

Great Commission MANUAL



How to make Christ's Great Commission
your Supreme Ambition

by Dr. Peter Hammond



*"Can that be called a sacrifice which is
simply paid back as a small part of a great debt
owing to our God, which we can never repay...
It is emphatically no sacrifice!
Say rather it is a privilege!"*



GREAT COMMISSION MANUAL

2014

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*"All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth.
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...
teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded..."*

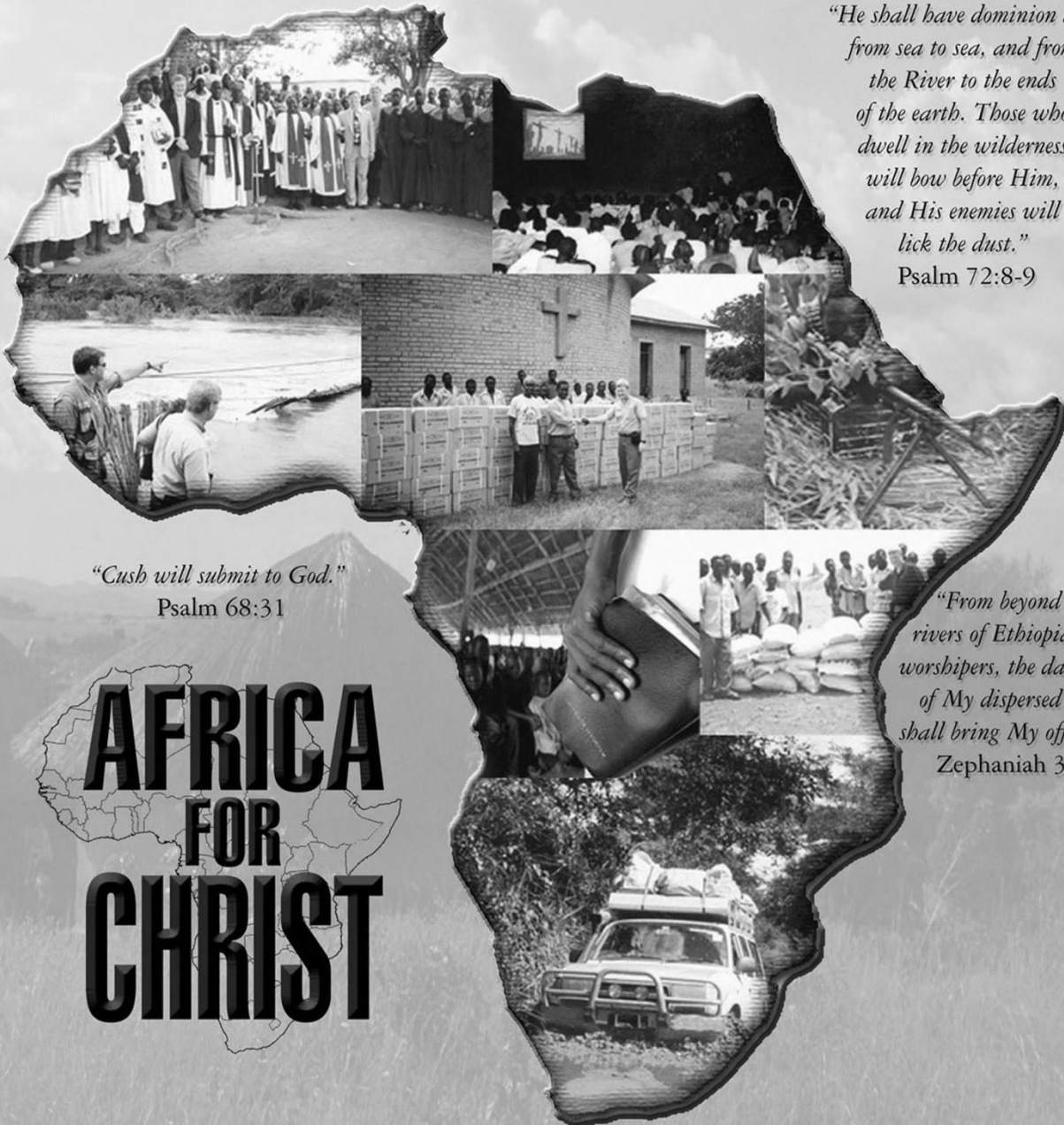
Matthew 28:18-20

*"...The harvest truly is plentiful,
but the labourers are few. Therefore,
pray the Lord of the harvest to send out
labourers into His harvest." Matthew 9:37-38*

PRAY FOR AFRICA

*"He shall have dominion also
from sea to sea, and from
the River to the ends
of the earth. Those who
dwell in the wilderness
will bow before Him,
and His enemies will
lick the dust."*

Psalm 72:8-9



*"Cush will submit to God."
Psalm 68:31*

AFRICA FOR CHRIST

*"From beyond the
rivers of Ethiopia, My
worshippers, the daughters
of My dispersed ones,
shall bring My offering."
Zephaniah 3:10*

*"That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those
in Heaven, and those on earth, and of those under the earth, and every
tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."
Philippians 2:10-11*

THE CHALLENGE OF LIVINGSTONE TODAY

An Example of Excellence

Dr. David Livingstone is an example of excellence. His life, legacy and literature continue to speak to us today. The challenge of David Livingstone is most relevant to our times.

If Dr. David Livingstone was here today, what would he say to us?

We do not need to guess. We have his writings and published statements available. We can know exactly what David Livingstone would say to us today. It is what he said to the people of his generation:

"The Salvation of men ought to be the chief desire and aim of every Christian!"

"All men have the right to hear God's Word. No nation ought to hoard the Gospel like a miser!"

"Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave trade carries the trader?"

*"If you have men who will come **only** if they know there is a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come even if there is no road at all!"*

*"We must be **uncommon Christians**, i.e. imminently holy and devoted servants of the Most High. Let us seek that selfishness be extirpated, pride banished, unbelief driven from the mind. Every idol dethroned and everything hostile to holiness and opposed to the Divine will crucified; that **holiness to the Lord** may be engraved on the heart and evermore characterise our whole conduct."*

*"We have still a debt of gratitude to Jesus... and there is no greater privilege on earth, than after having our own chains broken off, to go forth and **proclaim liberty to the captives**, the opening of prison to them that are bound."*

A Vision of Victory

Dr. David Livingstone was inspired by an optimistic view of the future. Like most of the missionaries of the 19th century, Livingstone held to the Eschatology of victory:

"Discoveries and inventions are culminative... filling the earth with the glory of the Lord. All nations will sing His glory and bow before Him... our work and its fruit are culminative. We work towards a new state of things. Future missionaries will be rewarded by conversions for every sermon. We are their pioneers and helpers... let them not forget the watchmen of the night, who worked when all was gloom and no evidence of success in the way of conversions cheers our path. They will doubtless have more light than we. But we serve our Master earnestly, and proclaim the same Gospel as they will do."

*"A quiet audience today. The seed is being sown, the least of all seeds now, but it will grow into a mighty tree. It is as if it were a small stone cut out of a mountain, **but it will fill the whole earth.**" Daniel 2:34-45*

"We work for a glorious future which we are not destined to see, the Golden Age which has not yet been, but will yet be. We are only morning stars shining in the dark, but the glorious morn will break – the good time coming yet."

An Understanding of History

*"The dominion has been given by the power of commerce and population unto the people of the saints of the Most High. This is an everlasting Kingdom, a little stone cut out of the mountain, without hands, which will cover the whole earth. **For this time we work.**"*

"By different agencies, the Great Ruler is bringing all things into a focus. Jesus is gathering all things to Himself and He is daily becoming more and more the centre of the world's hopes and of the world's fears."

A Harvest of Souls

Today there are over 500 million people in Africa who claim to be Christians. This includes: 150 million Protestants, 50 million Anglicans, 140 million Charismatics, 60 million Pentecostals and 100 million Independents. David Livingstone ploughed in stony ground and sowed the Gospel seed that has produced this great harvest.

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the Kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations." Psalm 22:27-28

David Livingstone Changed my Life!

The life and legacy of David Livingstone changed my life. As a new Christian, I imbibed many of the pre-suppositions and tendencies of churches in the 1970s. I read *The Late Great Planet Earth* and *There's a New World Coming, Satan is Alive and Well on Planet Earth* and other date-setting, end-times, rapture fever publications. I was Saved. I loved the Lord. I was enthusiastically involved in Evangelism. But my understanding of Biblical doctrine was actually quite shallow.

End Times Obsession

I imbibed the prevailing prejudice against Calvinism and was convinced that we were living *in the last days*. Therefore I could not at that time consider marriage, or children. There was not enough time! I could not allow myself to be *distracted* by such *worldly matters* as family and raising children. I needed to devote the last few days on earth to *snatching souls from the fire*. The rapture was coming, surely before the end of that year! I was completely closed to the idea of Theological training. What is the point? *The Lord will have come before I can finish my studies!* Better to stay in the field winning souls in these last few days remaining.

The Puritan Hope

Then I read *The Puritan Hope – Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*, by Iain Murray, published by Banner of Truth. This book informed me that all of the pioneer missionaries of the 19th century missionary movement were Calvinist and post-millennial! I had no idea what post-millennialism was, but when I read that the Father of Modern Missions, William Carey, and the best friend Africa ever had, the great missionary pioneer Dr. David Livingstone, were both Reformed and post-millennial, I determined to read up more on these matters.

Sanitised and Censored

Earlier I had read a thin, modern biography on David Livingstone. It did not seem too extraordinary, because, like many modern books, it had been sanitised. All controversial, or politically incorrect, details had been omitted. The modern censored version of Livingstone's life did not mention the ravages of the Islamic slave trade, which David Livingstone confronted, documented and fought against. It left out his Calvinist convictions and post-millennial eschatology of victory. The modern biographies left out the fact that David Livingstone carried a six-barrelled revolver and a double-barrelled rifle. His violent confrontations with Islamic slave traders and bold initiatives to set thousands of captives free were also apparently deemed too controversial to include in these modern sanitised, abridged versions of Livingstone's life!

The Challenge of Livingstone Today

Back to Original Sources

However, I have always been a bookworm and had a love for history. Finding most of the books available in the average book shop today to be quite shallow and predictable, I have developed a preference for scouring through second hand bookshops finding rare old first editions of these missionaries and pioneers.

Livingstone's Travels in Mozambique

I was reading Livingstone's *Missionary Travels* as I was following in much of his footsteps in Tete Province of Mozambique in the Zambezi Valley in 1989. That was when I and the medical team I was leading were captured by Russian forces and imprisoned in SNASP security prison in Machava, Maputo. What I learned from the writings and from the exemplary life and extraordinary legacy of David Livingstone transformed my life and ministry.

What Did I Learn from Livingstone?

I learned from David Livingstone the importance of **discipline**. He was disciplined in reading and in exercise. He was self-controlled. Livingstone abstained from alcohol for life. He was temperate, duty orientated and hard working.

Work Ethic

Livingstone's work ethic is a rebuke to us all. From age 10 he worked 14 hours a day, 6 days a week, walking an average of 34km a day, much of this in a crawling, or stooping position, amongst and under the machinery, or balancing over it. Imagine the tremendous physical training this was for his later transcontinental expeditions throughout Africa. This he did in the steamed heat and humidity considered essential for the production of thread.

Hunger for Knowledge

David used his first week's wages to purchase a book on Latin. Less than 10% of the children who worked in the cotton mills ever learned to read or write. David not only learned to read and write, he taught himself Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Each night, after work, he would attend a night school, 8pm to 10pm. Then at home, he would study, often until midnight. Each morning began at 5:30am and his workday at 6am.

Disciplined Study

When he was studying Medicine and Theology, he would walk from Blantyre to Glasgow, refusing every offer of a ride on horse carts passing by. He preferred the four-hour walk, often in the snow, in order to strengthen his muscles for his chosen career in Missions.

