

# Unfinished

A publication of TMS Global

Summer 2018 | 67



## Coming fully alive

Exploring abundant life through missions



UNFINISHED  
Summer 2018, Issue 67

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*Unfinished* is a publication of TMS Global.  
Subscriptions are free upon request.

Send subscription requests, change of addresses, and all correspondence to P.O. Box 922637, Norcross, Georgia 30010 or call 800.478.8963 (FAX 770.446.3044). Send donations to P.O. Box 936559, Atlanta, GA 31193-6559. TMS Global is funded entirely by gifts from individuals and local congregations. All gifts are tax-exempt and are gratefully acknowledged. Please visit TMS Global online at: [tms-global.org](http://tms-global.org).

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**Cover photo:**  
Wondering where vibrant Christian faith has gone? In this issue, cross-cultural workers tell stories that reacquaint us with the abundant life Jesus came to give.

# FEELING CALLED?

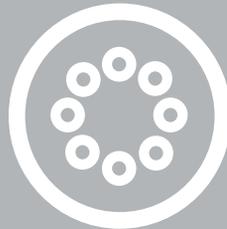
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I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*  
— **John 10:10, ESV**



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# Taking Jesus at His Word

Max Wilkins reminds us of the life Jesus came to give.



*“To answer the call to discipleship—the call to join Jesus in His mission—is to hear Jesus say, ‘Come with me if you want to live,’ and to make the choice to take Him up on His offer, regardless of where that pathway may take you.”—Max Wilkins*

*Shown: Dora Barbee who serves with her family among youth in Roi Et, Thailand*

I was saddened, if not surprised, by a conversation at a recent dinner engagement with some longtime friends. Lamenting the challenge he was having in keeping his 30-something daughter engaged in church, the father said, “You know how it is these days. She recently came home from church quite upset about the pastor’s message. She said, ‘I don’t like to be challenged or made to feel guilty about my life choices in church! I want to leave feeling good, blessed, and happy about my life. Isn’t that what church is supposed to do for me?’”

In recent times, the Christian faith in North America is seemingly being morphed into something unrecognizable from the kingdom-minded, life-giving

journey to which Jesus called His followers. And while this new, feel-good, require-nothing religion fits in nicely with our consumption-oriented, self-centered Western culture, it is producing blasé, unengaged devotees who are increasingly asking, “Is this all there is?”

*“In John 10:10, Jesus speaks of zoe, often described as an appetite for life, a zest for living, even as ‘aliveness.’ More than mere existence, zoe is about coming fully alive.”*

It is impossible to reconcile this pabulum with the wonders of authentically following Jesus.

## Understanding life

When I first trusted Jesus, I quickly became enamored with the promise of

John 10:10. It became my life verse. In it Jesus describes how a thief comes to steal, and kill, and destroy. But, He says, “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (NKJV).

To get the full intent of this powerful promise of abundant life, it is necessary to consider how Jesus uses the word *life*. There are several words in Greek that can be correctly translated as life in English.

The common word *bios*, from which we get biology, refers to the opposite of death. It means the breathing in and out of our physical existence. Interestingly, Jesus uses *bios* in Luke 8:14, in the parable of the soils, when He says, “As for the seed that fell among thorns, these are the

ones who, when they have heard, go on their way and are choked with worries, riches, and pleasures of life [bios], and produce no mature fruit.”

In John 10:10, however, Jesus speaks of *zoe*, often described as an appetite for life, a zest for living, even as “aliveness.” More than mere existence, *zoe* is about becoming fully alive. And furthering the point, the word Jesus uses to speak of abundance in this same verse is a qualitative, not a quantitative, word. Thus, despite the empty promises of our materialistic, consumer-driven society, the abundant life Jesus promises those who would follow Him is not one of abundance of riches and possessions, but one of aliveness and rich quality.

### Understanding promises

Of course, this life to which Jesus is calling His followers was never promised as a life of constant comfort and ease. He clearly instructed those who would be His disciples to “count the cost.” He openly affirmed that there would be trials, challenges, and tribulations. He never suggested that people could follow Him without ever having their life choices challenged. Indeed, in order to “follow” Him, disciples would be required to allow Jesus to set the course and direction of their lives. He even went as far as saying that only those who would lose their lives for His sake would find the abundant life He was promising.

There is a famous scene in the 1991 motion picture *Terminator II* where, in the midst of crisis and challenge, Arnold Schwarzenegger’s character extends his hand toward the hero of the story and

says, “Come with me if you want to live!” It is a moment of decision, of trust, of willingness to step into an unknown adventure and a new life. And while everything about what lay ahead was uncertain, one thing was sure: It would not be an ordinary, dull, meaningless existence.

### The real offer

I remember thinking the first time I saw that scene: *They stole our story!* To answer the call to discipleship—the call to join Jesus in His mission—is to hear Jesus say, “Come with me if you want to live” and to make the choice to take Him up on His offer, regardless of where that pathway may take you. I am convinced it is the only way to know and experience the abundant life Jesus promised.

