

## THE CHRISTIAN EXECUTIVE IN 2035...A PEEK INTO THE FUTURE

By Dr. Merlin Switzer

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Fear grows in darkness; if you think there's a bogeyman around, turn on the light.

Dorothy Thompson

*When was the last time you pondered what life would be like in the future? What will your job be like? What will life be like for your children? Many of us have had such thoughts. This is a narrative of Ben Switzer, my son, in the year 2035. Ben will be thirty-five years old...a Millennial in full bloom. Join me in taking a peek into his possible future. He is the narrator of this scenario.*

It's Sunday morning, January 28, 2035...my birthday. As I sit on the balcony of my 100<sup>th</sup> floor San Francisco condo, looking out toward the Golden Gate Bridge Monument, I take a few minutes to reflect on my life as I sip on an energy elixir, a custom blended mixture of juice and pharmaceuticals that helps me adjust to time changes, having just returned late last night from visiting Multiplix's production partner in India. While hypersonic-jets make the flight in three hours, there is still a 12.5 hour time zone difference.

I was just promoted to Assistant Global Sales Manager with Multiplix, a global corporation, headquartered in Beijing, China. Though the company started in the U.S., a Chinese conglomerate purchased the company in 2025 and has maintained a regional office in San Francisco. Considering the size of the company's gross revenues, one might think it has a considerable number of employees. Not so; Multiplix outsources much of its non-core functions, like human resources and production.

I remember the day when I came to work at Multiplix as a graduate intern. It was a great learning experience. Near the end of my internship, my boss asked me if I would like to do some work as an independent contractor. I liked the idea of a flexible job that would fit with my upcoming doctoral studies.

Within a year, I was getting great results conducting data mining with some recently developed software that allowed me to find new clients for Multiplix. After five years, I had begun using some newly developed artificial intelligence, which not only improved my results, but brought opportunities with other companies, some of whom were competitors of Multiplix.

Unexpectedly, Multiplix offered me a job three years ago as Regional Vice-President. The job was going great, and then my boss in China asked me to help executives in other countries. Even though real-time voice interpretation software made my interaction with colleagues relatively easy, cultural context had created some issues. I had decided to inquire about a cultural business chip that had recently been developed. As a result, I was among the first to get a biometric connection inserted under the skin behind my left ear to accommodate the chip. This biometric connection enhanced my ability to learn...even while sleeping.

During one of my many trips to China, I met Ling. She was a colleague in Beijing. Ling means “delicate,” and she was delicate in some ways, but very strong in others. Like me, she had been raised in a Christian family. However, her family practiced their faith secretly in small home-based churches until 2020 when the government stopped persecuting Christians.

My job requires a lot of travel, which I enjoy...although my recent marriage to Ling has prompted me to consider installing a holographic office portal; allowing me to interact with colleagues and clients “face-to-face” without leaving my home office. My boss has encouraged me to do this.

I was brought back to the present when Ling reminded me that we needed to leave for church. We are members of the Global Christian Community Church. We could watch the service live, but preferred to go to a local facility where we can fellowship with others and watch a live holographic broadcast. There would be two speakers today, Pastors Miguel Santa Rosa from Brazil and Chun Lee from China. Both would be speaking from their respective churches to local and international audiences.

Global Christian Community Church obviously isn’t the traditional denominational church like the one I had attended as a child. I recall reading an article by Phyllis Tickle entitled, “The Great Emergence Has Emerged.” Though dated by at least fifteen years, her article chronicled the shift in church domination leadership from the Western hemisphere to the South and East – much like what has occurred with wealth as China and India became economic powerhouses.

I am saddened as I think about this, because I couldn’t help but believe that the liberalizing of America had throttled what Christ wanted to accomplish. However, like the Bible says in Galatians 6:7-8, “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life (NIV).”

Tickle had used the term “Gathering Center,” which referred to people of different faiths as they began to learn more about each other in urban work environments. Many learned they had more in common than differences. Now, some sixty percent of the population lives in urban areas.

A protestant metamorphosis had taken place between 2010 and 2025 when churches began to merge, particularly among Protestants. At the same time, the Christian faith was growing exponentially in other parts of the world. The Global Christian Community Church emerged in 2028.

As we emerged in the street below, a hyper-taxi was waiting for us. The streets were very quiet, since the City of San Francisco prohibited the use of personal vehicles within the city limits some years ago. That’s why the Golden Gate Bridge is a monument of a past era. Hyper-taxis are “smart taxis” that travel the city through computer controlled streets and intersections. One could travel across the city in minutes. Since they are solar/hydrogen powered, they are quiet and efficient.

The church service and speakers were very energizing. We prayed for the victims of another Muslim terrorist attack, this time coordinated against numerous churches throughout Europe. Muslims are now the majority ethnic group in France, Germany, and some of the smaller countries. There are significant cultural and political shifts going on in Europe.

After church, Ling and I decided to stop by the Global Market. We purchased a few items from among a wide variety of fruit and vegetables from around the world, including a rich variety of fresh and salt water aqua-crops. We are very blessed to have access to such an array of delectable delights, considering that there is a high demand for these fruits and vegetables. The world’s population of 7.2 billion and is projected to reach 9.2 billion people within fifteen years.

When we arrived back at our condo, Fredo, a robotic bellman, opened the door after a quick swipe of my thumb and a voice synthesizer authenticated my identity. At the elevator, a voice said, “Welcome back Mr. and Mrs. Switzer. Was your outing acceptable?” “Yes, it was very nice,” I replied. “How nice to live in a ‘smart condo,’” I thought. A second or two after the door closed, it opened again on the 100<sup>th</sup> floor. There had been no sense of movement or sound.

The condo door opened automatically as we approached. Just inside the door, Soledad, our personal robot, waited. “Welcome home,” she said merrily. “Hi, Soledad,” replied Ling, “When will dinner be served?” “I have it ready and will serve it as soon as you are ready,” responded Soledad. “How about in five minutes,” responded Ling. “Yes,” answered Soledad.

As I walked by my office, I noticed that I had a HD videogram from my boss who informed me that a client needed a specific part for a desalination plant in Africa. I knew this needed immediate attention.

Due to a decline in fresh water, desalination plants are commonplace. In some regions, this was the only source of fresh water. My computer had automatically turned on as I entered the room. I touched a parts icon to find out where the closest part was located. It was in India. As I clicked on a map to designate where the part needed to go, I knew that within an hour the part would be dispatched via a drone-operated airplane.

After a gourmet dinner, Ling and I continued discussing our first child. Should we preplan its genetic characteristics? Should Ling carry the baby or let a birthing chamber handle this task, as some of their friends had done? What does the Bible have to say about this?

As my head hit the pillow, the window shades closed and lights automatically dimmed. I thought about the week ahead...a meeting in Beijing, make an appointment to have a holographic portal installed, check to make sure the part arrived safely in Africa, meet with a vendor in India, and contact our pastor for Biblical input about family planning. "Have I forgotten anything?" I mused as I drifted off to sleep.

## **Bio**

Dr. Merlin Switzer works exclusively in the field of leadership. He holds a Doctor of Strategic Leadership with an emphasis in Leadership Coaching. Dr. Switzer is a leadership coach, consultant, trainer, and conference speaker. He has worked with numerous leaders and organizations across the U.S. to help leaders be more effective. More recently, he has worked with leaders in Ecuador and Cambodia.

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