Overcoming His Disadvantaged Background

Livingstone never accepted charity. Although being brought up in the poorest of circumstances, where a family of seven were forced to live in a single room, 10 feet by 14 feet, without any electricity, plumbing, or running water. He worked and saved up to put himself through both Medical school and Theological College. David was the first worker from the cotton mills to receive a university education. And nobody gave it to him. He earned it and passed with high honours, receiving his Doctorate from the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons, November 1840, and ordained as a Congregational Minister, 20 November 1840. Against all odds he achieved far more than any would have thought humanly possible for someone born into such a poverty stricken and disadvantaged background. He did not wait for someone else to open up Africa, to invent 4WD vehicles, to build the roads and bridges. He drew the first maps of

the Zambezi. He did not have an attitude of entitlement. David Livingstone had a Protestant work ethic.

Doctrinal Steel

To achieve what he did, Livingstone was decisive, goal orientated and inflexible. Reformed Theology put doctrinal steel in his backbone. He was a man of **integrity**. A man of his word. He meant what he said and he said what he meant. He walked many thousands of miles across difficult and dangerous terrain to return his porters to their village.

Holy Spirit Fire

David Livingstone understood the power of prayer. He had Holy Spirit fire in his heart, soul and mind. He prayed and sang the Psalms daily.

Love for God's Creation

He had a great love for God's creation, for nature and for wildlife. His books are filled with intricate sketches and fascinating details on animals and vegetation.

Vision

David Livingstone was inspired by the post-millennial eschatology of victory. He had a Kingdom vision.

Ministering to Body, Mind and Spirit

David Livingstone understood the greatness of the Great Commission. He worked to comprehensively fulfil the Great Commission, ministering to body, mind and spirit. As a doctor, he ministered to the **body**, as a teacher he ministered to the **mind**, and as a preacher of the Gospel, he ministered to the **spirit**. Wherever he went he used his medical knowledge and training, his breadth of reading and learning and his deep faith and knowledge of the Holy Scriptures to enrich and empower the people of Africa.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

David Livingstone teaches us that actions speak louder than words. He was described as: "*A man of resolute courage*"; "*Fire, water, stonewall would not stop Livingstone in the fulfilment of any recognised duty.*" Indeed he did not let swamps, rivers, deserts, or mountains prevent him from opening up Africa for the Gospel.

The Great Commission Was His Supreme Ambition

David Livingstone was determined to make a difference. The Great Commission was his supreme ambition. Christ's last command was his first concern. He wrote: "*I hope to be permitted to work as long as I live, beyond other men's line of things and plant the seed of the Gospel where others have not planted.*"

In His Steps

"I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son, and He was a Missionary and a Physician. A poor, poor imitation of Him I am, or wish to be. In His service I hope to live; in it I wish to die."

Dedication

"I shall open up a path into the interior, or perish."

Faith

"May He bless us and make us blessings even unto death."

Determination

"Shame upon us missionaries if we are to be outdone by slave traders!"

The Challenge of Livingstone Today

Perseverance

Battling rains, chronic discomfort, rust, mildew and rot, totally drenched and fatigued, and laid low by fever, countless times, Livingstone continued to persevere across the continent. Trials tested the tenacity of the travel-wearied team. Often Livingstone endured excessive and unnecessary suffering and deprivation, hacking through dense jungle on foot, because lack of funds prevented him from affording the "luxury" of a canoe!

Not Sacrifices

"These privations, I beg you to observe, are not sacrifices. I think that word ought never to be mentioned in reference to anything we can do for Him, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes, became poor."

It is a Privilege to Suffer for Christ

The challenge of Livingstone rings out to us today: *"Can that be called a sacrifice, which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? ...it is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather, it is a privilege!"*

Sacrificial Service is More Eloquent than Sermons

David Livingstone emphasized that sacrificial service is more powerful than eloquent sermons. We need to put feet to our Faith.

Exposing the Islamic Slave Trade

Livingstone also alerted the world to the cancerous sore of the Islamic Slave Trade. It was Missionary explorer David Livingstone whose graphic descriptions brought the ravages of the East African slave trade to light. His *Missionary Travels and Narrative of an Expedition to the Zambezi* exposed the horrors of the slave trade: *"Two of the women had been shot the day before for attempting to untie their thongs. One woman had her infants brains knocked out because she could not carry her load and it; and a man was dispatched with an axe because he had broken down with fatigue... those taken out of the country are but a very small section of the sufferers. We never realised the atrocious nature of the traffic until we saw it at the fountain head, 'There truly Satan has his seat.' Besides those actually captured thousands are killed and die of their wounds and famine, driven from their villages by the internecine war waged for slaves with their own clansmen and neighbours, slain by the lust of gain, which is stimulated, be it remembered always, by the slave purchases of Cuba and elsewhere."*

Courage to Confront Evil

David Livingstone taught that you cannot be neutral in the battlefields of life. He had the courage to confront evil. His fearless faith fought *the good fight of Faith* and set many thousands of captives free!

"Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." James 4:7

Patience and Perseverance

David Livingstone is an example of extraordinary patience and perseverance. He overcame every obstacle. Walking across the continent of Africa. He walked from Delgoa Bay (present day Port Elizabeth), up all the way through Graaf Reinet to Kuruman, in what is today the Northern Cape. He walked across what is today Botswana and all the way back across the Cape Colony to Cape Town, to place his family on a ship to return to Britain. He walked from Cape Town across the whole of the Cape Province through what is today Botswana, Zambia and Angola through to the Port of Luanda. He walked from the Atlantic Ocean across the continent of Africa, crossing

what is today Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique to the Indian Ocean. **"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."** Philippians 4:13

The Zambezi Expedition

He came back and explored much of the Zambezi River, the Shiri River and the Ruvuma River, walking across much of what is today Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. **"Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."** Romans 8:37

Walking Across a Continent

On his third great missionary journey he walked across the whole length of Tanzania, much of Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, the Congo, Burundi and finally died on his knees in prayer in the province of Luapula in Northern Zambia. In his 30 years of dedicated missionary service in Africa, he walked from coast to coast, across, what are today, 12 vast countries. He walked across a continent that did not yet have roads, bridges, or purified water. **"I shall try to hold myself in readiness to go anywhere, provided it be forward!"**

The Power of the Printed Page

David Livingstone teaches us the power of the printed page. It was books that he read, such as *Practical Christianity* by William Wilberforce, which channelled much of his life in dedicated labours to eradicate the slave trade and open up Africa to the Gospel. Livingstone wrote *Missionary Travels*, the *Zambezi Expedition* and his *Journals*, which inspired generations of missionaries to dedicate their lives to winning Africa for Christ.

Mobilising Missionaries

Livingstone's steadfast example inspired Mary Slessor to devote her life to Calabar (present day Nigeria), and Peter Cameron, to launch the Africa Inland Mission. Peter Cameron had returned to Africa in failure after his first Mission. However, when he read the inscription on the tomb of David Livingstone in Westminster Abby: **"Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice."** Cameron was rebuked, inspired and resolved to return to Africa.

Strategic Thinking

Livingstone knew the power of the printed page and of public speaking tours. He also focussed on the universities as strategic for mobilising Reformers and Missionaries to fulfil the Great Commission. Livingstone saw rivers as *God's highway* to reach Africa for Christ. As all communities need access to water, rivers are a strategic artery which missionaries should utilise to fulfil the Great Commission.

Leadership Training

David Livingstone believed in Leadership training. His vision was to establish Bible Colleges for Africans to be trained as Evangelists, teachers and missionaries, to disciple the nations.

Lessons for Life

The life and legacy of David Livingstone has taught me the importance of discipline, exercise, reading, a Christian work ethic, temperance, self-control, self-denial and to be duty orientated. His Reformed Theology has put doctrinal steel in my backbone. He has taught me the importance of being a man of my word, a person of integrity, and most important a student of God's Word.

The Challenge of Livingstone Today

Great Commission Vision

The post-millennial Eschatology of Victory of David Livingstone has inspired me that we are not working at uncertainty. The Lord who gave us the Great Commission will ensure that it is fulfilled. His promises and His power are fully sufficient to empower His Church to fulfil His Great Commission, *making Disciples of all nations, teaching obedience to all things* that He has commanded.

Raising the Standards

David Livingstone's comprehensive vision of fulfilling the Great Commission, ministering to body, mind and spirit has raised the standards of missionary service for all of us. It is a rebuke to religious tourism.

How to Change Your World

Actions speak louder than words. Sacrificial service is more powerful than eloquent sermons. We must put feet to our Faith. We must recognise that we are in a world war of worldviews. Islam is a threat to Faith and freedom. You cannot be neutral. Confront evil. Fight the good fight of Faith! Be bold. Be brave. Be courageous. Be patient and steadfast. Persevere. Overcome every obstacle. Go forward in the Faith. Never forget the power of the printed page. Invest in books. Invest in your mind. Read. Teach your people to love reading. Readers make leaders. A reading Christian is a growing Christian. Do not forget the schools, colleges and universities. They are strategic. We must disciple the next generation to be faithful to God's Word and effective in God's service. Think strategically as to how to reach the nations for Christ. **Make your life count for eternity!**

In the words of C.T. Studd: *"Only one life, it will soon be past. Only what is done for Christ will last!"*

As William Carey declared: *"Expect great things from God! Attempt great things for God!"*

What would David Livingstone say to us today?

*"I beg to direct your attention to Africa. I know that in a few years I shall be cut off from that country, which is now open. Do not let it be shut again! I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity. **Will you carry out the work which I have begun? I leave it with you!**"*

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: 'Whom shall I send and who will go for Us?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me!'" Isaiah 6:8

Africa for Christ!



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THE GREATNESS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the Kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations." Psalm 22:27-28

The Great Commission is great! It contains:

- A great Truth - Jesus is Lord over **all areas** of life.
- A great Commission - we are to make disciples of **all nations**.
- A great Command - we are to teach obedience to **all things** that the Lord has commanded.
- And a great Promise - the Lord Himself promises to be with us for **all time**.

A careful reading of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-10) should make it clear that we are called to do far more than merely *"share the Gospel."*

Jesus Christ declared: ***"All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on Earth..."*** The Lordship of Jesus Christ in every area of life must be proclaimed and practiced.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...". We are not called to make converts, or *"decisions"*, but disciples. We are to make disciples, not only of individuals, we must start there, and of families, which is vital, we are not only to disciple congregations and communities. The Great Commission commands us to make disciples of nations - **all nations!**

"...Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...", complete submission to Almighty God is essential.

"...Teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you...". Education is an essential part of the Great Commission. And we are not just to teach faith, or a selection of a few of our favourite things. We have been instructed by the Lord Jesus Christ to teach obedience to everything that He has commanded.

Our Greatest Priority

This Great Commission must be our supreme ambition. The last command of our Lord Jesus Christ ought to be our first concern.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes." Romans 1:16

We must never allow distractions, danger, disappointments or determined opposition to deter us from obeying Christ's Great Commission. Our purpose on earth is to ***"Make disciples... teaching obedience..."*** The life-blood of the Church is its evangelistic zeal. No matter what the situation, or how adverse the circumstances may seem to be, our Lord's Command is to: ***"Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching."***

2 Timothy 4:2

We are commanded to: ***"Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."*** Mark 16:15; ***"Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name to all nations..."*** Luke 24:47; Jesus declared: ***"As the Father has sent Me,***

The Greatness of the Great Commission

"I also send you." John 20:21; Christ made it clear that we are to be ***"witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*** Acts 1:8

When we consider the greatness of The Great Commission, that Christ is commanding us to follow His example, to be sent, even as He was sent, to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins to all nations, to be His witnesses to the very ends of the earth, to preach the Gospel to every person, to make disciples of the nations, teaching obedience to all things that He has commanded - we are overwhelmed! The task seems impossible. Which of us can possibly feel adequate to the incredible responsibility of discipling the nations?