In this issue of *Unfinished* you can read about “Moral Therapeutic Deism,” a caricature of authentic Christianity that is taking root in our culture. You will also read the stories of several TMS Global cross-cultural workers who have made the choice to give their lives to Jesus in following Him in His mission, and who are experiencing adventure, meaning, and the abundant life Jesus promised as a result. I hope you know this life is available to each of us as well. According to Jesus, this is what He came for. ✚



**Max Wilkins** is president and CEO of TMS Global.

## Come fully **alive**

### **C.S. Lewis describes the way of transformation**

The ordinary idea which we all have before we become Christians is this. We take as starting point our ordinary self with its various desires and interests. We then admit that something else, call it “morality” or “decent behaviour”... has claims on this self. ... Some of the things the ordinary self wanted to do turn out to be what we call “wrong”: well, we must give them up. Other things, which the self did not want to do, turn out to be what we call “right”: well, we shall have to do them. But we are hoping that when all the demands have been met, the poor natural self will still have some chance, and some time, to get on with its own life and do what it likes. ...Because we are still taking our natural self as the starting point.

The Christian way is different: harder, and easier. Christ says, “Give me All. I don’t want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don’t want to cut off a branch here and a branch there. I want to have the whole tree down. I don’t want to drill the tooth, or crown it, or stop it, but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked—the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours.”

From *Mere Christianity*



CHRISTIAN BELIEFS

# DERAILED

## EXAMINING AMERICA'S WASHED-OUT FAITH

Today, a clear majority of the world's Christians live outside the West. Christianity is seeing explosive growth in the "Global South" (in Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia). The faith of these Global South Christians is more biblically orthodox than their counterparts in the West.

In fact, in the United States, authentic Christianity has been displaced, declares Rod Dreher in a 2017 *New York Times* article. The culprit, he says, is something called "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism."<sup>1</sup>

In M.T.D., writes Dreher, "the highest goal of the religious life is being happy and feeling good about oneself. It's the perfect religion for a self-centered, consumerist culture. But it's not Christianity."

Dreher was citing a study by Christian Smith, a sociologist at Notre Dame who named M.T.D. as the faith of most American young people. But, says Methodist minister Kenda Creasy Dean, M.T.D. is not only the faith of young people. What is happening, she tells, is that "we are doing an exceedingly good job of teaching youth what we really believe: namely, that Christianity is not a big deal, that God requires little, and the church is a helpful social institution filled with nice people focused primarily on 'folks like us.'" <sup>2</sup>

In this issue of *Unfinished*, we take a deep dive into the lives of cross-cultural workers. We asked how they were freed from the tangles of our feel-good, insular Christian culture to live out their callings of self-giving love.

We trust their testimonies will refresh our understanding about what it means to follow Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> *The New York Times*, August 2, 2017 <sup>2</sup> From *Almost Christian*, by Kenda Creasy Dean, pp. 11-12

*The beliefs of M.T.D.:* 1. A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life on earth. 2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions. 3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself. 4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem. 5. Good people go to heaven when they die. —Taken from *Soul Searching*, by Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton, p. 163



# MOVING INTO LIFE IN TECHNICOLOR

## LIFE OUTSIDE THE COMFORT ZONE

“One moment changed my life completely. It was the moment that moved me from fear to faith,” remembers Sharon Nichols, who serves among the people of Ecuador.

### Can you describe what changed in your life that led you to serve in full-time missions?

As long as I can remember, I have loved serving in my local church and my community. It was easy to serve in a familiar place and among people I already knew. Even so, when my youngest son urged me to step outside my comfort zone and explore international missions, I did. I went on a short-term trip. I returned convinced it would be best if I stayed close to home.

My issue wasn't about leaving a comfortable US lifestyle. My issue was a fear about leaving my ministry comfort zone. I was afraid I could not be an effective witness in another culture.

The next year God sent me back out on another international mission trip. I filled my days doing the tasks given to me to do, tasks I could do well. These included helping teach English-as-a-Second-Language to a group of Spanish-speaking seminary students. I was relieved to learn the students spoke some English, which

made my afternoons with them easy. I was in my comfort zone again—like how I felt when serving in the US! I could do this! I was proud! God, however, was getting ready to change my life.

On the last day in the ESL class, we were told the students wanted to pray for us. We were each paired with a seminary student who took us by the hands and prayed over us. It was powerful. Then we

“He was beaming from ear to ear. . . . But I was so overcome by fear, I could not move.”

were told that the students wanted us to pray over them. *No worries*, I thought. *These students speak English beautifully. I will pray in English. Easy.*

But as it turns out, I would be praying for a new student. This was his first day, and he knew very little English. Instantly, I was outside my comfort zone. I was terrified. He was beaming from ear to ear, evidently anticipating what nugget of truth I might pass on to him and what I might say to heaven on his behalf. But I was so overcome by fear, I could not

move. Obviously sensing my concern, he took my hands in his, held them tightly, smiled, and shut his eyes.

I began to pray out loud in English. It was all I knew. Soon he began to softly cry. Then he began to sob and dropped to his knees. He got it! By the power of the Holy Spirit who speaks for us, he got it! When we are without words, He becomes our interpreter!

That was a moment that changed my life completely. It was the moment that moved me from fear to faith. God said, “Remember, I am with you

always—even when you are in the most unfamiliar, uncomfortable situations.”

I have always loved Jesus and have served Jesus for as long as I can remember. But I had never before taken Him at His Word: He would be with me, and He would be doing the work. That day, God changed my thinking from “I can do this,” to, “I can do this, but only because of the power of the Holy Spirit.”

At times, I am still far outside my comfort zone, but when I am afraid, I remember that God is always with me.



Cross-cultural workers recount how they followed Jesus into life beyond what they ever imagined.

