



**CHURCH OF GOD**  
**EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION**

**Nairobi, Kenya**  
**August 20-23, 2007**

**EVANGELIZATION:**  
**REACHING THE AFRICAN HARVEST**

**Jack C. Nkandu, MADCF**  
**C.E. Coordinator**  
**Central Africa**

# **EVANGELIZATION: REACHING THE AFRICAN HARVEST**

**Jack C. Nkandu, MADCF**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The church has been given the Great Commission to share the good news of redemption (Matthew 28:18-20). This mission aims at the eschatological gathering of the nations under God's rule. It is concerned with reaching people who have not heard the gospel and have not confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Reaching the African harvest calls for us to step out of our comfort zones onto unfamiliar grounds. The church in Africa is growing, because God is still using ordinary people to reach the lost, but we must not close our eyes to the crisis within the church and to the challenges that have emerged. The church must be aware of the deep needs as far as stability and strength are concerned. There needs to be Scriptural-based preaching and teaching and a trained and developed leadership. There needs to be a renewed emphasis on godly leadership, both men and women demonstrating a lifestyle of evangelism. How can people believe in the supreme value of the gospel message if we do not practice it, if we do not spread it, and if we do not sacrifice either time or money? By the power of the Holy Spirit, we must overcome personal sin and faults so that we might walk in purity and holiness and truly shine as lights in the world. Furthermore, we must be a positive influence in the African harvest, and see people cut their ties with other gods and submit their hearts and lives to the Lord Jesus alone.

Every day thousands of babies are brought into this world, and thousands of people leave it. This is the situation in Africa. Millions never discover an alternative to the purposelessness and misery of their lives before passing into an eternity of darkness and pain. The Bible indicates that the person who has never heard about Jesus Christ is lost forever. Reaching the African harvest is God's mission, as well as an important part of church life in which each believer should be involved—developing relationships with the lost and then sharing the gospel with them through both verbal and life witness. This should not be limited to activities done by a few individuals, but witnessing is a whole process in which all believers can and should be actively engaged. Reaching the African harvest should involve establishing relationships with lost people so the gospel can be demonstrated and communicated in a way they understand. We have come to Nairobi, Kenya, to get more and more involved and to go back and get more people involved.

Thank you for all who have been involved in this divine investment. Thank you, Brother John Gregory, for making it possible for us to come together for such a time as this.



The book, *World Mission: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement*, edited by Jonathan Lewis, gives a picture of our task through an explanation of the terms *evangelism* and *evangelization*:

Evangelism and evangelization share the same nature (communication of the gospel) and purpose (to give a valid opportunity to accept Christ), but they differ. Evangelism is an activity; evangelization adds the dimension of a goal.

*Evangelism* is “making good news known.” How it is made known (and with what aims it is made known) has been the subject of considerable debate. The three Ps, denoting the types of evangelism, should not imply that they are mutually exclusive. Indeed, the most effective evangelism consists of all three—presence, proclamation, persuasion—being employed simultaneously.

**Presence.** “Presence” evangelism is that which radiates the character of Jesus by the quality of Christian character and concern registered in the life of the evangelist. To be specific, it is the type of evangelism reflected in the Christian’s care of the sick, his concern for the uneducated and poor, and his consistent godly life as a member of the community. In itself, “presence” evangelism does not denote a verbal witness as such, nor even close identification with the people.

**Proclamation.** Only the genuine good news of Jesus Christ can reproduce the church. Our task is to be sure we communicate the gospel and to select the appropriate means and media for this communication. At a minimum, this verbal proclamation is accomplished by preaching or personal testimony.

**Persuasion.** To produce results, proclamation must intend to evoke a positive response from those who hear the gospel. The gospel confronts people with the necessity to make a commitment to Jesus Christ. People must be urged to make a decision. The goal of evangelism is the making of disciples. Good evangelism is usually a balanced “three-Ps” evangelism.

“Evangelization” is in fact the goal of evangelistic activity. Evangelization has preeminently a “closure” perspective since it aims always at a comprehensive goal, such as evangelism throughout a people group, city, country, or the world. Evangelization then adds two more Ps to the list—planting and propagation.

**Planting.** Those who believe the gospel and make a commitment to Jesus Christ must be incorporated into the body of Christ. They must become members of a local assembly of believers. This church is the context in which they can grow in Christ and in which they can properly serve Christ.