The Promised Power

But every command of Christ comes with a promise. When the Lord commands us to go and make disciples of all nations, He reminds us that He has all authority in Heaven and on Earth, and He promises us: ***"Lo, I am with you, even to the end of the age."***

Matthew 28:18-20

When the Lord commanded us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature He promised miraculous power: ***"And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the Word through the accompanying signs."***

Mark 16:20

When the Lord commanded ***"That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name to all nations..."*** He promised ***"power from on high."***

Luke 24:47-49

When the Lord commissioned His followers: ***"As the Father has sent Me, I also send you"*** He breathed on them and said: ***"Receive the Holy Spirit."*** John 20:21-22

And at the Ascension, when the Lord commanded His followers to be His witnesses ***"To the ends of the earth"*** He promised: ***"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."*** Acts 1:8

Nothing that God has commanded us to do is impossible. As we read in the Book of Acts: The Lord went up! The Holy Spirit came down! The disciples went out! (Acts 1:8-8:1). A handful of disciples in an upper room went out and changed the world!

The greatest experience is to **come** to Jesus. The greatest task is to disciple the nations for Jesus. The greatest priority is to **go** for Jesus.

Changed lives - changing the lives of others. Forgiven sinners, sharing the way of Salvation to other sinners. Blessed Christians, seeking to bless others.

The first recorded words of Christ in His early ministry were: ***"Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand...Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."***

Matthew 4:17-19

Our Lord's call to repentance, to discipleship (***"Follow Me"***) and to evangelism (***"And I will make you fishers of men"***) are all inter-related. We are called to come to Him for Salvation and to go for Him to bring the message of Salvation to others.

Jesus is: ***"The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*** John 1:29

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Jesus is: *"The Light of the world"* John 8:12.

Jesus is: *"The Way, the Truth and the Life. No-one comes to the Father except through Me."* John 14:6 There's no other way, no other religion, no other hope for mankind. *"Go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that My House may be filled."* Luke 14:23 ***"Freely you have received, freely give."*** Matthew 10:8

Jesus said: *"He who is not with Me is against Me, and He who does not gather with Me scatters abroad."* Matthew 12:30

You are either a missionary or a mission field. You cannot be neutral in missions. Walking by on the other side of the road is not an option for Christians.

"Lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already ripe for harvest!"

John 4:35

Jesus commanded us to look at the fields. We need to investigate and understand the missionary challenge.

How well do you know your World? Did you know that there are 12 000 ethno-linguistic people groups in the world? There are 66 nations which restrict religious freedom and persecute Christians. Over 400 million Christians live under governments which persecute believers. 21% of the world's population are Muslims, 13% of the world's population is Hindu.

Africa occupies 22% of the world's land surface. 41% of Africans are Muslims. 14 countries in Africa have less than 1% Evangelical Christians: Mauritania, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, Comores, Djibouti, Niger, Senegal, Somalia, Algeria, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Mali. Over 100 million Christians in Africa do not yet possess a Bible.

"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the Harvest to send out labourers into His harvest." Matthew 9:37-38

The Lord commanded us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all Creation. This is a command, not only to go into all the geographical world, but into every level of society. We must go into the world of business and education, the judiciary, government, entertainment, economics, medicine, sports and the arts. And we are to proclaim the Gospel of repentance and forgiveness of sins. We must deal with the primary issue of **sin**. People are not innocent victims needing deliverance, but guilty sinners needing forgiveness and mercy from Almighty God. *"As the Father has sent Me, so I am sending you."* As with Christ's incarnation we need to become one with, and identify with the people we are sent to. We need to live and speak the Gospel in their language and in their culture. *"The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the Kingdom, ..."* Matthew 13:38.

"You are the salt of the earth...you are the light of the world..." Matthew 5:13-14

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven." Matthew 5:16

The Greatness of the Great Commission

The best sermon illustration is the life of integrity of a Christian neighbour, colleague or family member. At Evangelism Workshops, Great Commission Conferences, and Biblical Worldview Seminars that I have conducted throughout Africa, Europe and the USA, I found that the vast majority of delegates surveyed came to Christ through personal evangelism, from friends, family and strangers in one-on-one witnessing and counselling. So far I have not come across anyone who reported being converted through Gospel music. Once, in a conference of 400 pastors and evangelists in Nigeria, I came across one individual who reported being converted through Gospel TV. Even in large groups of several hundred, I've seldom found more than 3% who could, along with myself, report being converted through an evangelistic crusade. There are normally a few dozen who report Gospel literature having been used of the Lord to bring them to repentance. However, at every evangelistic workshop and conference that I have surveyed, the vast majority report that it was through family, friends, neighbours, and even strangers, in one-on-one personal evangelism that they were converted.

Jesus said: *"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in Heaven. That whoever denies Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father who is in Heaven."* Matthew 10:32-33. We dare not let opportunities to witness for Christ pass us by.

"For whoever is ashamed of Me and My Words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father's and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26. Do not be intimidated into silence, fear God and not man.

Jesus assured us: *"There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for My sake and the Gospel's, who shall not receive a hundred-fold now in this time - houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions - and in the age to come, eternal life."* Mark 10:29-30. Sacrifice is required.

"I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent." Luke 4:43. Don't bottleneck the Gospel. Reach out across boundaries.

"Let us cross over to the other side." Mark 4:35. Overcome all obstacles for the Gospel.

"On this rock I will build my Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18. Victory is assured. The best form of defence is attack!

"The Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing and forceful men lay hold of it." Matthew 11:12. Be bold, innovative, and persistent in seeking first the Kingdom of God. Nothing is impossible, nothing is beyond the reach of prayer - accept that which is beyond the will of God. No one is unreachable. The will of God will never lead you - where the grace of God cannot keep you.

"And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14

"That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in Heaven, and those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:10-11

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Habakkuk 2:14

Is your church consistently praying for the fulfilment of The Great Commission throughout Africa? It is written: *"My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations"* Mark 11:17

"In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven..." Matthew 6:9-10. We need to pray for God's Will to be obeyed - not just in the Church - but in the world! You are not to be the salt of the church, but the salt of the earth, the Light of the World.

This is the Word of God: **"Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it!"** Luke 11:28

If you are serious about missions, and share our vision of winning Africa for Christ, contact Frontline Fellowship for the **Great Commission Course** audio CDs, or MP3, for the **Great Commission Manual** and for evangelistic resources that you can use to disciple the nations for Christ.

Give up your small ambitions and follow Jesus!

IF I GO NOT

***If I Go Not To Those Who Have Not Heard,
If I Withhold From Them God's Precious Word;
If Sin-Cursed Heathen Go To Christless Graves
Having Never Heard That Jesus Saves,
If By My Negligence Some Souls Are Lost,
Despite God's Mercy And Calvary's Untold Cost,
If I Care Not For Those In Distant Lands,
Shall Not Their Bloodguilt Be Upon My Hands?***

***If I Pray Not For Those Who Witness Bear,
If I No Intercessory Burden Bear;
If God's Dear Servants Never Are Upon My Heart,
And In Their Labours I Share No Part;
If By My Prayerlessness There Comes An Hour
When They Lack Wisdom, Grace, Strength Or Power,
And Captives Escape Not Sin's Strong Bands,
Shall Not Their Bloodguilt Be Upon My Hands!***

***If I Give Not, And By My Selfishness I Caused God's Work And Workers Sore
Distress;
If My Poor Stingy Heart Hardened Be - To Needs Of Others, Their Necessity;
If By My Failure Some Shall Never Hear - The Message Of
Salvation...
Then I Fear - Mine Is The Sin, And Justice Fair Demands -
That I Accept The Guilt Of Bloody Hands!***

(See Ezekiel 3:18-20; 33:2-9; 34:2-10; Matthew 25:34-46)



THE AMATEURISATION OF MISSIONS

Superficial

Despite the hard realities and desperate needs of the mission fields, we are increasingly seeing the amateurisation of missions. More and more Christians are pouring into the mission fields - but for very short periods of time and for very superficial goals.

Religious Tourists

I have been astounded to come across large tour groups (calling themselves "*missionaries*") travelling across the world just to spend four or five days "*in the field!*" The high costs of international air travel would seem to make such short visits cost-ineffective. Even more incredible is how most of these short termers have undergone no selection procedure, received no training and are ill-equipped to benefit the local believers. In most cases these religious tourists have a lower grasp of Scripture and a spiritual maturity that is dwarfed by the local believers to whom they presume to come to minister.

The Need for Training

Most people understand that doctors and engineers, in fact every other profession, need proper training to be able to do their work. Yet for some obscure reason many Christians seem to think that any churchgoer can be a missionary! The flood of untrained, ill disciplined and unaccountable lone ranger supposed "*missionaries*" into Third World countries is disastrous. Many do not even know enough of the local culture, to realise how much damage they are doing to the Christian cause.

Cross Cultural Challenges

I have seen many female missionaries in trousers, or even shorts, ministering in rural Africa. They seem oblivious to the fact that all the local Christian women only wear dresses. Nor could they possibly realise how offensive their dress (or lack of it) is to their hosts. Once a team of 6 American medical missionaries flew out to work with us in Mozambique. As they arrived in Malawi, the two women were detained by Police for wearing trousers! They did not even have a single skirt between them in their luggage. We had to rush into town to buy some dresses for the ladies before the police would release them!

When Politeness Conceals Offense

African cultures value politeness and hospitality highly. So unless you probe and ask lots of penetrating questions you will never know that you have offended your hosts. They will continue to smile and be friendly even as the door slams firmly shut to further ministry.

Long Hair on a Man

For example, in Africa, it is generally considered a disgrace for a man to have long hair. This is not only cultural, but Biblical: "***Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonour to him.***" 1 Corinthians 11:14. Yet you will see many long haired and pony-tailed men heading out "*to evangelise the pagans in Africa*" oblivious to what a "*stumbling block*" they are.

Return to Paganism

The present fad of body piercing seems to have invaded the church as well. I have met Christians heading out to the mission field with nose rings, belly rings, tongue studs and who-knows-what other body mutilations. It is not that these piercings are unknown in Africa or Asia. In fact every pagan culture practises it. The Hindus and animists in

particular practise body piercings and tattoos extensively. However, once converted, they repent and turn away from such abominations.

Tattoos and Body Piercing

It is generally quite easy to tell the difference between a Christian and a pagan in Africa: by how they dress and by how they treat (or mistreat) their body. The Scriptures are clear: ***"You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh... nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the Lord"*** Leviticus 19:28. Earrings on men in the Bible were a mark of slavery (Exodus 21:6; Deut 15:17). Cutting of ones own flesh was seen as an act of worship to demon idols by the pagans (1 Kings 18:28). For a Christian who recognises that his body is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthian 3:16-17) to defile himself with the pagan practise of body piercing is not only tragic but blatant rebellion against God. How then can you expect African Christians to respect long haired men with pony tails and earrings - who presumed to come and teach them?

Helping or Hindering?

Often the Message we bring is undermined by our appearance or actions. One *"mission team"* that came to assist some good friends of ours started arguing with the established missionaries over divisive doctrines, then they asserted *"a woman's right"* to have an abortion! Finally, they complained about being given physical work.

Physical Work is also Spiritual

"We came here to minister" protested the pony-tailed team leader. *"Physical work is part of our ministry,"* answered the mission leader. Before the whole congregation the young team leader stood up on Sunday morning and protested the way his team of volunteers had been forced to help with the building extension of the mission station. *"We came here to preach the Gospel, not to lay bricks. Look at my hands,"* he pleaded. *"My hands are like that of a little girl. God did not make my hands to handle bricks!"*

Unhelpful Help

The incredible thing is that every year thousands of such undisciplined and unteachable, selfish individuals jet into mission fields around the world... to help!

Religious Tourism

I first came across the term religious tourists in Romania. A pastor was relating to me the bizarre story of 89 Californian Christians who had flown in to *"minister"* in Romania! Naturally, none of them spoke Romanian. Neither did they have transport. They were totally dependent upon their local hosts, whom they presumed they were coming to help.