**What do you wish people in the US could know about life and faith as you experience it now?**

Looking back, God has been preparing me for a life of cross-cultural mission from the beginning. And for me, it was a rather difficult, giant leap. But in the end, it came down to one simple question: “How much do I love Jesus?” As I have trusted Him, He has never once failed me. There is great comfort knowing that God cannot fail. †



Graham and Sharon Nichols work among the underserved children of Ecuador.

## Try this at home: **Know you're loved.**

I saw a bumper sticker recently that read, “Love God, Love Others.” I began reflecting on this and concluded that the bumper sticker gets only half the message right.

As it stands, the bumper sticker leaves us with the impression that the gospel addresses us primarily as imperative: “love, act, sacrifice, do!” But by the larger logic of the gospel, profusion (output) can only be funded by infusion (input). “Love out” can only be funded by “love in.”

It’s my conviction that in many of our churches, we’re telling people to get busy, get moving. But there is an inner vacuum that is crying out for infusion—for an awareness of being loved by God.

This deeper infusion of love is something we must, apparently, seek—with the expectation that God will (in his own time and way) actually

satisfy this quest. This seems exactly the point of Paul’s prayer for his readers in Ephesians 3, which reaches its apex in 3:19, “and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, and [so] be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Here is the highest prayer, which—when granted—so satisfies our inner thirsts (through this infusion of divine love for us) that we are finally freed to turn outward in self-giving love. We must learn

to pray this prayer together, actively waiting within the means of grace for God to answer it.

*Dr. Joseph Dongell is professor of biblical studies and director of Greek studies at Asbury Theological Seminary where he has served for more than 25 years. He is an ordained minister in The Wesleyan Church. This was adapted from his address entitled, “Three Waves from Wesley.”*



## LIFE AMONG PEOPLE NOT LIKE US

“Living life in this place, serving among our Muslim neighbors, has been the most fulfilling and satisfying time of our lives,” tells this couple.\* “Our lives are much richer and more joyful for having stepped out in faith to do something radical.”

**Can you describe what led you to give your life to serve in full-time missions? Was there a pivot point for you?**

The change in mindset that happens when we expose ourselves to new, seemingly strange or scary things is a priceless gift. That is what happened to us when we (along with others in our church) helped sponsor some Somalian refugees who had come to America.

We had no idea how to interact with or care for these strangers (who looked different, talked differently, and pretty much did everything differently)! But when we got to know them in a personal way, it changed our lives. It changed our perspective on how we saw the world and, more importantly, on how God saw the world.

We spent countless hours offering support to these vulnerable families. We took them to doctor visits, helped register

kids for school, helped them find jobs, and shared lots of meals together when we had no words to exchange.

In that time, God gave us the desire and vision to serve full time and to care for these least and lost. He allowed us to experience how wonderful it feels to be a part of His plan, even if it means hanging out with total strangers. He showed us how easy it was to love in a new and meaningful way and how much more colorful and exciting it was to be with

## Try this at home: **Hang out with them.**

We should all think of ourselves as missionaries, and missions is about going out.

The first question we need to ask is: To whom are you sent? Some of us might be sent to a people group in a far-off land. Others of us might be sent to the people living right next door. Once we identify the group to

whom we are sent, then we begin to understand some of the practices we need in order to connect with these people.

One of the practices is proximity. Jesus got up close and personal with people. In order to connect, we need to hang out with them, to be near them.

A couple of ladies came to me saying, “We don’t do outreach, but we are very faithful in prayer. What can we do to kind of get closer to people?” The women had been meeting in a home for prayer. I said, “Get your prayer meeting out of the home. Adopt a coffee shop in your neighborhood. Go there, have



“Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.”

–Psalm 117:1-2, ESV

Him outside our comfort zones than to continue in the security and familiarity of our lives.

**What do you wish people in the US could know about life and faith as you experience it now?**

Often, when people hear about where we live and that we work with Muslims, they fear for our safety. But never once have we been afraid or felt unsafe. Of

course we use common sense and take reasonable precautions, but it does not limit our desire or determination to be in relationship with those who are different from us.

Jesus modeled for us how to come into

relationship with all people. When we follow His example, it's miraculous how barriers break down. As we engage in life with our Muslim neighbors, we see how much we have in common with them.

We also have the rare privilege of seeing

Many years ago, before we came on the field, we never imagined that our life would take this trajectory. ... Leaving the norm was the best decision we ever made.

how they are being drawn by Jesus.

Many years ago, before we came on the field, we never imagined that our life would take this trajectory. We were so used to the norm—to the way we had always done things: the way we had

always worked, the way we had always lived, the way we had always worshipped. Leaving the norm was the best decision we ever made.

Living life in this place, serving among our Muslim neighbors, has been the most fulfilling and satisfying time of our lives. Truly our lives are so much richer and more joyful for having stepped out in faith to do something radical. †

*\*This couple serves in discipleship and healthcare ministries to the under-reached and the displaced in the Arab world. They are unnamed for security reasons.*

your coffee, and catch up with each other. As you do, you're getting to know the person behind the counter. You're getting to know those who are coming in, and you're seeing your neighborhood."

One of them asked, "But how do you pray in a coffee shop?" I said, "You don't pray in the coffee shop. You get out and walk around the streets and

pray as you're walking. Talk and pray as you're seeing things. It changes everything."

We always tell people, "Where you stand determines what you see." Where are you standing? What are you seeing? These are questions we need to ask over and over again.