**Propagation.** Evangelization aims at the planting of churches that are able to spread the gospel throughout their own people groups and beyond to penetrate for the first time still other people groups. The ultimate goal is always to complete world evangelization.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Jonathan Lewis, *World Missions: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement*, second edition, Part 2. *The Strategic Dimension, Strategy for World Evangelization: Evangelism vs. Evangelization*, pp. 6-7. This section is excerpted from S. C. Hawthorne, and R.D. Winter (1992). *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Study Guide* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1992 ed), p. 92.



Take note of Brad Gill's Challenge: "It is not enough for us today to go across the world and do a good job. We must work towards the goal of finishing the task of evangelization."<sup>2</sup> This is the mission of the church, and reaching the African harvest is a part of this task. The noun *mission* means first "a sending forth." It implies that there is some charge for which those sent forth are responsible. There is a purpose to be fulfilled. There is a mission to be carried out.

The mission of the church, composed of believers who shared a personal commitment to Jesus as Savior and Lord, is to be a redemptive body of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, growing toward Christian maturity through worship, proclamation and witness, nature and education, and ministry to the whole world that God's purpose may be achieved.<sup>3</sup>

The above statement helps us focus on the function of a church as valid expressions of her mission. The mission was clearly outlined by Christ before His ascension. The Great Commission in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark points out the task of the church. The Gospel of Mark states: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Matthew says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things" (Matthew 28:19-20). These Scriptures show us that true outreach or evangelization is achieved only when the ultimate goal of discipleship is reached.

Jesus gave us the great love commandment, to love God with our whole being and our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:37-40). This is our very purpose for being. When combined with the Great Commission, love is the unmistakable mark of the church which defines her form and function.

Rick Warren, in his classic book on church growth, expresses this truth in a memorable slogan: "A Great Commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church."<sup>4</sup> A careful study of the Great Commission makes it clear that our calling is to make disciples, a process that involves the entire church in baptizing, teaching, equipping, and mobilizing the disciples for ministry.

### THE CHALLENGE

The harvest field is larger than when Jesus spoke the Great Commission. More people need to be reached with the gospel, more laborers need to respond to the Lord's call, prepare themselves, and begin gathering in the harvest. Jesus gave a direct command to the church to evangelize the

---

<sup>2</sup>B.A. Gill. "A Church for Every People," *Church Growth Bulletin*, 1979, 15 (6), p. 280.

<sup>3</sup>Howard P. Colson and Raymond M. Rigdon, *Understanding Your Church's Curriculum*, revised edition (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982), pp. 88-90.

<sup>4</sup>Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), p.102.



world. This is not limited to activities done by a few overseas, but is a whole process in which all believers can and should be actively involved.

In Luke 15, we have the stories of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. Jesus gave this story in response to religious leaders who criticized Him for talking to the outcast of society. The lesson in all three stories is that God wants lost people found, and heaven rejoices when sinners repent and are reconciled to God. The message to evangelize and reach the harvest is there and clear for all to see.

Jesus taught us what to expect in the harvest field in the story of the four soils (Matthew 13:1-23). The word is brought to people who are resistant, to others who show little interest, to others who bear no fruit, and to others who are receptive and bear fruit.

Joel F. Williams offers the following insight into the story of the sower and what it teaches about the sovereignty of God and in the work of missions:

One of the odd features of Jesus' parable is that the sower is apparently a wasteful farmer. Without a great deal of concern, the sower throws seed along the road, on rocks, among thorns, as well as on good soil. The common practice at that time of plowing after sowing may partially explain the sower's actions. Also, some loss is simply the typical condition of farming. Yet the abundant harvest is clearly the results of God's blessing and not the sower's skill. The size of the harvest is out of proportion to the ability of the sower. Jesus tells a similar parable about a sower who scatters seeds and then goes to sleep, only to find later that the seeds sprout and grow all on their own without his help (Mark 4:24-30). An underlying principle that helps us to make sense of both parables is that ultimately the harvest is the work of God. This is God's mission. He sends, He empowers, and He produces the results. The ultimate purpose for the mission is to bring glory to God, so that a multitude from every nation, tribe, and language might declare the praises and honor and glory and power of God for all eternity. We are called to participate in this mission because we have convictions concerning the importance of God and His will and because God has chosen to include human agents in the accomplishment of His work. God stands at the center of mission as it is described in the New Testament.<sup>5</sup>

Jesus told His disciples: "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matthew 9:37-38, *NIV*). We have to see that the harvest in Africa is plentiful and ripe.