Sunday Morning Circus

On Sunday morning they all wanted to speak at the main service. Each was given two minutes to bring greetings! So began a seemingly never-ending procession of 89 religious tourists delivering their greetings through an interpreter - with successive camera flashes accompanying!

More of a Burden than a Blessing

These visitors never seemed to consider just how much their large tour group had imposed upon their Romanian hosts for transport, accommodation, food and interpreters. *"We never saw these people in the dark days of persecution."* declared one pastor. *"They are not missionaries - they are religious tourists!"*

Relief Aid Visits

There have been groups of up to 29 Americans and Europeans flying in, on a single aircraft, to one location in Sudan. When I asked how long they were going in for they proudly announced *"two or three days - maybe even four!"* I could only stand in amazement at their superficial understanding of what is needed in Missions. *"What do you plan to accomplish?"* I asked. *"Oh!"* the man answered, *"We plan to hand over some relief aid and buy some slaves!"*

An Age of Superficiality

So is this now what missions are coming to: large groups of people flying half way across the world to hand over some relief aid, say a few nice words and set some slaves free! In just a few days they fly back home thinking that they are now missionaries! They have no real grasp of the people to whom they are going, they have no understanding of the religious worldview of the people they are evangelising and they have never bothered to study the history of the nation they say they are sent to. Untrained, unprepared, unaccountable, and even unaware of the way the local people perceive them.

Slave Redemptions

Without knowing the local language or staying there long enough to know what is really going on, how can they be sure that those people sitting under the tree really are slaves? Do they know what the correct price and exchange rates are? Once they set the slaves free how can they be sure that they will not be re-enslaved again? Would they even know if they were being deceived in an elaborate plot to enrich certain slave traders? Those who only fly in for the day cannot be certain of the answers to any of these questions. The mission fields are too complex for amateurs.

Frontline Training

Of course a mission worker's training should not stop when they reach the field - in fact it must never stop. It takes an average of 2 years or more for a trainee field worker in [Frontline Fellowship](#) to qualify as a Field Worker. This training will include many courses such as: the Great Commission Course, Discipleship Training Course, Biblical Worldview Seminar, Muslim Evangelism Workshop, Evangelism Explosion III, First Aid courses, and participation in many outreaches including street evangelism, Muslim evangelism and Bible smuggling into restricted access countries. There are required reading lists, written assignments and practical tests. All of these are important components of a comprehensive programme to prepare effective missionaries for ministry in war-torn, Muslim or Communist countries. Frontline's selection and training procedure is fairly unique in its blend of intensive Biblical instruction and practical outreach within an apprenticeship programme.

Character Development

Those who are easily upset by irritations, loss of sleep or unfair treatment and those who are moody and easily discouraged and depressed are not suitable for Missions. Missionaries must be emotionally stable, and self-disciplined.

Interpersonal Relationships

In the Mission field, relationship difficulties are often aggravated by high levels of stress, heat and cross-cultural frustration. The closeness of living, travelling and working conditions intensifies interpersonal conflicts. Missionaries tend to be strong-willed people, so potential clashes can undermine the mission team and projects.

Interdependent Team Players

There are two major problems here: dependant people who need constant support and direction and sap the energy from a team; and independent people who divert the team's energy as they pull one way and another to pursue their own agendas. Missionaries need to be inter-dependant (team players) relinquishing their own interests for the good of the team: self-starters, self-reliant and self-sacrificing.

Physical Health and Fitness

The harsh terrains, hot climates and primitive conditions of most Mission fields require healthy and fit missionaries who can endure and be effective in adverse conditions; who can cope with and recover from debilitating sicknesses.

Ministry Experience

It is amazing how many people volunteer for Missions who have never done any ministry at home! It is essential for all missionaries to have extensive ministry experience at the home front before venturing into cross-cultural missions overseas. If it does not work at home - do not export it.

Perseverance

Obstacles abound. Frustrations, disappointments and discouragements are occupational hazards and part of our job description. Missionaries need endurance - a willingness and capacity to suffer hardships, discomfort, opposition and worse. Sacrificial service is more eloquent than many sermons.

In the Frontline of Missions

Frontline Fellowship pioneered missionary work in war-torn Mozambique and Angola in the 1980s and in Islamic Sudan since 1995. Frontline Fellowship smuggled over 330,000 Bibles and Christian books in 24 languages into Sudan, and has trained many thousands of pastors, teachers, chaplains and medics in restricted access areas.

Practical

The **Great Commission Course** has been designed by Frontline Fellowship as a uniquely practical missionary training programme for all those who desire to be more innovative and effective in cross-cultural Evangelism and Discipleship.

Insight

If you want to see behind the scenes, what is actually involved in cross-cultural missionary work, particularly in areas where Christians are persecuted for their Faith, then the GCC is for you.

Intensive

The Great Commission Course starts with the Great Commission Camp. It is then followed up by an intensive training course with daily outreaches and practicals, hands-on ministry in townships, prisons, etc.

Do You Want to Change Your World?

If so, then join us for the inspiring and life-changing Great Commission Course. The first part of the GCC will be held at a campsite in a forest, on a mountain, by a lake in a nature reserve. The Great Commission Camp will provide an ideal introduction to the course with the theme of **Reclaiming Africa for Christ**.

MOTIVES FOR MISSIONS

Wrong Motives and False Calls

Because of human depravity, even the best of us can do some of the finest ministry with mixed Motives.

You must not wait for your motives to be 100% pure before launching out into missions - or you will never get there. But once in the mission field you can expect God to thoroughly purify your motives.

Those who go to the mission field for predominantly wrong motives can cause a lot of grief - to themselves and those around them. These are some examples of wrong reasons for involvement in missions:

1. **The desire to escape problems at home or work** - boredom, job dissatisfaction, in-law problems, etc. (*"Escaping"* to the mission field does not work because you tend to take your problems with you.)
2. **The desire to impress other people.** Missionary children who feel obligated to follow in their parent's footsteps. Fear of disappointing college teachers, pastor, or church friends. A desire to be more holy and dedicated than one's peers. (God's Will is more important than what people think of you.)
3. **The desire to prove something to yourself.** (The mission field is **not** the place to go for an ego trip).
4. **The desire to earn favour with God.** A *"salvation by works"* mentality.
5. **Feelings of guilt and pity** for being better off than the *"downtrodden masses"* who have been *"exploited and oppressed."*
6. **Emotionalism.** Human emotions are God-given, and essential, but emotion is not a good enough basis for a call.

What is Holding You Back?

1. Are you in debt? You must pay it off!
2. Are you getting too much education?
3. Are you falling in love with someone who is not committed to missions?
4. Are your parents opposed to your going?
5. Are you worried about your safety?
6. Are you afraid of failing?
7. Are you afraid of dirt, disease and discomfort?
8. Are you worried about your children?

The greatest hindrance to missionary work is self. Self that refuses to sacrifice. Self that refuses to give. Self that refuses to go. **"Go ye therefore..."**

Why Many Resist the Call to Missions

1. The Myth of the Super-Spiritual Missionary

Unrealistic estimation of the spiritual qualifications required. (Missionaries are ordinary Christians who face the same struggles and infirmities as other Christians, yet are responding to the Great Commission).

2. The Burden of Deputation

The hard work of promoting missions, recruiting prayer supporters, inspiring others into missions and getting one's home church involved is essential but daunting.

3. The Reluctance to Make a Life Time Commitment

The most efficient expenditure of resources is career commitment. Yet the existentialism of the *"now generation"* militates against long-term commitment. We need to be committed for life to do God's Will and be flexible as to where and how God may direct us to accomplish it.

4. The Reticence to Learn another Language

The negative experiences of many in foreign language classes at school discourage them from attempting to learn how to communicate the Gospel in the field though a foreign language. (Yet there are many mission fields where English, French, or Portuguese is needed.) Actually, language learning in the field while communicating the Gospel is a far more enjoyable and workable experience.

5. The Fear of Failure

Many fear that they might fail to raise enough support, or fail to adjust to a new culture, or fail to learn a new language. The fear of a tough, demanding, dangerous, or difficult job in unfamiliar surroundings. The fear of the unknown deters many from launching out in obedience and faith. *"Nothing ventured - nothing gained."* (Example of John Mark – failed and deserted Paul but later returned, repented and recovered to become an assistant to Paul and Peter and author of the Gospel of Mark.) There is a general lack of direction and commitment. A paralyzing passivity and inertia. **"Look at the Fields"** John 4:35. Commitment and obedience will open up God's blessings.

Why Many Who Respond to the Call are Sidetracked

1. Love and Marriage

Many prospective missionaries get sidetracked by marrying someone who is not willing to be a missionary.

2. Parental Opposition

The tension between honouring our parents and obeying the Lord (Matthew 10:37).

3. Financial Debts

Good intentions crippled by unwise choices and enslaving debt.

But Christ must come first.

Why Should the Heathen be Evangelised?

1. The **Bible** is True

"for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:21

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." Romans 1:16

2. All **Mankind** is Lost

"As it is written: 'There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one'. 'Their throat is an open tomb; with their tongues they have practiced deceit'; 'The poison of asps is under their lips'; 'Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness'. Their 'feet are swift to shed blood; destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace they have not known'. 'There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now we know that whatever the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God apart from the Law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Romans 3:10-23

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God."

John 3:18

3. **Death** is Inevitable

"And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the Judgment" Hebrews 9:27

4. **Judgement** is Certain

"because He has appointed a Day on which He will Judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead." Acts 17:31

"For as many as have sinned without Law will also perish without Law, and as many as have sinned in the Law will be Judged by the Law (for not the hearers of the Law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the Law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the Law, by nature do the things in the Law, these, although not having the Law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the Day when God will Judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel." Romans 2:12-16

5. **Hell** is Real

"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it." Matthew 7:13

*"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
Matthew 25:46*

"Then I saw a great white Throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the Heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were Judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were Judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:11-15

6. There is Only One **God**

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Ephesians 4:5-6

"Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other." Isaiah 45:22

7. **God Loves** the Whole World

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:3- 4

"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

8. The Whole **World** Belongs to God

*"The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein."
Psalm 24:1*

*"If I were hungry, I would not tell you; for the world is Mine, and all its fullness."
Psalm 50:12*

9. The Nations are the **Inheritance** of the Messiah

"I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'you are My Son, today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession.'" Psalm 2:7- 8

*"A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel."
Luke 2:32*

Motives for Missions

"For to which of the angels did He ever say: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'? And again: 'I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to Me a Son'?" Hebrews 1:5

10. **Jesus Died** for All Mankind

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:29

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations. All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship; all those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive. A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, they will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has done this."

Psalm 22:27-31

"And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world." 1 John 2:2

11. **Jesus Saves**

"Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15

"Then they said to the woman, 'Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world'." John 4:42

12. Jesus is **The Only Way** to God

"Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives." 1 Timothy 2:5-6

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'." John 14:6

13. There is **No** Salvation Outside of Jesus

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." 1 John 5:9-12

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"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

14. Jesus Left Us an **Example**

"But He said to them, 'Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth.'" Mark 1:38

"Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd."

Matthew 9:35-36

"but He said to them, 'I must preach the Kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.'" Luke 4:43

"So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'" John 20:21

15. Jesus **Commands** Us

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen." Matthew 28:18-20

"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.'" Mark 16:15

Mark 16:15

"and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24:47

"So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'" John 20:21

16. The **Love** of Christ Compels Us

"So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the Gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us."

1 Thessalonians 2:8

"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. 'This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30, 31

"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

Motives for Missions

17. The Lord is **Worthy** of All Praise, Worship and Honour

"saying with a loud voice: 'Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!' And every creature which is in Heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: 'Blessing and honour and glory and power be to Him who sits on the Throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!'" Rev. 5:12-13

"Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His Name; make known His deeds among the peoples! Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods.