*The preceding is taken from a presentation by Deb Hirsch at the 2014 New Room Conference. Deb Hirsch and her husband, Alan, are missiologists. For more, see their book Untamed: Reactivating a missional form of discipleship. For information about the upcoming New Room Conference in Franklin, TN, September 19-21, 2018, visit [www.newroom.co](http://www.newroom.co).*

# LIFE OF SURRENDER

“I’ve learned that in following Him wherever He leads, I can finally lay down my burdens ... and find the only real and lasting peace,” writes Nancy Peed, a former hospital CEO, who serves among the people of Uganda.

## **Can you describe what changed in your life that led you to serve in full-time mission work?**

There was a time when I was so caught up in *my* life—*my* family, *my* career, *my* money, *my* house, even *my* church. But thankfully God quietly and surely called me to missions in Africa. He began to show me that all the things I was holding on to so tightly really didn’t matter. Then one day, He gave me the courage to surrender and to let Him take over my life completely. And since that day, about three years ago, when I paced anxiously across my deck overlooking the Flint River, my mind heavy with the magnitude of all I would surrender, I finally found the freedom and the greatest peace I have ever known.

So I gave away or sold all of my possessions and hugged my father and daughter goodbye before boarding a plane to Uganda. I thought my heart would break into a million pieces.

Today, I feel at home in Africa and am thriving. Just recently, I was sitting on the back of the motorcycle with the warm African breeze blowing through my hair, and I thought, *What if I had said “no” to Jesus’ call to serve Him cross-culturally? Look what I would have missed!*

He is calling us all to follow Him. ...Maybe it will be just across the street. Maybe it will be a call to serve in our church, to teach little ones, to give a little more, to want a little less.

## **What do you wish people could know about life and faith as you experience it now?**

Within us all there is a longing, but we spend our lifetimes trying to deny it or silence it. The noise of this world keeps us distracted. Activities entertain us. Silence, rest, and peace are rarely part of our days. We stay busy bravely trying to keep on our masks of self-reliance.

So what have I learned in Africa? Here in this beautiful place, surrounded by authentic, honest, and humble people, I have seen my needs for things to simply fall away. It started with the basics—comfort, air conditioning, hot water, electricity, medicine. And as these things were removed, at once I had new eyes and began to see that I am hungry. I am weak. I am not in control. And the mask of self-reliance that I have worn for so long fell to the ground. I no longer needed it.

Finally I am becoming who I am meant to be, who I have always been—a child of God, who is dependent, and weak, but clothed in light. I am secure in my reliance on Jesus—the One who can stand in the gap of hunger, weakness, grief, pain, and oppression. He emerges brighter, stronger, and more powerful. I am being transformed. God is taking me on a beautiful journey. He is transforming me so I can be used to serve Him here, in Africa, where He has brought me.



## Try this at home: **Listen to their hearts.**

One of the deepest hungers in the world is the hunger to be heard. TMS Global is looking for volunteer mission mobilizers who would serve as listeners in their churches and communities. All it takes is eyes to see and ears to hear. Do you have the eyes

to see the restless young person in your church who needs to be heard—or the quiet one who is always there, sitting in the back, intently soaking it all in? Could you have coffee and offer your ears to hear their stories? If you love helping others discern

what God is doing in their lives (and helping them hear what it is in their own hearts), contact Sarah Parham at [sparham@tms-global.org](mailto:sparham@tms-global.org). Your calling in missions might be helping others discern theirs.

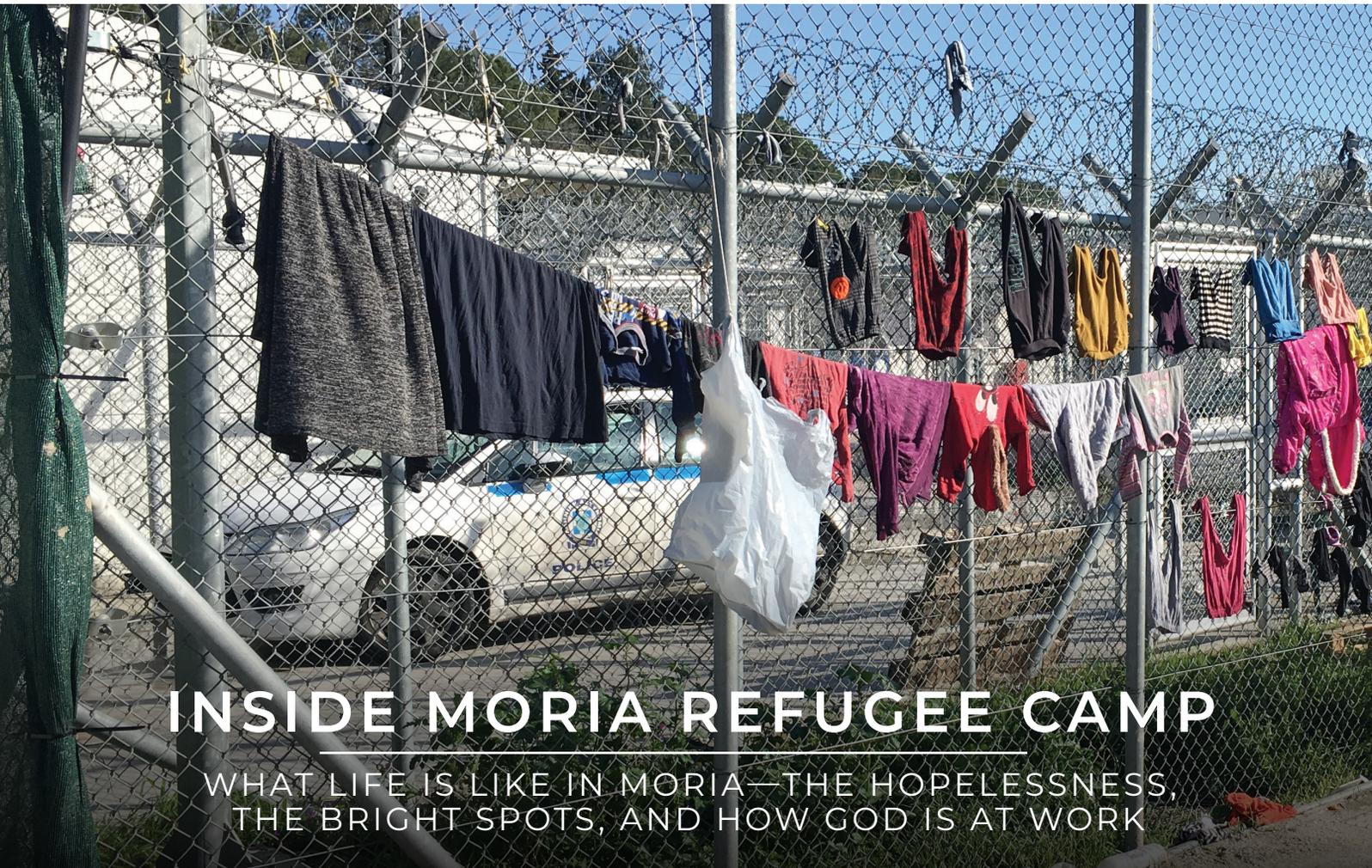
He is calling us all to follow Him. It probably won't be to Africa. Maybe it will be just across the street. Maybe it will be a call to serve in our church, to teach little ones, to give a little more, to want a little less. He is calling. My prayer is that we can make a space to hear Him through all the busyness, and surrender ourselves to follow Him.