Jesus emphasized the importance of seeing when he said: "My food . . . is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:34-35, *NIV*).

---

<sup>5</sup>William J. Larkin Jr. and Joel F. Williams, *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach* (Orbis, 1998), pp. 239–240.



The time is short, so we ought to redeem the time. The night will come when we cannot work. While we still have time, we must work hard to reach and reap the harvest. The African harvest is wide, and time will not permit me to address all the groups of people who are posing a formidable challenge, but I will address a few—the world of Islam, urbanization, youth, culture, HIV/AIDS epidemic, the poor and hurting are some of the groups before our eyes.

### THE WORLD OF ISLAM

Islam competes for recognition as the “right religion”<sup>6</sup> for the African Continent. This is the core of the unreached people of our world. We are familiar with the term 10/40 Window. These people live in a rectangular-shaped Window, often called “The Resistant Belt.”<sup>7</sup> The Window extends from West Africa to eastern Asia, from 10 degrees north to 40 degrees north of the equator. This region encompasses the majority of the world’s Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists—billions of spiritually impoverished souls. Committed Christians are focusing on the 10/40 Window, because no other area is so blatantly in need of the truth that salvation is only in Jesus.

*The 10/40 Window.* This is home to the majority of the world’s unevangelized people. Of the world’s 50 least evangelized countries, 37 are within the 10/40 Window. Yet those 37 countries comprise 97 percent of the total population of the 50 least evangelized countries.<sup>8</sup>

The Church of God World Missions has targeted 10 unreached people groups. Africa alone has contributed four.

1. The Berber of Morocco
2. The Hausa of Ghana
3. The Selale Oromo of Ethiopia
4. The Zaramo of Tanzania

Jean Isch says, “Islam presents a permanent spiritual challenge for the church and for evangelism. It is one of the church’s largest mission fields and has the fewest number of missionaries.”<sup>9</sup> Almost every day, something in the media—both print and electronic—calls our attention to the Muslim world. Jean Isch gives an example of the spread of Islam in Togo, where in January 1997, an Islamic association was created with the goal of reaching every household in the country for Islam. The missionaries carrying out this task are merchants sent from Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, and other

---

<sup>6</sup>Terry C. Hubert, *World Missions Today* (Evangelical Teacher Training Association, 1979), p. 41.

<sup>7</sup>William J. Larkin Jr. and Joel F. Williams, *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach* (Orbis, 1998), pp. 7-17.

<sup>8</sup>Jonathan Lewis, editor. *World Mission: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement*, second edition, Part 2, *The Strategic Dimension* (William Carey Library, 1994), pp. 7-18.

<sup>9</sup>Jean Isch, *Even to the Ends of the Earth* (A Publication of SIM, 2002), pp. 12–13.



Islamic countries.<sup>10</sup> Churches must adopt these countries and shoulder the responsibility to pray for evangelism and those called into these countries and for the rest of the 10/40 Window.

The ultimate goal of the Church God World Missions is to see churches planted among these groups and those outside of Africa. Islam is posing a great challenge in many African countries. There are now large mosques in countries where traditionally there were almost no Muslims. In Zambia, the Islamic Library is just opposite the University of Zambia. Islam seems to be triumphing on all fronts, and in some countries, it threatens the very existence of the church. Islam is moving ahead. The challenge is right in front of the church's nose. The church in Africa has no choice but to accept the challenge as best as it can, and fulfill its role as the salt of the earth in the Muslim world.<sup>11</sup> It can be done, and will be done. The Church of God is already harvesting among the Muslim in Zanzibar, Busmen in Botswana, and Pigmies in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

### URBANIZATION

This is one of the major sociological changes taking place in Africa. People, especially the young, are moving to towns and cities in large numbers, hoping to find a better life than they had in their rural homes. What they often find is something very different from what they expected. Most cities in Africa, Johannesburg in South Africa, Nairobi in Kenya, and others are dangerous. There is crime and a general lack of concern by people on the street for the welfare of one another. One of the greatest problems in the cities is unemployment. Urban areas of cities are overcrowded with homeless and displaced people, war refugees, handicapped people, beggars, and abandoned street children.