1 Chronicles 16:8, 24-25

18. The **Holy Spirit** Impels Us

"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of Judgment." John 16:8

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

19. The **Prophecies** Must be Fulfilled

"And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the Throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands," Revelation 7:9

20. **To Speed His Return**

"And the Gospel must first be preached to all the nations." Mark 13:10

"looking for and hastening the coming of the Day of God, because of which the Heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?"

2 Peter 3:12

21. **God's Will** Must be Done

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 5:10

"Be still, and know that I am God; will be exalted among the nations, will be exalted in the earth!" Psalm 46:10

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

The Great Commission Manual

22. The **Need** is Great

"Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few.'"
Matthew 9:37

23. The **Opportunity** is Unprecedented

"Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!"
John 4:35

24. Our Personal **Responsibility**

"When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand."
Ezekiel 3:18

"For if I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel!" 1 Corinthians 9:16

"For 'whoever calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.' How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!'" Romans 10:13-15

"May Your ways be known on earth, Your Salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise You, O God; may all the peoples praise You." Psalm 67:2-3



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HOW TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MISSIONS WITHOUT BECOMING A VICTIM

There is no doubt that the harvest is very large and the workers are far too few. However, I've become increasingly concerned about how ill-prepared most mission volunteers are on entering the field. Also disturbing is how little discernment is evidenced in all too many cases.

Frustrations in the Field

Over the years, I have tried to give an honest and balanced report on the problems, frustrations and difficulties of the field, without unduly glamourising missions. Of course one wants to encourage and inspire fellow Believers to wholehearted commitment to world missions, but, even from the earliest years of Frontline Fellowship, I have felt the need to also issue words of warning and caution as to the real dangers and difficulties involved. The Lord warned us to count the cost and much of what I have heard in different missions conferences seem to be setting up well-meaning people for inevitable disappointment, and even disaster.

Disappointments and Disaster

The tragic story of seven international missionaries being robbed and abused in Zimbabwe prompted me to write this article. Then the report back of one of our co-workers on his three and a half month mission to Congo impressed on me even further the importance of this article. We need mental toughness, emotional strength, spiritual discernment and a resilience to persevere in spite of the many discouragements, dangers and deceptions looming in most fields.

Called and Commissioned

From the very first day that I heard the Gospel of Christ, 4 April 1977, I have been called to missions. For over thirty years The Great Commission has been my supreme ambition. Starting with distributing Gospels of John door-to-door in Pinelands, being a Group Leader in Scripture Union Holiday Missions, teaching Sunday School, running Youth Groups and coffee-bar outreaches, ministering in old-age homes, mass literature distribution at railway stations and bus stops, then working in Hospital Christian Fellowship, starting a Bible Study and Prayer Fellowship in the army which met every night and led many soldiers to Christ, through to the launch of Frontline Fellowship, over 28 years ago, the last command of Christ has been my first concern.

I've had the privilege of ministering in 36 countries, on four continents. This has involved well over 14,000 meetings, including many missions camps and conferences, and conducting Great Commission Courses.

Thefts and Threats

Certainly, in my 28 years experience in foreign missions, I have experienced thefts and threats, not only from pagans, but from false brethren and false shepherds within the church. Right from my very first mission trip to Mozambique, in 1982, there were the greedy and malicious back stabbers and traitors quick to steal and to report our "illegal" Bible smuggling to the local communist commissar.

Turning Back and Giving Up

The trouble is, the vast majority of missionary volunteers give up before completing their first term in the field. Many short-term missionary volunteers only go once, and, whether because of negative experiences in cross-cultural confusion, misunderstandings, sickness or thefts, for one reason or another, fail to return to the field ever again.

Enormous resources are being spent on training, preparing and transporting to the field missionary volunteers who don't persevere, and return home within weeks or months – never to venture into any mission field again.

In 1989 I led a team of 6 American medical missionary volunteers to Mozambique. Within days we were captured, arrested and imprisoned, mistreated by the SNASP Secret Police and incarcerated in solitary confinement at Machava Security Prison in Maputo. Not surprisingly, none of those volunteers have returned to the field since.

Perseverance

However, one of the members of an Evangelism Explosion team that I took to Sudan in 2000 has continued to return multiple times since, despite us being bombed by the Sudan Air Force on his first Sunday morning there. This kind of perseverance has become all too rare.

Theft and Treachery

Of course, one expects persecution from anti-Christian, Marxist and Muslim, regimes when working in restricted access areas. However, most missionaries are not prepared for the blatant theft from those they have felt called to serve. Yet even missions dedicated to establishing hospitals and schools amongst desperately needy people have been cheated and attacked by the very communities they are seeking to serve, stolen from by staff, and looted by the local community.

We should not be too surprised. Even Jesus had His Judas amongst His twelve hand picked Disciples. Although Judas was entrusted with the finances of the Apostles, he was a thief. Not only stealing from the Lord Himself, but even betraying Him for mere money.

Muggings and Manipulation

I know of all too many cases of missionaries who have faced muggings and manipulation in the field, threats and theft, being used and abused, not only from the local people to whom they were sent, but even by fellow Christians. Not only stolen from by local believers, but by fellow “missionaries” and “co-workers.”

Malice and Deceit

This may be a shock to many people wanting to get involved in missions. When I first became a Christian it never crossed my mind that someone could claim to be a Christian and yet be malicious or devious. Nor that we would not only be cheated and abused by local Believers and fellow missionaries, but also by overseas ministries and churches.

All too often there are those who don't pay their bills, fail to fulfil their promises, never keep up their end of the work load, and happily run up huge expenses which they leave for the local missionary that they are meant to be “supporting” - while they return to engage in brilliant fund raising campaigns entirely built upon deception.

Pretence and Plagiarism

In dealing with guests from other ministries, we have sometimes been horrified by dishonest and unethical practices and claims. Some, who merely participated on one field trip with our mission, have gone on to make incredibly extravagant claims in their fundraising letters and videos. One launched an entire ministry with an impressive marketing campaign based entirely on false claims and plagiarism. Pretending responsibility for Frontline Fellowship shipments and ministry activities in Sudan, one individual, who was merely a junior guest of a large team with no significant ministry role, later claimed to have been the leader of the entire operation, quoting all of our statistics of Bibles delivered, ministry conducted and flights chartered as his accomplishments.

Exaggerations and a Lack of Ethics

Another individual, who came in on one Frontline Fellowship mission trip to Sudan and participated in the first few days of our Teacher Training Courses, leaving early, later claimed to have set up a couple of dozen schools in the area, and requested funds for his “staff” there. Needless to say, none of the teachers or pastors in the area were aware of any such activity. On numerous occasions we have been asked to arrange flights for overseas “missionaries” who later have left us to pay all their bills without so much as a contribution.

We have sponsored numerous “poor pastors” from third world countries to our training courses who, after accepting all our hospitality, have gone out to buy themselves cell phones, video cameras, DVD machines and other expensive luxuries.

Fantasies and Fool’s Errands

One needs to be aware of those who will happily send you on a fool’s errand. The book of Proverbs warns us about fools busy with some fantasy and unworkable project. There are people who want to live on your faith and want you to do their work for them. A mission in the hand is worth dozens of visions and concepts “in the planning stage”. They live by presumption – not by faith.

Honesty and Integrity

There is a desperate need for absolute honesty and integrity. We need to be people of our word, say what we mean, and mean what we say. And we need discernment, precautions and a basic understanding of security principles. Otherwise we could be guilty of sending out dedicated missionary volunteers who will fall victim to muggings, theft, rape and murder. All of this has happened to mission volunteers in the field.

Frauds and Scams

Then there are the financial scams from false brethren who pretend to have all kinds of ministries and exploit well-meaning Westerners with their slick fundraising letters and e-mails. As we actually travel to the field, we have been able to expose numerous of these “pastors” as the real pastors in the area have taken us to meet the well supported frauds in the local bar!

The Politics of Guilt and Pity

Then there are the cross cultural opportunists and exploiters who seek sponsorships to travel the world and attend various missions conferences, only to gather as many names and addresses and e-mails as possible in order to soak well-meaning, but naïve, Westerners with emotive fund raising scams. *“Can you just help with some money?”*. Others try the politics of pity and guilt manipulation to get an American or European wife (and therefore a passport to the West): *“God told me to marry you...!”*

Guilt Manipulation

You would find it hard to believe how many times we have encountered cross cultural opportunists attempting to guilt manipulate some Western girl into marriage. Even “pastors”, who are already married. If you ever doubted the Biblical Doctrine of the depravity of man, you will find more than enough examples to verify it in the mission field, and even at missions conferences.

Seek First God’s Kingdom

The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. We need to seek first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness. The Great Commission must be our supreme ambition. Nothing must be allowed to distract or deviate us from that. We are called to build God’s Kingdom, not to enrich false brethren, false shepherds and false prophets. We are to have faith in God, not in human nature. We are to trust the Lord, not be gullible victims of con artists.

PT and Prayer

If we want to be effective in the Lord’s service, we need to protect our time and our limited resources from the unscrupulous and manipulative. Because of the abundance of free-loaders, who inevitably are attracted to the rich pickings, and targets of opportunity, at missions conferences, we now insist on early morning PT and prayer meetings to weed out those who have another agenda. Of course, false brethren are able to put on a good act, but we find that as our Great Commission Courses progress with daily PT and prayer meetings, outreaches and late-night hikes, we begin to see the real person under the veneer.

Test the Track Record

There is no substitute for track record. We need to test all things. It is remarkable how many “pastors” and “bishops” turn out to be Bible illiterates. We have found this when we have compelled them to complete our multiple-choice Bible Exam!

Learn To Discern

There are so many frauds, fools, con artists and opportunists seeking to take advantage of missions. A large percentage of funds earmarked for missions don’t really reach the Lord’s work because of the abundance of dishonest scams and unworkable schemes which manage to intercept and hijack what is meant for God’s service.

Shine the Light

This may not be a pleasant message to hear or acknowledge, but it is the truth. The world should have already been evangelised and disciplined several times over, if everything that is being said to be done was actually being done. It is time for us to shine the light of God’s Word on some of the shady dealings of professional fund-raisers and con-men who have found an abundance of gullible and naïve Christians to exploit under the guise of “missions”.

How to be Effective in Missions Without Becoming a Victim

Watch and Pray

We owe it to our Lord Jesus Christ to be watchful and alert, wise and discerning, taking proper precautions to avoid becoming a victim, so that we can be effective in real missions.

“God’s work, done God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.” Hudson Taylor

“Only one life, it will soon be passed - only what’s done for Christ will last.”

C.T. Studd

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DISCERNING BETWEEN TRUE AND FALSE GUIDANCE

False Guidance

Anyone who has been involved in ministry for any length of time would have come across some bizarre examples of how some Christians seek “guidance.”

As I have been involved in missions for over 30 years, I regularly have been confronted with some very strange concepts of guidance.

Self Serving Fleeces

One mission worker boldly told me that his fiancée had “*laid a fleece*” before the Lord as to whether he should continue in missions. The “fleece” was that if she won a competition (the prize was a new car) then they would know that God wanted him to continue in missionary work!

Such self serving “fleeces” are not that uncommon. One man approached a good missionary friend of ours and declared to him: “God has revealed to me that He wants to give you a better car. You need to give me your car and then the Lord will provide you with a better car.”

This missionary immediately responded: “I am very happy with the old car that I have. May the Lord give you the better car!”

Taking God’s Name in Vain

Numerous people that I know have been approached by someone telling them: “God told me to marry you!”

The best answer that I have heard to that is: “Well, He didn’t tell me!”

On several occasions individuals have approached me declaring that God told them that I would provide them with a certain sum of money. To this I could respond: “How strange, when I was talking to the Lord earlier today, He never mentioned that!”

Presumption is not Faith

We have frequently had individuals arrive on our doorstep announcing: “God told me to join your mission!” Amazingly, the same people don’t seem to last very long, deserting at the first sign of stress and difficulty.