I've learned that in following Him wherever He leads, I can finally lay down my burdens, drink from the streams of living water that refresh and restore, and find the only real and lasting peace. In my journey with Him, I am finding true freedom—and indescribable joy! †

**Nancy Peed serves the people of Uganda and the refugees of South Sudan primarily through mentoring and developing local healthcare.**



"God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him."  
—Andrew Murray



# INSIDE MORIA REFUGEE CAMP

WHAT LIFE IS LIKE IN MORIA—THE HOPELESSNESS,  
THE BRIGHT SPOTS, AND HOW GOD IS AT WORK

Charlie and Miki Chastain have served with TMS Global in Russia and Estonia. Charlie works in the arts, and Miki leads healing prayer workshops. The Chastain family has been making regular trips to refugee camps across Europe since 2015.

In January, Charlie traveled to Moria Refugee Camp in Lesbos, Greece. Refugees arrive by boat and are transported to the camp where they receive a medical exam and are quarantined for a few days in an effort to ensure that new diseases are not introduced into the camp.

Moria is currently housing about 2.5 times more people than the camp was designed to accommodate. “Conditions have worsened since I was here last,” said Charlie. “You can tell that people are more desperate. They don’t know if there will be enough food. They are cold, and the psychological and emotional toll is catching up to them.”

People wait in line for hours to receive food. Fights often break out in line as they wait.

One morning, as Charlie helped the other volunteers prepare breakfast, a fight broke out in the distribution line. The police were called in to calm down the situation, which

had gotten out of control. With so many people in a very small space pushing and shoving, the police mistook who was unruly and beat an Afghan man.

“The man was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. He was doing what he was told, following orders, and waiting his turn. He wasn’t part of the problem,” said Charlie.

When the incident was over, the police officer was sobbing with regret.

“At the end of breakfast I stood with the beaten Afghan man who was standing by the gate, crying,” said Charlie. “All I could do was put my hand on his shoulder and tell him I was sorry and that he will be okay.”

“But no one really knows if he will be okay.”

Hundreds of children run around the camp throughout the day, many of whom are unaccompanied minors. With no schools and nothing to do, the kids are bored and often end up in trouble. “The children want attention, so they act out to get negative attention. They steal or get into fights,” said Charlie. “There is no future for them here.”

Human traffickers wait just outside the camp gates.

More than a quarter of the children Charlie saw did not



An estimated 7,600 asylum seekers live on the Greek Island of Lesbos. Moria, the largest camp on the island, is a former military base. "Conditions have worsened since I was here last," says TMS Global's Charlie Chastain. "You can tell the people are more desperate." Since 2015, the Chastains have taken regular trips to refugee camps. Recently, they have relocated to be closer to the camps, in order to engage more deeply. "None of us is able, nor are we called, to help every one of the thousands of refugees coming into Europe," says Miki Chastain. "Instead, we are each called to serve faithfully those individuals whom God brings into our lives."

have socks, and the temperatures dipped below freezing at night. The floor of the cafeteria tent had rotted through after years of excessive use. Charlie's friends and supporters donated money enabling him to purchase socks for many of the children, as well as a new floor for the eating area. "We can't solve so many of the issues related to the refugee crisis," said Charlie, "but anything we can do to improve their lives really does make a difference."

Each time a truck arrives with new refugees, inhabitants flock to the front entrance to see if they can find lost family members. As Charlie passed by the camp gate one morning, a truck transporting refugees arrived at Moria. A man near Charlie started smiling and waving crazily at someone he recognized. The man said, "That is my brother! I thought he was dead!" Mercies populate the darkest places.

