to talk over with an Interserve Partner or worker.

[GROUP] Discuss questions raised by these pages.

JESUS, OUR MODEL

In John 20:21 Jesus says, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” Think about how Jesus was sent into the world. What do we learn from him about mission?

Let’s take a look at one incident in the Gospels to see how Jesus responded to a situation recorded in John chapter 9:

- 1] Compare the response of Jesus to that of the disciples.
- 2] How did Jesus respond to the blind man?
- 3] Trace the journey the blind man made to see Jesus.

As you read and reflect on pages 12-16 of *God’s Big Idea*, focus on the feelings these pages invoke. Remember that we are not alone or helpless in this mission - we have the Holy Spirit in us and with us. Jesus said, “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

[GROUP] *Discuss any questions that have come out of this reading.*

GOD’S BIG IDEA

So then, wholistic mission is God’s Big Idea, modelled for us by Jesus.

We seek to use all our creative gifts, training and energy to declare the glory of God in discipling the nations.

- 1] How do you plan to use your gifts and training in discipling others?
- 2] What new or reinforced insights or ideas have you grasped through this study?
- 3] Enumerate the challenges and joys you see in being involved in wholistic mission. ✨

In wholistic mission we are called to join God in his purpose, his mission. In this study guide we examine our understanding of the term “wholistic mission,” the theology behind it, and how we can become a part of “God’s big idea”.

This study guide is suitable for personal use or for a small group setting.

*Lives and communities
transformed through encounter
with Jesus Christ.*