Clearly all too many of those who brazenly assert that God led them and “God told me...” are taking the Lord’s Name in vain.

Guided to Disobey Scripture?

We recently heard of a high profile tele-evangelist and self styled “revivalist” who claimed that an angel told him to tattoo his body. Well, there is no need to debate the subject of whether it was one of God’s angels or a fallen angel that guided him. The Scriptures are crystal clear on the issue: “***Do not cut your bodies... or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the Lord.***” Leviticus 19:28

Beware of Deception

There is no way that God would guide anyone to violate His Law and go against the clear teaching of Scripture. Our Lord Jesus Christ said that we are to be careful that no one deceives us. He warned of false prophets, false teachers and false shepherds.

Discerning Between True and False Guidance

Religious deception is a very real, clear and present danger. So, some of the false guidance include: following our **Feelings/emotions**; **Following the crowd/trends/fashions**; laying self serving **Fleeces**; following unscriptural **Formulas**; and **Fancy claims** that God, or an angel, told me...

Fooling Counsellors

Another false method of guidance involves **Fixing the counsellor**. This includes trying out different counsellors and feeding them with incomplete, selective and misleading information so as to elicit the desired response. On one occasion when I was ministering at a mission station in Africa, a young man came to me afterwards and requested my counsel. He had not gone very far when I had to interrupt and ask: "Have you spoken to one of the mission leaders here?"

Yes, in fact he had. Well, what had they counselled him? He was very evasive and tried to avoid answering the question. It transpired that he had sought the counsel of a wide variety of excellent missionaries, both at this mission station and at a nearby one. And all of them had clearly told him, on the authority of Scripture, that he must reconcile with his wife. However, he wanted to divorce his wife and marry the person he was involved in an adulterous relationship with. What this man was doing was seeking as many counsellors as possible and providing incomplete and selective information in order to elicit the desired response: which was that he could ditch his wife and marry the new attraction in his life!

It is incredible how many people try to manipulate ministers to rubber stamp their rebellion and approve of their abomination.

One pastor described the situation to me in this way: What many people seeking counsel want could be summarised in these words: "Pastor, I have a problem, how can you help me to be blessed and in the centre of God's Will, without having to repent of my sin or obey the Bible!"

They may not put it that way, but that is really what many people are seeking when they ask for your counsel.

Otherwise, if what the person really wanted was to know what the Bible says on this matter, counselling would not take very long. You would point out the relevant Scriptures, the counselee would say Thank You and head out to put into practice what the Bible commands.

True Guidance

"The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, to such as keep His Covenant and His testimonies." Psalm 25:9-10

Most people, when they think of the will of God, are thinking in terms of who is the best person for me to marry, what is the best career for me to go into, and where should I move to. However, the will of God is concerned with far more than marriage and career guidance.

God gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him. Vocation and location become clear when we are studying God's Word and following His instructions. The will of God will never lead us where the grace the God cannot keep us. Where God guides, He provides.

However, the question is: am I humble and teachable?

“Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105

God guides us first and foremost through His Word. The best way to know the will of God is to study the Word of God. We need to know the Word of God and the God of the Word. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing. And the main thing is to know God and to make Him known. His Great Commission must be my supreme ambition.

“But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

When we get our priorities straight, first things first, everything tends to follow from that.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

It is our priority to ensure that we are not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds, then we will be able to prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Romans 12:2).

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand.” Psalm 27:23-24

To be guided by the Lord, we need to be following Him. Have you turned away from this world in order to follow Christ? Have you repented of your sins, taken up your cross and embarked upon this adventure of discipleship, following the teachings and examples of Christ alone?

“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow His steps.” 1 Peter 2:21

The best way to know what God’s will is, is to study His Word, to have our mind renewed by the Word of God. It is when we are taught, rebuked, corrected and trained in righteousness through the Word of God that we become thoroughly equipped for every good work. Then we are able to test and discern what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns and in spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Colossians 3:16-17

The will of God is no mystery for us to discover. He has made His will abundantly clear in the Bible.

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that you should abstain from sexual immorality...for God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.”

1 Thessalonians 4:3,7

Discerning Between True and False Guidance

Those people who say they want to know what God's will is, this is God's will: ***"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."*** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

It is God's will that you be joyful, prayerful and thankful.

And it is God's will that you be wholehearted: ***"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men."*** Colossians 3:23

"Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

Psalm 37:4-5

When we are Bible-based and Christ-centred, we will find that we are Spirit led. When we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our heart.

"However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all Truth." John 16:13

"I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked places straight. These things I will do for them and not forsake them." Isaiah 42:16

"Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it', whenever you turn to the right hand or whether you turn to the left." Isaiah 30:21

To know the will of God we need know the Word of God. We need the wisdom of God. And the Bible is clear that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7). The Scripture tells us that if any of us lacks wisdom, we should ask God who gives generously to all (James 1:5).

No one should expect to gain an understanding of the will of God if they spurn the Word of God. ***"Then they will call on Me, but I will not answer; they will seek Me diligently, but they will not find Me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would have none of My counsel and despised My every rebuke. Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way and be filled to the full with their own fancies. For the turning away of the simple will slay them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; but whoever listens to Me will dwell safely and will be secure without fear of evil."*** Proverbs 1:28-33

Before we should even begin considering guidance questions of vocation, location and marriage partner, we should ensure that we are right with God. Jesus taught: ***"If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching..."*** John 14:23

Carefully read The Ten Commandments. ***"The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."*** Psalm 19:7

"But he who looks into the perfect Law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the Word, this one will be blessed in what he does."

James 1:25

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Is there Restitution that you need to do? Have you ever stolen anything, or borrowed something and failed to return it? If you have not yet done Restitution for that, make that an urgent priority. Restore that property to its rightful owner.

Have you been responsible for damaging someone else's property? Have you repaired or replaced the item?

Have you been guilty of speaking behind someone's back? Have you repented of this and made right with that individual?

If you are concerned to do God's will, ensure that you apologise to everyone that you owe an apology. That you forgive those who have despitely used you. That you leave your gift at the altar and go and be reconciled to your brother before you come to worship God.

This is the will of God that you love God with all of your heart, soul, mind and strength and that you love your neighbour as yourself. It is God's will that you do unto others what you would want them to do unto you.

You see, those who seem to think that the will of God is primarily concerned about vocation, location and selection of marriage partner, miss the point. We are our own worst enemy. If we are not right with God it doesn't matter where we are, or what we are doing, or who we are married to. We will take our problems with us.

However, if we have come to the foot of the Cross, surrendered to Christ and forsaken our sin, if we are diligently studying God's Word daily, delighting ourselves in the Lord, seeking first His Kingdom and His righteousness, then we will be a blessing, wherever we are. We will also be more responsive and open to understanding God's will and recognizing His guidance as to the **where**, the **when**, the **who** and the **how**.

We need to put first things first. When I am humble and teachable, prayerful, joyful and thankful, wholeheartedly following in the teachings and example of Christ, then we will find the reality of what the Psalmists declared: ***"I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will guide you with My eye."*** Psalm 32:8

God gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him. You can know the peace that passes all understanding and experience the joy of being in the centre of God's will. ***"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh and strength to your bones."*** Proverbs 3:6-7

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the Day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through Faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend, with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height – to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:17-21

Discerning Between True and False Guidance

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:20-21



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INTERPERSONAL CONFLICTS IN MISSIONS AND CHURCHES

The number one reason for missionaries failing and giving up is interpersonal conflict. Interpersonal conflicts are a primary source of disruption in Christian ministries, missions and churches.

Dependent

Some come to the field with serious character flaws, fears and phobias, which lead to major relationship problems. There are **dependent** people who need constant support and direction and, rather than contribute to the team, they sap its energy.

Independent

On the other extreme, there are the **independent** people, the lone rangers, who divert the team's energy as they yank this way and that to pursue their own agendas.

Interdependent

Missions need **interdependent** people, team players, who are willing to relinquish their own agenda and interests for the good of the team. They are self-starters, self-reliant in the healthy sense, and able to reach out and be a support to others (Galatians 6:2-5).

Unstable

In a media-saturated culture, with severely dysfunctional families, there are more and more people with severe emotional instability. Those touchy and explosive people, who are prone to mood swings, easily upset by irritations, riding the emotional *big dipper* into periods of discouragement and depression, are becoming more and more common.

Undisciplined

Most homes have no discipline. Most schools have no discipline. Most churches have no discipline. So it should not surprise us that so many people applying for missions are lacking self-discipline and need to be prodded by a whole regiment of rules and constant supervision, in order to function.

Service

It is a rare blessing to have missionary volunteers, who come with a humble, teachable, servant attitude of: *"How can I help you? How can I fit in with your plans?"*

Called and Consecrated

There are two things that any mission organisation has to look for in their candidates: first, evidence of a clear call; and secondly, a strong devotional life.

On the field, much of the support which we become used to, our home church, pastor, conferences, study groups, multitudes of books, magazines, radio programmes, audio cassettes, etc. are often not available. For strength and growth, every missionary must be able to draw directly from God and His Word. In difficult and often hot environments, where they are constantly ministering, but seldom being ministered to, it is very common for missionaries to become spiritually depleted.

Those missionary candidates, who do not have clear evidence of the reality and power of the Holy Spirit in their lives, should not be sent out to the mission field.

Interpersonal Conflicts in Missions and Churches

When I asked my father-in-law, Rev. Bill Bathman, a veteran missionary with over 60 years experience in missions behind him, what made the difference between success and failure in missions, his response was that successful missionaries are those who are wholeheartedly surrendered and dedicated to Christ, with a definite assurance of their call. By way of contrast, he had noted that many of those who failed were those who may have been moved and inspired by the example of others, but they were not necessarily called of God. Therefore, they were easily disillusioned and tended to give up when faced with too much pressure, or too many problems.

Humble and Teachable

Dr. Thomas Hale, a medical missionary to Nepal since 1970, and the author of *On Being a Missionary*, observes: *"Some mission organisations today may be catering too much to new missionary recruits. After the sales pitch, the candidate begins to enjoy the attention. Things like 'submission to leadership' are played down, while things like 'self-expression' and 'self-fulfilment' are played up. The new missionary comes out to the field expecting full autonomy from day one, and when his ideas are overridden, he cries: 'Authoritarianism', which is a very bad name indeed. The new missionary launches out on a journey of discontent and dissension, which may well lead to the destruction of his missionary team. What is lacking? Above all, humility ...teachability and open mindedness."* **"Pride only breeds quarrels..."** Proverbs 13:10

Under Authority

He also asserts that one's call: *"must be confirmed by one's local church. There are lots of lone rangers out loose in the world, who have 'gotten called' to do this or that. But they don't fit in with anyone. They are often disruptive to the work of others ...there is no place for totally independent missionaries ...the sending church must share in this call; they have the duty to examine the call and modify it as necessary. Together with the missionary, they will need to evaluate the results of the call. An isolated call in itself never justifies a missionary's activities."*

Trained and Loyal

"Anyone who ventures into cross-cultural missions without some kind of preparation is nuts... no-one should begrudge the time spent in such preparation. It will cut out half the stress on arrival on the field, keep oneself from making needless mistakes and make one a much better missionary." This training would also have to include practical experience. *"One month of good practical training can be worth a year of book work."*

Dr. Hale adds: *"Once you have chosen and been accepted, then enter into the life of the mission wholeheartedly. You're not an employee, you're a family member. You be loyal to them; they'll be loyal to you."*

Tried and Tested

Hale insists that missions must develop suitable screening programmes. The single most important factor for predicting one's future missionary performance is one's past performance as a Christian. Missionary candidates must be tried, tested and proven.

"All missionaries, tent makers included, must be answerable to a church or churches. And on the field, they need to be linked with other Christians, and if possible, to be accountable to some form of field structure. To remain 'independent' is to cut oneself off from the body of Christ, and that will guarantee that the missionary will not bear fruit and ultimately, will not survive."