A study found that in 1950 there were only two cities in Africa with a population of one million or more people. By 1997 there were 37 cities with a population of one million or more.<sup>12</sup> The problem of dire poverty dominates most cities. Proper housing is hopelessly expensive. Ethnic and racial diversity produces tension, violence, and open evidence of tribalism as people from each ethnic group desperately struggle to favor and help their own people. There is a great problem concerning the effects of urbanization on the souls of individuals. City life is leading to major psychological and emotional problems. People moving to the city can lose many of their traditional values and their sense of personal identity. Young people living in the city often lose the all-important African core value of life in community. There is materialism, secularism, godless people,

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Africa Ministry Resources, *The Church Leader in Africa* (Vol.7, No. 3, Third Quarter, 1997), p.1.



godless values, greed, individualism, and selfishness instead of Christian values of generosity, self-sacrifice, humility, and support for the community.

In order to confront the enormous challenge of reaching the harvest of urbanization in Africa, and taking the gospel to these diverse groups of people, prayer must be solidly at the forefront of the list of priorities before any activity. Unreached rural places certainly need the gospel, yet more attention must be given to these masses of unsaved and unchurched people in the cities. The cities are offering unique opportunities to reach great numbers of people. There is an urgent call to the church for culturally relevant ministries of evangelism and discipleship. Each person comprising the millions of people in our cities is a human being, made in the image of God. Each needs Jesus Christ and salvation through Him.

Most of our churches are rural and those in towns and cities are on the outskirts. Roger S. Greenway believes God is behind the “migration of masses of people to the cities, because He is creating new opportunities for spreading the gospel among unreached people coming from remote towns and villages.”<sup>13</sup> It is our task to take hold of the opportunity and carry out Christ’s command. We have to harvest the cities and plant city churches. In some countries, it is very difficult to locate our churches, even if you ask for directions, because they are hidden.

### CULTURAL CRISES

There is the challenge of cultural barriers: differences in language, custom, religion, values, and attitudes. Cultural barriers separate people and make it difficult for the message of Christ to move from one group to another. No culture is best. No culture is right in everything. There are things in every culture that must be rejected by sincere Christians because they are not pleasing to God. There are also beneficial things that can be learned from every culture. Tribalism and ethnic prejudice is not pleasing to God. Here we have neither the time nor the space to examine the concept of culture and all of its ramifications in detail, but we will focus on the specific context of evangelism. The gospel has demands and Biblical values that, in some ways, force a confrontation with culture. Some aspects of our cultures are incompatible with the gospel, but that does not mean we must reject our culture in order to accept and live out the gospel. We must submit our culture to the authority of Scripture. Locals and partners in reaching the African harvest must be honest enough to admit and accept that our own culture is not better and no less sinful than any other culture. Understanding that our own culture needs the gospel is an indispensable starting point for taking the gospel to others. It is also worthy to point out that there are also cultural elements that do not contradict gospel values, and which may be kept and respected.

---

<sup>13</sup>Roger S. Greenway, *Go and Make Disciples: An Introduction to Christian Missions* (P&R Publishing, 1999), p.107.



In a local culture, there are traditions and practices that raise no objections, even if they are not Biblical, because they do not violate the Word of God and its ethics. In evangelism, the people's culture must be respected. There is no inferior or superior culture. In its mission to evangelize, the church must take pains not to impose its own culture. Rather, it must do its utmost to understand the culture, customs, traditions, and language of the people in order to better communicate the gospel. Christians will always be harried by the selfish ambitions of their own cultures. The church is called to proclaim the gospel and to communicate it to a variety of languages and cultures. This requires, on our part, a good understanding of the culture and feelings of the ethnic groups to which the gospel is taken. Training must include the study of cultures and how to communicate the gospel from one culture to another. "We must not change the content, but we must clothe the gospel and its values in appropriate cultural dress. This is easier said than done."<sup>14</sup>

### **HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC**

In June 1990, as part of an international conference in Bangkok, Thailand, several organizations considered the theme "The Church: Serving Man in Need." Mention was made that the Christian community must react and become involved in problems such as social breakup, hunger, natural disasters, the AIDS epidemic, environmental degradation and ghettos of poverty in our large cities. "All of this," the conference speaker said, "forces us to respond together, by finding appropriate means based on solid theological foundations."<sup>15</sup> The following list gives some alarming facts about the extent of AIDS in Africa:

