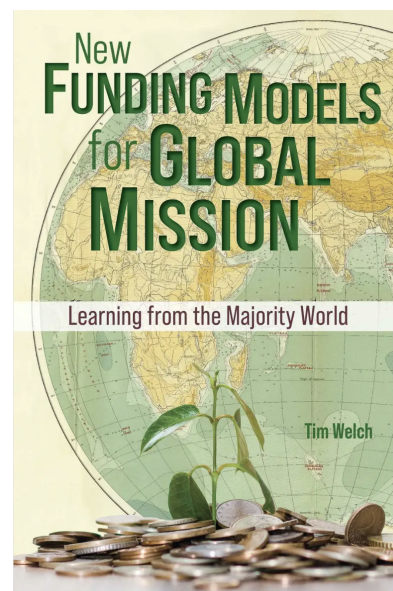


Welch, Tim. *New Funding Models for Global Mission: Learning from the Majority World*. Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing, 2023.

Reviewed by Baron Muga, Outbound Team, SSAP.

Tim Welch served as a missionary in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire for thirty-one years with SIM, including twenty-two years as national director. Currently, he serves as the SIM Ministry Point Person for Literature, based in the US. In this book, Welch seeks to expand the mission funding paradigm from the traditional western approach to new ways and possibilities stemming from his experience and research on this subject. Welch offers alternative funding approaches, a refreshing review of biblical foundations for funding, and seeks to repaint the old perception of the majority world from back-of-the-line recipients of trends and economic assistance to one of inevitable importance, contribution and creativity in God's mission and world influence.



Without a doubt, Welch's thought to offer new ideas on mission funding is a step forward in a direction the global Church needs to take. He is not the first nor the last in his efforts in this regard. Welch's book, so far as I know, is the first to address this with a contemporary lens with a global perspective and application at a local level. The book fills a gap. Welch gives innumerable examples of options and possibilities that can be applied or tried in various contexts to fund missionaries and mission endeavors. Every reader of this book will come across at least one or two suggested possibilities that they

can seek to immediately deploy in their context. Welch's effort to review missionary support in the Bible while paying attention to majority world representation is also a welcome addition that further stimulates us to think Biblically about funding missions.

Welch's approach, in my view, could be improved in two areas. There is a lack of structured categorization of the suggested ideas. It would have been helpful for a reader interested in the subject matter to find some way to categorize all the suggestions he gives throughout the book. Indeed, Welch provides us less with models for funding global mission, and more with examples of funding possibilities. He defines *the traditional* model as one where the missionary seeks the funding (pg. 4). One can consider that a model because it can take many forms with the defining characteristic being that the missionary is the one that seeks the funds. Following this categorization, it may have been helpful to group the subsequent alternate suggestions he provides as part of models maybe based on who request/obtains the funds (e.g. church initiated, family initiated, self-initiated, agency initiated if that is the case, etc.) Other possible models could be based on the source of the funds, nature, or frequency of funding. These are just some ideas that would help a reader have a handle on which to peg the examples given and even categorize their own contextualized examples.

A second weakness of the material is that many examples and ideas are repeated using different terms. For example, the "mission designation" *model* (pg. 48) he mentions is conceptually the same as the "handful of rice" *model* (pg. 45). Though these models serve well as examples of regular planned giving by church members, they are essentially the same concept explained and applied in different ways. Readers of this book may find themselves feeling that ideas are being rehashed as different concepts but are in fact examples of the same possible model.

That said, this resource is valuable for a missionary to stimulate their ideas regarding missionary funding for themselves and, more so, for those they reach and disciple who are considering the call to take the gospel to

the ends of the earth. The book will be a resource for offering options and propelling thoughts around the endless possibilities of funding for missionaries. Personally, this subject continues to be a focus as we are seeking to see more African Churches send African missionaries to the Ends of the Earth and we continue to think through and attempt the implementation of paradigms that will facilitate missionary work in, through and from the African continent.

Welch's book is a timely resource that begins to bring greater focus and definition to the issue of mission funding in today's reconstituted landscape. It has begun the journey of structuring this topic and I hope, as others engage it, we will continue to see this topic addressed in theory and practice with consideration to present realities for the sake of the expansion of His Kingdom.