When a missionary reaches the field, he will discover new weaknesses, new temptations and new sins. *"We learn much about ourselves when we arrive on the mission field. Some of our flaws and weaknesses may never have been revealed before in the security of our home country. But now they are. Our defects are exposed."*

Dealing with the Spiritual Roots

Amy Carmichael wrote of this inner conflict: *"One day I felt the 'I' in me rising hotly, and the Word came: 'see in it a chance to die.'"*

We can seldom change our circumstances, but we can change our reactions. How are we going to react to the circumstance – by turning towards God and letting God use the circumstance for our good, or by giving in to complaining, irritability, and a critical and bitter spirit?

Difficult circumstances are not the real problem. The real problem usually is in us. At its root, it is spiritual. Bad experiences can make us bitter or better.

On Being a Missionary exposes some of the sins that inevitably come to the surface in missions: *"Anger, irritability, rudeness, ...a judgmental attitude, resentment, jealousy, pride ...the sins of attitude ...all these are root spiritual problems. They arise from pride, self-centredness, or lack of faith. And until the root spiritual problem – sinful attitude – is dealt with, there can be no final correction of the person's problem ...the success or failure of a missionary's career depends on the extent to which his attitudes are brought under the control of the Holy Spirit."*

Constructive Conflict

"Conflict, in and of itself, is not necessarily sinful or even harmful. In fact, conflicts usually precede any kind of human progress or development. Conflict stimulates ideas, challenges us to find new solutions, brings out the best (or worst) in us, and generally, if properly controlled, leaves us better people working in better organisations ...conflict is also inevitable."

Pride, Envy and Jealousy

Hale highlights numerous sins which lead to many missionaries failing and giving up: *"The first is the refusal to confess wrong and the second is the refusal to forgive. The first is always rooted in pride. The second is usually associated with ...slander, judgement and envy ...the third sin is self-assertiveness ...a move to get my way ...putting a higher value on our beliefs and objectives than on those of our colleagues, and for that we are prepared to sacrifice our colleague's interests in order to protect our own ...a desire to manipulate or to dominate ...self-assertiveness is more a problem in newer missionaries ...all kinds of demons are released – impatience, criticisms, hostility, frustration. Why? Because the young person wanted his own way. ...Jealousy is the second greatest sin among missionaries. ...Those passed over for leadership are jealous of those appointed; those with lesser gifts in some areas are jealous of those with greater gifts; those who are not respected and sought out by the nationals, are jealous of those who are ...jealousy always creates a desire to tear the other person down, to take away his advantage. Jealousy leads, inevitably, to resentment and backbiting. This is what destroys teams."*

"The jealous person is unable to rejoice in another's success. Yet that successful person, of whom we are jealous, may himself be a very humble person, not seeking any credit for himself, even embarrassed by recognition of any kind. His success may have

Interpersonal Conflicts in Missions and Churches

been due to simple hard work and dedication, not to any desire for recognition. Among missionaries, the most harmful form of jealousy is that directed towards someone who is being successful in ministry. After some years of ministry, a missionary may have built great trust among the nationals ...but to the person afflicted with jealousy, ...he sees the successful missionary as someone who has sought prominence for himself and who wants to keep it at all costs. The jealous person feels that he, himself, is being kept back; he feels threatened by the other person's success. No matter that the jealous person's perceptions are thoroughly distorted. The seeds of grumbling, dissension and slander have been planted; jealousy is fertile soil for such seeds."

"In most cases, our so-called 'righteous indignation' isn't righteous at all; it is merely our own sinful anger cloaked in self-righteousness. Whenever our anger becomes personal – that is, when it arises on our personal account or is directed against another person – it becomes selfish. The only sinless anger is that which is impersonal and unselfish."

Resentment and Bitterness

"Resentment and bitterness, on the other hand, are always sins. Resentment is prolonged anger, the continued feeling of being wronged, even after the wrong has ceased. Bitterness is the savouring of a bitter or painful experience. Resentment and bitterness are often the aftermath of anger. If we handled our anger better, we would have less trouble with resentment and bitterness."

"In the New Testament, there are relatively few instances of anger that we could say were appropriate. And even with appropriate anger, Paul gives a pretty strict time limit for it – sundown!"

Taking Up Grievances on Behalf of Others

"How do we tell righteous anger from sinful anger? By asking this key question: 'For whose sake am I getting angry – for God's sake or mine?' ...A dangerous variation of indignation ...is taking up another's grievance against a third party. Nowhere in Scripture does God authorise us to do this. Christians often feel quite justified in taking up the grievances of others. 'It's not for my sake', they say. 'It's unselfish.' So, without a twinge of conscience, they nurture hostile feelings against people. ...The fact is that being angry with someone on someone else's account is no more righteous than being angry at someone on our own account."

"This indignation, this taking up of a grievance, is usually the outward expression of an underlying, personal animosity – though we deny it to ourselves. The less we know about the actual situation we are taking sides on, the more righteous our indignation seems to us, and the freer we feel to indulge it."

"I have often seen this visceral anger directed from one missionary to another colleague ...in each case, the one angered did not know the full truth or even half the truth. The angered person's only source was the 'injured party.' What's more, the angered person felt obligated to take the side of the injured party against the 'wrongdoer', and to talk to others about the problem – all under the cloak of righteous concern! Before you know it, yet another team is split apart..."

Search your Own Heart

"Search your own heart for the unrighteous source that will almost always be lurking there. Are you reliving a past conflict of your own? Does the person you're angry with remind you of someone who has wronged you in the past? Or you may have a direct

grievance against the person involved, but find it more convenient to ventilate it 'on behalf of someone else'. How cleverly we justify our attacks on a brother or sister! How great is our capacity for self-deception!

Poisons for the Soul

"Resentment and bitterness all missionaries know ...are poisons for the soul ...in some people, resentment and bitterness go underground and do great damage to the person's physical, emotional and spiritual health.

"Resentment or bitterness can be redirected towards God ...all too often, ...we end up with left over, unfocused anger, directed basically against God. We blame Him for our trouble and disappointment. Second, we may redirect our resentment to innocent parties or objects ...nationals, ...employees ... children ...we find excessive anger suddenly welling up inside us against these people for relatively trivial offences."

The Critical Spirit

Harold Cook, in *Missionary Life and Work* says: *"By far the most serious overt threat to missionary relationships, the greatest danger of all, is criticism of one another."*

"The devil's chief method of rendering missionaries ineffective is to divide them, and his favourite means of dividing them is a critical spirit. The critical spirit is the most destructive attitude to be found among missionaries. ...Criticism is basically passing judgement on someone else. Critical people are self-appointed executors of God's judgement. They always see the faults and mistakes ...just like modern-day Pharisees ...without humility, without gentleness, without love ...those who criticise reveal much more about themselves than the one being criticised. It is a common thing that picking at the faults of others is an unconscious cover for much larger sins in ourselves ...we often render judgement against others in those very areas in which we ourselves are guilty. We project onto others our own wrong attitudes ...and our blindness is the more remarkable because that shared fault we so easily see in our brother, we fail to see in ourselves. Beware of judging another. 'For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged.' Matthew 7:2 ...Don't deceive yourself ...those most quick to judge others are also, not surprisingly, the most sure their judgement is correct ...Joseph was one of the first victims of mistaken judgement in the Bible. The 'proof' of his intention towards Potiphar's wife was the cloak he left in her hands. The household servants all saw it, and I can imagine them saying: 'Proof, proof.' 'Fire, fire', but they got the location of the fire wrong and the innocent Joseph went to jail."

"When it comes to Christians judging Christians, they get it wrong more than they get it right."

Blaming Our Benefactors

An elderly man wrote a letter addressed to God, describing his desperate needs and asking God for a certain sum of money. Not knowing how to deliver the letter addressed to God, the postal clerks in that town opened the letter and were moved to raise the money among themselves. They raised 80% of the old man's request, but couldn't raise it all. Rather than wait further, the postal clerks sent the man the money they had. A few days later another letter came addressed to God. The postal workers eagerly gathered around to see what his letter said. It read: *"Thank you, God, for sending the money. But next time, please send it to me directly, not through the post office. Those thieving postal clerks pocketed 20% of it!"*

"Many a time we have seen missionaries labour sacrificially for others, and then be totally misjudged concerning both their actions and their motives. In many cases, that which they had been desperately trying to correct and compensate for, has been the very thing they were accused of. All of us will experience abuse and slander, sooner or later, but the worst kind of all will come from fellow Christians whom we have loved and tried to help."

Criticism is Habit Forming

Some people are critical and judgemental because of an inferiority complex. Unconsciously, they try to build themselves up by tearing others down. Others may be critical because of resentment or hostility against the person. Still others may criticise out of jealousy. The trouble is that criticism is habit forming. The West has institutionalised criticism in the media. Journalists even get awards for ruining people's lives – no matter how much of what they have 'exposed' is untrue, or is a misrepresentation of the truth. In Nepal, they call it *"dogs biting at people's heels."* The Apostle Paul warned: ***"If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out, or you will be destroyed by each other."*** Galatians 5:15

"Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down. As charcoal to embers and as wood to a fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife."

Proverbs 26:20-21

John Calvin said: *"No greater injury can be inflicted upon men than to wound their reputation."*

Submit to God's Purpose

We need to try to see God's purpose behind any given conflict and to submit to God's purpose. God wants to discipline the participants in the conflict. God is at work in conflict, perfecting His servants, creating a stronger and better functioning Christian team or church. But we are so easily discouraged by our own sins and the sins of others. Some missionaries get so discouraged they just give up.

Paul said: ***"Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me Heavenward in Christ Jesus."*** Philippians 3: 13-14

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves." Romans 12:10

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility, consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but to the interests of others." Philippians 2:3-4

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the Law of Christ."

Galatians 6:2

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

Ephesians 4:2-3

LIVING BY FAITH

Pioneer Missionary Hudson Taylor declared: *“God’s work, done God’s way, will never lack God’s supply.”*

Hudson Taylor not only pioneered the first Inter-denominational Mission Society, but the first Faith Mission. Convinced that *“God’s servant is God’s responsibility”* and that *“The will of God will never lead you where the Grace of God cannot keep you”*, Hudson Taylor determined not to engage in fundraising, but to concentrate on the Mission God had entrusted him with.

30 Years ago, as God laid the vision of launching Frontline Fellowship upon my heart, I determined to follow the example of Hudson Taylor in launching Frontline Fellowship as a Faith Mission.

This was during all-night prayer meetings in our military base. We were praying our way through *Operation World*, particularly praying for our neighbouring countries: Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Angola. These were the, so-called, Frontline states. At that time they were at war with South Africa and supporting revolutionary groups which were coming across the border into South Africa and South West Africa, laying landmines in roads, placing limpet mines in shops, restaurants and railway stations and car bombs in public streets. They were coming at us with bombs and hate. We determined to go to them with Bibles and with the love and Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Most Christian ministries seemed to make a major emphasis on money and fundraising. We determined to go the other direction. There is nothing wrong with taking up an offering to cover ministry expenses. However, I have never taken up an offering in the almost 30 years of our Mission, Frontline Fellowship. Others may have taken up some offerings on our behalf and we are grateful for that, but we have never required or requested it. Nor have we, as a Mission, engaged in direct fund raising.

Despite conducting speaking tours in 34 countries on 4 continents, I have never required speakers fees. *“Freely you have received, freely, freely give.”*

Neither have I taken any royalties from any of the books I have written and published. All proceeds go directly into the Mission. Everything that has been accomplished in, and through, our Mission over the last 29 years has been entirely due to God’s grace alone.

Some have asked how any individual can live without a salary and a visible source of income. Or how any organisation can operate without fundraisers.

Francis Grim, the Founder of Hospital Christian Fellowship International, taught me how to live by Faith. When he issued me the call to join his ministry in Kempton Park, I was in Cape Town, 1,400 km away. Having already been living and ministering by Faith for some months, I no longer had so much as a Rand to my name. I had to trust the Lord for the train fare to reach Kempton Park. When Uncle Francis sent me on a country wide tour to visit all the Christian bookshops and promote Heart Publishers materials, I needed to do so by hitch hiking.