Despite the complexities and emotional toll that comes with serving refugees, Charlie and Miki desire to show the self-giving love of Jesus to people who have lost nearly everything. Their family has moved from Tallinn, Estonia closer to the camps so they can volunteer more often.

"When God calls individuals to one another in the midst of

crisis, His work of healing, reconciliation, and transformation flows in every way, to everyone involved," says Miki Chastain. "We are asking God to provide abundant humility, discernment, courage, and peace as He reveals His plan for our family." †



*Cross-cultural workers since 2009, **Charlie and Miki Chastain** and their three children presently serve among refugee communities. If your church would like to learn more about how you might help minister among Europe's refugees, contact [charliechastain@mac.com](mailto:charliechastain@mac.com).*

*Several TMS Global workers volunteer among refugees. For their stories, check out *Unfinished* #62, "Rediscovering hospitality: Getting serious about welcoming the stranger," at [www.tms-global.org](http://www.tms-global.org).*



## Regional gatherings bring cross-cultural workers together for education, retreat



### Welcoming our new cross-cultural workers

Six new cross-cultural workers were recently approved to serve with TMS Global. These new team members (*shown to the right*) plan to serve in Peru, Thailand, Albania, and a country yet to be determined. Thank you for praying for them as they discern their next steps and follow the Lord to serve cross-culturally. For more information about how your church could partner in ministry with one of these workers, contact [activate@tms-global.org](mailto:activate@tms-global.org).

Presently TMS Global cross-cultural workers serve in 35 countries.

*Above, photos by Jonathan Duncan and Isaac Wheaton*



In recent months, TMS Global held two regional gatherings. During these events, cross-cultural workers and staff came together for several days of teaching, rest, community, and prayer.

Jim Ramsay, vice president for global operations, made these gatherings biannual in 2009. “These events are an integral part of building community and common purpose across the 35 places where our people serve,” said Ramsay. “They also provide an excellent setting for training in ministry skills and spiritual renewal.”

Cross-cultural workers serving in Europe, Africa, and Asia gathered in Melaka, Malaysia from October 24-30, 2017. More than 150 people attended, including member-care professionals and guests.

**Guest speaker:** Bruce Olson, a legendary cross-cultural worker who has served in Colombia for the past 55 years, spoke at TMS Global’s Regional Gathering in South America (lower right photo). Olson ministered among the Motilone Indians, a remote people group who were generally hostile to outsiders. He managed to make contact with the Motilone and has lived among them ever since. Go to our website [tms-global.org](http://tms-global.org) to read Olson’s remarkable story.

Another gathering was held January 16-22, 2018 just outside of Bogotá, Colombia for cross-cultural workers serving in North and South America. Nearly 60 people attended the event, which featured guest speaker Bruce Olson, who has served as a missionary to the Motilone Indians for more than 55 years.

At both events, programming was planned for the 50 Third-Culture Kids (TCK) in attendance. TMS Global’s TCK coordinators assist in helping families survive and thrive on the field. “Children who grow up outside of their passport country can sometimes find it difficult to know where they belong,” explains Ramsay. “We work to alleviate that by creating a strong sense of community with one another.”

“I love to see the connections that take place at our gatherings. It reminds me of a joyful family reunion.”—Jim Ramsay

## They are on their way!

These cross-cultural workers are newly arrived in their places of service. Thank you for praying for them.



### Richard and Amanda Coleman – Ethiopia

Richard, Amanda, and their four children are serving in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Colemans will be partnering with an Ethiopian-led ministry, lending their skills and experience to the work of equipping and mobilizing Ethiopian believers to live out their faith in word and deed.



### Bethany Christolear – Kenya

Bethany serves in Kenya with Life for Children Ministry. This ministry provides meals, educational expenses, healthcare, and expresses the love of Jesus to the orphans and street children with whom it works.

### Unnamed couple – South Asia

This couple serves as teachers and healthcare providers in an unreached area of South Asia.



## Praying for your cross-cultural workers

**Try this:** Pray for insight into how to bring the peace of Christ to people around them. Ask that they would embody the love of Christ in their homes, neighborhoods, churches, workplaces, and cities as they do the works and speak the words of Jesus. Shown here: Christian and Angelica Dickson, who serve in Paraguay.

## New book by Romal Tune, TMS Global staffer, recently released

*Love is an Inside Job* chronicles Tune's path from brokenness to healing.



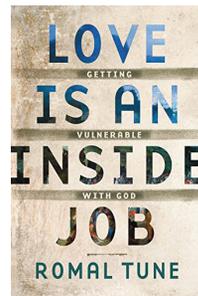
Romal Tune, TMS Global's senior advisor to the president for diversity and inclusion initiatives, recently published a new book. *Love is an Inside Job: Getting vulnerable with God* details Tune's personal journey to healing and self-love.

Tune is the son of a drug-addicted, single-parent mother, who herself inherited deeply ingrained obstacles to self-love. Tune escaped poverty through joining the military. He later graduated from Howard University and earned his Master of Divinity from Duke School of Divinity. Tune became a pastor, a sought-after speaker, and a social entrepreneur.

Despite his outward image of success, Tune continued to struggle with hidden childhood trauma. Feeling like a failure and questioning his faith and will to live, Tune made a choice not to give up, but to examine his life through counseling.