- Forty-two million people are living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, and 29.4 million of them are in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- There are now 16 countries in Africa in which more than one in ten adults (aged 15-49) are infected with HIV/AIDS. In seven countries, all in the South, at least one adult in five is living with HIV.
- Worldwide, 13 million children are living as orphans because of AIDS. Eleven million of them are in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- By 2010, 20 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa will have lost one or both parents to AIDS. By then, 15-25 percent of all the children in a dozen of these countries will be orphans, mostly due to AIDS.

---

<sup>14</sup>Jean Isch, *Even to the Ends of the Earth* (A Publication of SIM, 2002), p. 93.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 69.



- Two-thirds of all people living with HIV/AIDS are in Sub-Saharan Africa, though only ten percent of the world's population lives there.
- Ninety percent of those living with HIV/AIDS are not aware that they have contracted the illness.
- Many, if not most, African women living with HIV/AIDS were infected by their husbands.
- Infection rates in young African women are far higher than in young men. In some African countries, the rate of infection in teenage girls is four times that of boys.
- Some 800,000 African children were newly infected with HIV/AIDS in the year 2001.
- Three and one-half million Africans were newly infected in 2002.
- If things continue as they are now, about half of the adolescent boys now living in South Africa or Zimbabwe will die from AIDS. In Botswana, where nearly 40 percent of adults are infected, two-thirds of the adolescents will die of AIDS unless something major changes.
- In Eastern and Central Europe, one million are infected. In Western Europe, half a million are infected.
- Ninety-five percent of new infections are in developing countries.
- Of the 14,000 new infections daily, there are 2,000 new infections in children under 15 years old, and 12,000 in the 15-49 age group.
- In the last 20 years, AIDS has killed ten times more people than all of the wars in Africa in the last 100 years.
- In six countries of Southern Africa, AIDS is expected to claim the lives of eight to 25 percent of today's practicing doctors within a few years.<sup>16</sup>

The situation above has produced many orphans, street children and widows. For those we can reach with the message of hope and life, and who put their trust in the Savior, this life, no matter what its physical woes, takes on new meaning. Death is no longer an inevitable horror.

---

<sup>16</sup>Jean Garland and Dr. Mike Blyth, *AIDS Is Real and It's in Our Church*, pp. 112–113. This is based on UNAIDS reports from June 2000, 2001; *UNAIDS AIDS Epidemic Update*, December 2002 and 2003; *Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic* (UNAIDS/02.26E), UNAIDS, 2002; USAID Report 2001, UNAIDS Facts Sheets “AIDS and Population” and “HIV/AIDS in Africa,” *Africa's Orphaned Generations* (UNICEF 2003), and World Bank Report 2003.



## THE POOR AND THE HURTING

The poor, wherever they are, call us to bring them the gospel and Christian mercy. We must not ignore their cries. Poverty is one of the greatest problems in Africa today. Many cities have large shantytown areas filled with wretchedly poor people who lack many of the basic essentials of human life. There is no single cause of poverty. Personal sinful choices and complex social structures contribute to poverty, and so do misguided cultural ideas, natural and human disasters, and lack of appropriate technology. Some are poor because of their own laziness. Colonization is one reason for poverty today in Africa where centuries of colonial rule has left its legacy of poverty and dependence.<sup>17</sup>

Poverty means illiteracy, inadequate medical care, disease, and brain damage. As a result of malnutrition, there are millions of retarded children who become a problem in the future. Thousands of children die every day from infectious and parasitic diseases that are preventable. The children of the poor are 15 times more likely to die before their birthday.<sup>18</sup>

In reaching the African harvest, the church cannot abdicate social function. It is our responsibility to help meet the deepest needs. Other agencies may rightly share in fulfilling these aims, but no other institution can relieve the church of that obligation. The supreme task of the church—then, now, and for the future—is evangelism. It was the supreme task in the New Testament. It is also the supreme challenge facing the church today. Evangelism, as earlier pointed out, moves always in the direction of the unreached. It must focus on those without the gospel. There is no greater challenge to missions than that. But God is also concerned with all the needs of human beings, not just with their souls.

