

## **Message from the President: The Way I See It**

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The very real and current global economic woes create no lack of anxiety among us all. Followers of Jesus can gain perspective during these times through reminders from the pulpit reaffirming that “God is still in control.” I do not intend to minimize these necessary and truth-filled reminders; nonetheless, I believe followers of Jesus in this nation have become quite accustomed to a God who “fills in the blanks” for personal aspirations, which are, all too often, mistaken for God’s aspirations.

Could it be that what it means to be a follower of Jesus is receiving clarified perspective from places where the good news of Jesus Christ is most threatened? Church leaders I’ve met from Central Asia cannot conceive of a faith that does not include imprisonment. Iranian

leaders face torture and possible martyrdom with a confidence in Christ that unnerves me. The global economy impacts their lives, but, interestingly, they do not place it at the top of their list of major concerns.

This edition of the *Encounter Journal* provides examples of the reflections of a new generation of Issachar leaders—people who simply cannot accept business as usual because the future simply does not follow a predicted trajectory. Current times require the insights of Pentecostal leaders who understand the contemporary challenges. The issues to which leaders respond, I anticipate, will increasingly necessitate the breadth and depth of the new leaders of Issachar, like those whose work you find in this issue of the *Encounter Journal*.