



Many years ago, the subject of Christian television came up during a conversation I had with C.M. Ward, who had recently retired after 23 years as *Revivaltime* radio speaker. In comparing radio and television, Brother Ward observed, “The problem with television is that it’s so difficult to *let Jesus come through.*”

In missions, electronic media can reach many places where missionaries physically can’t go. The power of electronic media — whether broadcast on the Internet, television or radio — is undeniable. Media gives people the ability to disperse and multiply their message. This issue then becomes critical: “What is the message being multiplied?”

In most metropolitan communities in the United States, two or more Christian channels are available 24/7. Any casual perusal reveals one blatantly evident fact: The personality of people on television becomes central by nature of the visual medium. The person on the screen can become the primary focus instead of the message.

In New Testament times, photographs and audio recorders did not exist. The only people who knew what Paul the apostle actually looked like were those who had seen him in person. Only people who had actually heard him speak could recognize the sound of his voice. Yet in his epistles, his image and voice were not components in his message.

The goal of missionaries involved in broadcasting is not to create platforms for media celebrities. Rather, the focus of endeavors such as International Media Ministries, Asia Pacific Media Ministries and Unsión Television — the ministries featured in this issue — is our Master and how He can and will change lives if people are given the opportunity to hear about Him. Their message is simply Jesus...and that He is, as the Samaritans in John 4:42 were the first to declare, “the Savior of the world.”

The term *Christian celebrity* could be considered a contradiction in terms. We are Christians only by the grace of God and the sacrifice of His Son. The word *celebrity* comes from the word *celebrate*. The only Person we should truly celebrate is our Lord Jesus Christ.

For Christian television to be truly Christian, it must focus on and glorify Christ. As the apostle Paul said, “That in all things he might have the preeminence.”¹ In Christian communication, we need a holy fear of placing ourselves rather than Christ at center stage. Without that precaution, God may just lift His hand of blessing and leave us to our own dismal show.

In this issue you will read about several dedicated missionaries with a clear focus — not to promote themselves, but to communicate Jesus Christ and empower others to do the same in their own language and culture. They are “letting Jesus come through” the powerful electronic media that are vital to the “every available means” we use to evangelize a lost world.

— Randy Hurst, AG World Missions communications director

¹Colossians 1:18, NASB