The hearts of people are open to the love of Christ when they are helped at a point of physical need in their lives. The true ministry of Christ will always be a holistic ministry to the whole person. At the same time, the church must carry out such ministries with godly wisdom. God's people must help needy people to become self-sustaining. They should help them even to be able to help others, rather than making them dependent on the help they receive.

It is only when people begin to help others and to reach out to others, rather than just thinking about their own needs and problems, that people are truly helped and truly changed. The poor need to be empowered. The poor should not be encouraged in anyway to perpetually depend on handouts. Our goal is to build up the dignity and responsibility of the poor and give them a sense of importance and value to God. They should not be degraded and made to feel dependent, helpless, hopeless, and

---

<sup>17</sup>Mahbub ul Haq, *The Poverty Curtain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p.162.

<sup>18</sup>Robert L. Stivers, *Hunger, Technology, and Limits to Growth: Christian Responsibility for Three Ethical Issues* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), p. 31.



useless. Help should not make the poor more helpless and dependent. There is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission for the world.

### **THE MOTIVATION FOR THE HARVEST**

Our supreme motive in reaching the African harvest should be out of love for the Lord and a desire to please Him. We also need to ask ourselves continually whether we truly believe our friends, relatives, and the heathen are forever lost unless they turn to Christ. We must understand that the mission of reaching the lost was not based on human works. God initiated the mission while humankind was still God's enemy, alienated from His presence and living in sin. Love motivated Him to minister within human cultures. He loved Israel as a father loves his son (Hosea 11:1-11). Even when Israel's disobedience forced God to forsake them, He shed divine tears. God's steadfast love motivated Him to send Jesus to die for humankind.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16, *NKJV*).

Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). His ministry was marked by healing and preaching the message of redemption. Through His death on the cross and resurrection, He continues to offer healing and redemption to all who would believe and act accordingly. God is love, and He expects His people to be characterized by love. Jesus gave us the great love commandment—love God with our whole being and our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:37 and Mark 12:30).

This is our very purpose for being. Combined with the Great Commission, this unmistakable mark of the church defines both her form and function. Jesus lost no opportunity to impress on His followers the deep compulsion of His own soul aflame with the love of God for a lost world. Everything He did and said was motivated by this consuming passion. His life was simply the revelation in time of God's eternal purpose to save a people for Himself, and this is what He wanted His disciples to learn, not in theory, but in practice.

Why get involved? First, we must admit that there have always been people who entered the work of the Lord for the wrong reasons. There may be elements of wrong motives hidden in the minds of even the most sincere missionaries. We should be aware that wrong motives might be present, and repent from them when they are discovered. We must have the right motives so that our service may be pure and acceptable to Him. Right motives for missions are taught in the Word of God and made alive in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit.



Roger S. Greenway gives the following right motives:

- The desire that God be worshiped and His glory known among all the peoples of the Earth.
- The desire to obey God out of love and gratitude by carrying out Christ's commission to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19, *NIV*).
- A burning desire to use every legitimate means to save the lost and win unbelievers to faith in Christ.
- Concern that churches grow and multiply, and that the kingdom of Christ be extended by words and deeds that proclaim the compassion and righteousness of Christ to a world of suffering and injustice.<sup>19</sup>

### **TOOLS FOR THE HARVEST**

In my conclusion, let me say the African harvest is ready, and the right tools must be employed for the task:

1. *Committed disciples.* Education makes up an indispensable function. It should be natural for a church to nourish, and develop individuals. The Great Commission was not given to converts, but disciples. Discipleship, and leadership training is a must for the Church of God in Africa. Jesus demonstrated God's mission by equipping leaders who continued the mission and changed the world after His departure. He refused to let the ministry pressure of today stop Him from investing in the ministry leaders of tomorrow, despite the demand placed upon Him by the crowd who followed Him. He prayerfully selected the Twelve in whom He invested. He challenged them to a deeper, personal commitment to Him. He trained them to carry out His mission on a wider scale. This priority, as Mike Fleischerman points out, is nonnegotiable for those who desire to follow in His steps. It is also nonnegotiable for reaching the African harvest. Only disciples can make disciples.