In his work with TMS Global, Tune draws on his own experiences as he engages with multi-cultural leaders around the world. His message is that emotionally healthy men are crucial to thriving communities.

*Love is an Inside Job* will empower readers to face their past, embrace the love of God, and learn to truly love themselves.



*"Every story in this book says, 'There's a way through'—if you are willing to do hard inner work and give yourself to God's love. For those in search of inner peace and deeper meaning, this book will serve as a guide, a sign of hope."—Parker Palmer, author of Let Your Life Speak and The Courage to Teach.*

*Love is an Inside Job*, by Romal Tune, was published by FaithWords and is available on Amazon and other retailers.

## TMS Global welcomes new staff members



**Regina Bergeron**  
*Chief Development Officer*

Regina serves as TMS Global's chief development officer, leading the advancement, communications, and church ministry departments of TMS Global.

Regina, who previously served as a cross-cultural witness in Mozambique, has more than 20 years of experience serving with Christian nonprofit organizations.

Regina has extensive experience in many types of fundraising and marketing strategies, and is a certified coach for the Fundraising Executive program. She is passionate about coaching the next generation of ministry leaders.



**Rhonda Dahlin**  
*Director of Church Partnerships*

Rhonda serves as the director of church partnerships for TMS Global. She helps equip church leaders to cast a vision for missions in their local congregation and to help strategically live out that mission.

A graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary, Rhonda recently planted a church with her husband in Madison, Alabama, where she previously served as the director of missions for a large congregation.

## TMS Global voices: John and Suzanne Spencer

John and Suzanne Spencer have faithfully supported TMS Global for a number of years. John worked as a radio astronomer for the United States Navy for 40 years, and Suzanne served as a gerontologist. After retiring, Suzanne felt called to pastoral ministry and pastored three small churches on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

“TMS Global understands how to prepare people who feel called to cross-cultural ministry so they can be as effective as possible,” says Suzanne. “Now that I am in my seventies, I know I am not going to be the missionary that I thought, as a little girl, I wanted to be. However, I can invest time, funds, and energy in support of TMS Global and share with people that this ministry is a good place to carry the Word. That’s something that I can do to fulfill what Jesus has taught me to do.”



## Celebrating TMS Global’s founding first lady

Alice Maclin, the widow of TMS Global’s founding president, H.T. Maclin, celebrated her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday recently. For 20 years, Alice and H.T. served as cross-cultural workers in Kenya and the Congo, where they reared their four children. Upon returning to the US, Alice worked as a professor at DeKalb College in Decatur, Georgia where she developed the first English as a Second Language department and authored several manuals on the subject. TMS Global is indebted to the Maclin family for their legacy of passion and faithfulness in sharing the love of Jesus with people around the globe. Happy birthday, Alice! We love you! The humility and joy that you and H.T. sowed into this ministry continues to mark this community!

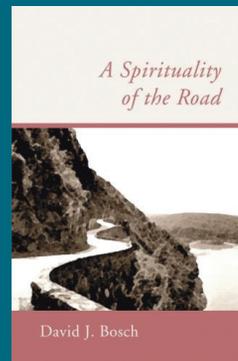
*Shown here: Alice with Ari Morsella, director of member care for TMS Global.*



### Malory Sanvidge Church Ministry Administrative Coordinator

Malory assists the church ministry team by managing communications and by providing crucial logistical and administrative services for church ministry events. She previously served on a World Race team, ministering in 11 countries in 11 months, and she is currently pursuing her master’s degree in clinical health counseling at Richmond Graduate University in Atlanta.

## TMS Global cross-cultural workers recommend:



### ***A Spirituality of the Road*** by David Bosch

“We’ve read this book again and again over the past 15 years or so,” writes one couple. “It’s 90 pages maxed out with wisdom for Christian mission.” Another online reviewer writes: “This book is comfort and support for all witnessing Christians, and especially

for all who are engaged in pastoral ministry. Based on Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians, Bosch demonstrates that the way of discipleship is also the way of the cross. There is glory, but always cross before glory.”



## A CHURCH ON MISSION

IMAGINE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF MISSIONS BECAME YOUR CHURCH'S FOCUS. THIS IS THAT STORY.

As a child, Piper Kirkpatrick attended Asbury United Methodist Church. This Madison, Alabama congregation began 16 years ago to partner with TMS Global to increase its mission outreach.

“Starting as a preschooler, kids at Asbury UMC are taught to be engaged in missions,” says Rhonda Dahlin, TMS Global’s director of church partnership and a former staff member at Asbury UMC. “Children have mission outreach opportunities throughout their elementary school years. In the fifth grade, kids are allowed to travel on their first international mission trip. Junior high and high school ministries coordinate monthly local mission nights, as well as an annual local mission trip and

an international mission trip. By the time a student graduates, missions has become a fundamental part of his or her faith.”

TMS Global’s church ministry team partners with local churches across the country, mentoring congregations as they

“When I was in the sixth grade, I went on my first international mission trip to Costa Rica,” remembers Piper. ... “The experience made me wonder why I didn’t share my faith more openly at home.”

take the next step in outreach. Dahlin explains, “One of our primary aims is to move missions from a program of the church to missions being the core DNA of the church.”

Asbury UMC adopted the concept

and integrated missions into every aspect of the life of the church. For almost seven years, Dahlin coordinated Asbury UMC’s mission ministries.

Piper absorbed the missions experiences and teachings as she attended church through middle school. “When I was in the sixth grade, I went on my first international mission trip to Costa Rica,” remembers Piper. “The trip was formative in the way I began to view life as a mission.”