Thank you for the T.O.T (Training of Teachers) program which has transformed many leaders and their ministries in Africa. Thank God for the CIMS program. What a powerful tool! There must be a deliberate move to involve leaders and members of the church in Africa to participate in this program. I do agree with Charles H. Bowen III, that effective leadership is critical to any ministry.<sup>20</sup> If the work and the church in Africa are to be positive influences in the larger church and in the harvest fields, there must first be positive influences within the spiritual Kingdom where the

---

<sup>19</sup>Roger S. Greenway, *Go and Make Disciples: An Introduction to Christian Missions* (P&R Publishing 1999), pp.18-20.

<sup>20</sup>Charles H. Bowen III, "12 Destructive Pastoral Behaviors," *Ministries Today* (July/August 1999), p. 52.



Lord's body of believers assemble each Sunday. Unfortunately, this may not be the case in many of our churches today. Many churches are suffering from "leadership malfunction,"<sup>21</sup> such as, promotion of one's clan or tribe, carnal desires for positions, and holding on to traditions that do not help or build.

The words of Jesus Christ, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37), express vividly the need for trained and equipped church leaders for the harvest field. Mass production in factories is accomplished because of good organization and competent leadership.

Humankind exists as male and female. Qualification for leadership training and development must not be based on gender. Women in the Church of God in Africa have been active in evangelism and have been instrumental in the numerical growth of the church. A large portion of membership in many local churches consists of women. Given the necessary training and equipping, these women would be more effective and successful in their ministries. The church in Africa has to work through the problem of how to include women more fully in leadership training and development. Beverly LaHaye notes that women have been victims of cruel customs, tyrannical traditions, and inferior status over the years.<sup>22</sup> But is this the status Scripture has given them? The women themselves have accepted the common tradition that a woman's chief role is to be a homemaker, a mother, and to live contentedly in the background.

The church also needs to direct its primary evangelistic and discipleship efforts to win the youth, instead of planning the majority of its ministries around older people. There is a need to train and employ youth pastors and youth leaders whose entire responsibility is working with young people in the church. There should be no fear that the young people will change things which old people like and want to keep. The young people should not be confined only to singing. The promotion of youth training programs, and other activities directed towards winning and discipling them, will be a big plus, and an important strategy in harvesting other young people.

2. *Finances.* Businesses do not develop new programs without adequately training their personnel. The resources of time, personnel, talents, and finances are needed more and more today to reach the African harvest. Discipleship and leadership training is a must for both men and women in the church and for effectiveness in reaching and taking care of the African harvest. Since the church's mission is the commitment to reach the people of the world with the whole message of the kingdom of God, the local church must not only invest resources for the ministries and well being of the local congregation but also to reach the world harvest.

---

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Beverly LaHaye, *I Am a Woman by God's Design* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1980), p. 11.



Jesus emphasized the importance of giving our money for eternal values when He said: “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:20). People with a heart for missions will invest joyfully. Total church giving devoted to missions tends to increase as people learn of mission needs, have contact with mission personnel, and act on faith that God wants to use them. This works only when the congregation is spiritually alive, has a Biblically based concern for the spiritual condition of the lost, and understands its responsibility in reaching them. People who give stay in the church they give to, because they are tied to it through their stewardship. The more serious matter is that the church in Africa is heavily dependent on foreign aid, and this creates apathy on the part of believers. On the other hand, when people are challenged to give even out of their “affliction” like the Macedonian believers, their concern and burden for world evangelization increases. We must teach our people in Africa—the local church believers—to give generously and sacrificially. Paul said that even though the members of the New Testament churches in Macedonia were very poor, they gave very generously for the needs of others beyond their means (2 Corinthians 8:1-4). The reason they were willing to do this is because they first gave themselves to the Lord (2 Corinthians 8:5).

Wilbur O’Donovan points out, “Wholehearted commitment to Christ together with strict accountability and safeguards for the handling of church money is the key to generous giving in the church. When the Lord’s people are sure their money is being used for the purpose for which it was given, they will be much more willing to give.”<sup>23</sup> We must teach people to give, not in order that they may get back from God, but because it is God’s method for the saving of a lost world. He gave His best. We must teach our people to give sacrificially for the propagation of the gospel.