On the trip, Piper shared her testimony in front of a few hundred students in Costa Rica. “The experience made me wonder why I didn’t share my faith more openly at home,” she said. Piper began to share her testimony



In 2002, Asbury United Methodist Church in Madison, Alabama began partnering with TMS Global. "Asbury really caught the vision that missions is the mission of the church, and they ran with it," remembers Dick McClain, former TMS Global president, who helped "coach" Asbury UMC in missions. "I'll never forget the director of children's ministries. Armed with the conviction that missions needed to be expressed through every ministry of the church, she established as one of the main goals of the elementary school program that Asbury UMC's kids would 'hear' about missions, 'see' about missions, and 'do' missions by the time they graduated into the middle school program."

*Shown here: Asbury UMC youth conduct a Vacation Bible School in an unevangelized village in the mountains of Panama.*

during local outreaches in Madison. She began to see her school as a mission field and became a Christian Club leader.

Now in college, Piper has continued to make missions a priority in her life. She is studying theological and biblical studies at Wheaton College and plans to pursue full-time ministry after graduation. She currently works for National School Project, a ministry designed to see a

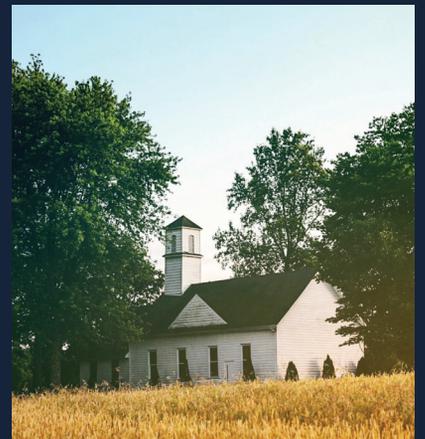


student-led, church-supported, campus awakening to the love of Jesus Christ in every public school. Piper disciples students in Chicago-area public schools and teaches them how to share the gospel in their contexts.

"I want to continue to equip students to reach their school campuses for Jesus Christ," says Piper. When missions becomes more than a program, everything changes. †

As a child, Piper Kirkpatrick was introduced to missions at Asbury United Methodist Church. Now among other things, she disciples students in Chicago-area public schools and teaches them how to share the gospel in their contexts.

## No matter your church size, we can help



If your church is seeking to become more active in mission, contact our church ministry team. At no cost to your church, TMS Global will offer its "Activate Training," a mission event designed especially for your mission team and other key leaders. In addition, a trained coach can help guide your leadership in developing an outreach plan unique for your church. Contact our church ministry team at 800.478.8963, ext. 9046, or [cm@tms-global.org](mailto:cm@tms-global.org).

# In Peru's rainforest, the gospel is spreading

Surrounded by terrorists and drug traffickers, an oppressed people group in a remote region of Peru respond to Jesus.



More than 60 percent of Peruvian territory is covered by the Amazon rainforest, but only five percent of Peruvians live in this area. Among them are the Asháninka people, most of whom are subsistence farmers who fish and hunt to survive.

Arthur and Mary Alice Ivey have served with TMS Global in Peru for 17 years. During that time, God has worked through the Iveys to impact thousands of Peruvians. The Iveys created a program that trains Peruvians to disciple others, which has resulted in more than 8,500 people being discipled in following Jesus. These discipleship groups have multiplied all over Peru, and Peruvian missionaries are ministering in the jungle regions.

Many of the leaders who work with the Iveys are bivocational. Arthur developed a farm to enable leaders to earn enough income so they can continue to serve in ministry. The farm is near a community of Asháninka people and grows cocoa and coffee.

The Asháninka are a people group residing in the rainforest region of Peru. Most of the Asháninka are subsistence farmers who have small farms and fish

and hunt to survive. The Asháninka were decimated when nearly 80 percent of their population was killed by rubber tappers (1839–1913) who enslaved the people. Maoist guerrillas, drug traffickers, oil companies, and other groups have continued to encroach upon Asháninka land.

Arthur and some of his discipleship leaders approached the Asháninka regarding the possibility of holding a medical clinic in their village. Arthur's team was welcomed in, and a short-term medical team from the US was able to minister to the residents. Some of the Asháninka accepted Jesus as Lord, and the gospel is spreading in their communities. Arthur and his team have continued to minister to the Asháninka in the months following the medical clinic.

Drug traffickers and terrorists are plentiful throughout the jungle, and

the Asháninka have been impacted by violence in the area. A mass grave of 800 Asháninka was found, believed to be the result of terrorists.

“The Asháninka have told us that no terrorists have come through their community since our team has been there,” said Arthur. “We pray that the gospel continues to spread, and that many more of the Asháninka would come to know Jesus as Lord.” †



Serving with TMS Global in Peru for the past 17 years, **Arthur and Mary Alice Ivey** raise up disciple-makers among Peruvians.



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# FIND YOUR PLACE



## MEDICAL STUDENTS! CONSIDERING MISSIONS?

GreenLight:Medical is a 4-6 week, mentor-guided experience in healthcare missions for young adults. This mission adventure gives you the opportunity to explore real life in a cross-cultural ministry context and guides you as you listen to what God is doing in you and in the world. If you are a medical student interested in exploring missions, consider joining the GreenLight:Medical team to Ghana, West Africa, in February 2019.

For more information, see [www.tms-global.org/go](http://www.tms-global.org/go).