3. *The Holy Spirit.* It is only the Holy Spirit who enables believers to carry on the redemptive mission of evangelism. Robert E. Coleman points out that Jesus underscored this truth early in His own work by declaring that He was in cooperation with the “Spirit of the Lord.” It was by His virtue that He preached the gospel to the poor, healed the brokenhearted, proclaimed deliverance to the captive, opened the eyes of the blind, cast out demons and set at liberty those that were oppressed (Matthew 12:28; Luke 4:18). Jesus was God in revelation; but the Spirit was God in operation.<sup>24</sup>

Regarding the gospel message he had preached to the Corinthians, Paul declared, “My preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power” (1 Corinthians 2:4). He understood how pointless it would be to try winning people from spiritual darkness to light without the power of the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit to fill us over and

---

<sup>23</sup>Wilbur O’Donovan, *Biblical Christianity in Modern Africa* (Paternoster Press, 2006), p. 127.

<sup>24</sup>Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revel, A Division of Baker Book House, 1993), p. 65.



over again. To be effective in reaching the African harvest, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit. The world that Jesus died for is at stake, so we must do God’s work in His way—and that way is always Spirit-filled and Spirit-led.

4. *Prayer.* The impact of prayer and fasting to open communities for evangelism and church planting cannot be overemphasized. Prayer is undoubtedly the greatest resource in reaching the African harvest. It evidences the concern of individuals and their conviction that only supernatural intervention can accomplish this task of missions. God wants to provide workers, resources, and power in answer to prayers. Jesus said, “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:38, *NKJV*). Each believer can participate in effectual prayer. The potential for opening closed doors, overcoming opposition, winning groups of people to Christ, and providing funds is unlimited when backed with prayer power. In response to the prayers of believers, God often has intervened in the warfare against Satan, so that missions can have penetrating power. The link between prayer and the fulfillment of our mission to reach the African harvest cannot be debated, but the way we pray is crucial. In *Operation World*, we read: “Prayer is basic to the kingdom of God.” We are not talking about an extra option, nor about a last resort when all other methods have failed; without prayer, God’s plan for the world cannot be fulfilled. “We do not only pray for the work, prayer is the work.”<sup>25</sup>

How much time do we spend in prayer—praying for effectiveness in evangelism, praying for the lost? When was the last time we prayed and fasted? Do we do spiritual warfare against the forces of darkness over the world? It is when he had served God’s purpose in his generation, that David fell asleep. Future generations cannot serve our generation.

---

<sup>25</sup>Jean Isch, *Even to the Ends of the Earth* (A Publication of SIM, 2002), p. 167.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Africa Ministry Resources. *The Church Leader in Africa*. Vol. 7, No. 3, Third Quarter, 1979.
- Bowens, H. Charles III. "12 Destructive Pastoral Behaviors." *Ministries Today* (July/August 1999).
- Coleman, Robert E. *The Master Plan of Evangelism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Fleming H. Revell, A Division of Baker Book House, 1993.
- Colson, Howard P. and Raymond M. Rigdon. *Understanding Your Church's Curriculum*. rev. ed. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1982.
- Garland, Jean and Dr. Mike Blyth. *AIDS Is Real and It's in Our Church*. African Christian Textbooks TCNN, PMB 2020, Bukuru, Plateau State, Nigeria: revised ed. 2005.
- Gill, B.A. "A Church for Every People." *Church Growth Bulletin*, 1992.
- Greenway, Roger S. *Go and Make Disciples: An Introduction to Christian Missions*. P&R Publishing, 1999.
- Hawthorne S.C. and R.D. Winter. *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement: A Study Guide*. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1992.
- Haq, ul Mahbub. *The Poverty Curtain*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.
- Hubert, Terry C. *World Missions Today: Evangelical Teacher Training Association*, third ed., 1986.
- Isch, Jean. *Even to the Ends of the Earth*. A Publication of SIM, Canada, 2002.
- LaHaye, Beverly. *I Am a Woman by God's Design*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1980.
- Larkin, J. Jr. and Joel F. Williams. *Missions in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach*. Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis, 1998.
- Lewis, Jonathan, editor. *World Missions: An Analysis of the World Christian Movement*, second edition, Part 2. Pasadena, California: William Carey Library, 1994.
- O'Donovan, Wilbur. *Biblical Christianity in Modern Africa*. Columbia: Carlisle Columbia: Paternoster Press, 2006.
- Stivers, Robert L. *Hunger, Technology, and Limits to Growth: Christian Responsibility for Three Ethical Issues*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose-Driven Church*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.