In the early years of this Mission, I hitch hiked over 140,000 km. On one occasion I had to get from Johannesburg to Port Elizabeth in less than a day. Knowing that that was

Living by Faith

virtually impossible by hitch hiking, I went to Lanseria Airport and asked the control tower if they knew of any aircraft flying through to Port Elizabeth that day. Incredibly a new helicopter was to be delivered to PE. When I explained my dilemma to the pilot, he cheerfully offered me a free ride! So in a matter of hours I was able to travel in comfort and style to my speaking engagement in the Eastern Cape. All this hitch hiking gave me opportunities to witness to hundreds of motorists and to distribute Gospel literature very widely.

When setting off on my first mission to Mozambique, funds were so low that I did not actually have sufficient means to purchase enough fuel to reach Mozambique. At a petrol station at King Williams Town, the owner of the fuel station came out and asked questions about the Christian stickers on my heavily laden off-road motor bike and what I was doing. I explained my Mission to Mozambique and after he filled my tank, he informed me that it was "*on the house*" and no payment was necessary!

Things don't always go quite that easily, of course. On one Mission to Mozambique via Zambia and Malawi, funds were so tight that I would not have been able to reach even Johannesburg without the books that I sold at a church meeting in Bloemfontein, en route. The books sold in Pretoria, helped me purchase fuel to go all the way through Zambia to Malawi and Mozambique. On the way back, however, I needed to sell spare shoes and our spare tyre, in order to have the fuel to get back home.

The first two times I received invitations to minister in Europe, I received extraordinary encouragement, (and essential provision) when, just before my departure, I went past our post office box and found an envelope sent by a supporter with hundreds of Deutschmark in the letter! As there was no way that he could have known of my impending ministry trip to Germany and Eastern Europe, the timing was incredible. This happened twice. At no other times did I receive DMark in the mail, except on those occasions that I was en route there.

When the wars in Mozambique and Angola came to an end, in 1994, the holocaust in Rwanda erupted. I knew that I had to go there, but there was no way that we had sufficient funds for an air ticket to East Africa. I investigated and found out that I had sufficient frequent flyer miles to earn a free air ticket to Nairobi. Through missionary contacts and correspondents in the area I was able to get into Rwanda and hitch hike with hundreds of Bibles into South Sudan. There I made contact with the persecuted Church.

That is also when Rev. Kenneth Baringwa tracked me down and gave me the Macedonian call: "*You must come to Moruland!*" But how could I do so? The distances were so vast. The expenses were impossible for our little Mission. We trusted the Lord for the resources to drive overland to Sudan. But then many of the areas we needed to reach were behind enemy lines. The Lord provided for one air charter and we smuggled 1,200 Bibles to a remote area in Western Equatoria. Incredibly, through the vision of a blind man, Brent Noebel, sufficient funds were raised from Summit students for us to deliver over 300,000 Bibles and Christian books in 24 languages to 14 different regions of Sudan. I personally conducted over 1,200 services and meetings training hundreds of pastors, teachers, chaplains and evangelists in Sudan on 27 Missions. All by Faith. Frontline Fellowship conducted over 70 Missions to Sudan.

Many ask: How is that possible? With the limited means at our disposal we attempt to do our very best to respond to the challenges and opportunities to fulfil the Great

The Great Commission Manual

Commission in Africa. The books that we have published go a long way towards financing the fuel for Mission teams in the field. But most of our support comes in from prayer supporters of our Missions, cheques, electronic transfers, direct deposits and envelopes after a meeting. These are some of the means that the Lord has used to enable our Mission to go forward.

Our recent Overland Mission to Sudan was another example of how the Lord requires us to step out in Faith. It was only after we had fully equipped and packed and loaded our vehicle and the team was already on the road to Sudan, that funds came in from supporters of the Mission to enable the team to reach their destination.

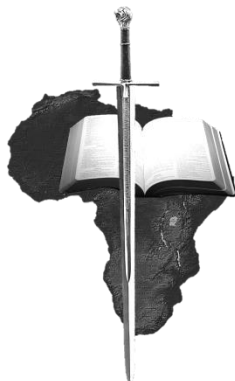
The children of Israel learned to follow the presence of God as it was manifested by the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day. Just as the children of Israel were required to step into the River Jordan before the Lord parted the waters, we need to be responsive to the still small voice of God's Holy Spirit. We need to stand up, step out and launch out in Faith.

We are determined not to be deterred by the dangers, diseases and risks involved in ministering in conflict areas. We trust God alone for His provision, protection, guidance and blessing.

May the Lord continue to be your joy and strength.

Yours for the fulfilment of the Great Commission

Dr. Peter Hammond
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AFRICA'S GREATEST NEED - DISCIPLESHIP

A World magazine article, Words and Deeds by a missionary in Malawi, quoted church leaders as saying that Africa's greatest need is discipleship. "The church has done a good job of evangelising but a poor job of discipling. Christianity here is a mile wide and an inch deep." Most of the pastors throughout Africa have no formal Bible training. Most pastors have no access to a library, and only a few books. Many do not even own a full Bible. Operation World reports that 100 million Christians in Africa do not even possess a copy of the Bible!

Africa is the poorest continent on earth, and the only continent that has actually grown poorer over the last thirty years. Most Africans do not even own the land they cultivate. In many countries in Africa the state owns all the land. Even where private leases of the land are allowed, there is often a time limit where after that the land reverts back to the state. Some economists have pointed out that the value of the "dead capital" in Africa, that is the property which cannot be capitalised because of lack of a title deed, is roughly forty times the foreign aid received worldwide since 1945. Corrupt predatory regimes and socialist economics have impoverished Africa and crippled its progress. Life expectancy in Africa has plummeted over the last decades. The holocaust in Rwanda is a graphic illustration of some of the consequences of inadequate discipleship.

Frontline Fellowship continues to receive enthusiastic responses, to our ***Biblical Principles for Africa*** book. Even the Presidents of Malawi and Zambia have written to us expressing their appreciation for Biblical Principles for Africa. Both the Zambian and Malawian Parliaments have requested quantities of Biblical Principles for Africa to be distributed to their members.

Others encouraged us to go even deeper by giving the Biblical principles for individuals - This led us to produce the ***Discipleship Handbook***.

In so many different ways, and from some very unexpected sources, the Lord confirmed that this was a project that we should put heart and soul into. As discipleship training has been a priority through most of Frontline Fellowship's 32 years, there was no shortage of material. Some chapters have been refined and developed many times over the years, others were crafted from scratch. The problem was knowing what to leave out! We wanted to limit the book to 150 pages and pack it full of great insights, practical instruction and Biblical inspiration - to enable us to love God more wholeheartedly, to serve Him more effectively, to obey Him more consistently, to worship Him more acceptably.

The ***Discipleship Handbook*** is my third discipleship book in the series which began with Faith In Action in 1989 and ***Putting Feet To Your Faith*** in 1998. The Discipleship Handbook deals with the most important issues possible. There is no one more important than God and nothing more important than our relationship to God. This is what really, ultimately matters - that we know God, and that we make Him known.

"Only one life, it will soon be passed only what's done for Christ will last."

C. T. Studd

We need to work out our priorities in the light of eternity. When Jesus was asked what the greatest Commandment was, He replied: **"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength...you shall love your neighbour as yourself."** Mark 12:30-31

Our greatest priority is to love God above all else and more than anyone else. We need to get to know the Word of God and the God of the Word.

"Teach us, good Lord, to serve You as You deserve:
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to ask for rest,
to labour and not to ask for any reward save that of knowing that we do Your will."

True love is measured by sacrifice.

This is what really matters. To know God and to make Him known. To love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and our neighbour as ourself. To go and make disciples of all nations, teaching obedience to all things the Lord has commanded.

Revivals are not churches filled with people, but people filled with God.

A Christian is a free man, set free to serve Christ. A Christian is an athlete, in training for a godly life. Rid yourself from all unnecessary weight, free yourself of all known sin, throw aside every encumbrance and run with determination and endurance. Obey the rules, run to win, run straight, harden your body, control your movements. Run your best, run the full distance.

A Christian is a soldier. We have a spiritual enemy to fight, we have a spiritual war to win. We have spiritual weapons that are powerful to the destroying of strongholds. Therefore be disciplined, be prepared, be alert, use the sword of the Spirit, fight evil, resist the devil, attack the strongholds, set the prisoners free. Win the victory in Jesus' Name. **"We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."** Romans 8:37

A Christian is a worker. As workers for the Lord we ought to do our best, wholeheartedly. A Christian is a farmer, sowing the seed of the Gospel. **"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."** Matthew 9:37

As these Biblical illustrations show, any definition of a Christian must include: action, devotion, dedication, persistence, sacrifice and service.

"Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?" Psalm. 85:6

No one is more important than God, and nothing is more important than our relationship with Him. We should schedule time with God in our diary. We should switch our cell phones off in church, during devotions and in prayer meetings. We need to build the Bible into our daily routine: The Bible before breakfast. Read a Psalm before lunch or Scripture before supper. Plan to read through the whole Bible in one year (By reading just 4 chapters a day you can complete the whole Bible in just one year).

Africa's Greatest Need - Discipleship

Attend the Bible study and prayer meetings of your church. Make Sundays special. Receive evangelistic training. Volunteer some of your time to help your local church or mission.

For those who say that they do not have time for these Steps to Personal Revival, here is another suggestion: Disconnect your TV and stop reading the daily newspapers. That will provide most people with a couple of extra hours every day! **What is your priority?**

The centre of the Christian Gospel is the cross, and the salvation that God wrought on the cross is the greatest act in all the history of mankind. *"God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself."*

**He became like us - that we might become like Him.
He was rejected - that we might be accepted.
He was condemned - that we might be forgiven.
He was punished - that we might be pardoned.
He suffered - that we might be strengthened.
He was whipped - that we might be healed.
He was hated - that we might be loved.
He was crucified - that we might be justified.
He was tortured - that we might be comforted.
He died - that we might live.
He went to hell - that we might go to Heaven.
He endured what we deserve - that we might enjoy what only He deserves.**

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." There are 278 references to fearing God in the Bible. The fear of God is mentioned more times than any other aspect of devotion. We should fear God because of who He is: our Creator, Sovereign Lord and Eternal Judge.

"To fear the Lord is to hate evil". Proverbs 8:13

We need to know God and to make Him known.

"All Scripture is God breathed." Jesus is the only way to God. Jesus is God in human form.

The disciple of Christ must learn and experience what it means to be filled with the Spirit; be led by the Holy Spirit; walk in the Spirit; pray in the Spirit.

The Word of God warns us to not grieve the Holy Spirit; to not quench the Holy Spirit. ***"The Spirit has given us life; He must also control our lives."*** Galatians 5:25

"If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching..." The Ten Commandments teach us respect for God, respect for people and respect for property. The Ten Commandments cover our responsibility to God, to our parents and to other people. The Ten Commandments are foundational to all of life.

The Bible teaches that ***"sin is lawlessness."*** 1 John 3:4

"The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7

"If you love Me, you will obey what I command." John 14:15

What is wrong with our world? Sin. Mankind is in rebellion to God. Instead of offering a weak, diluted, man-centred message of *"believe and receive"*, we need to faithfully proclaim a Christ-centred, Bible-based and Holy Spirit message of *"repentance and obedience."* Rather than only making converts we need to *"make disciples...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*

Discipleship is not complete until the disciple is discipling.

"Jesus said 'If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'" Matthew 16:24

Give up your small ambitions - and follow Jesus.

The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you. Forgiveness of sin is not a substitute for restitution. Forgiveness does not transfer property rights to the thief. Repentance from sin and restitution are inseparable. Do a thorough job of repentance and restitution.

"The discerning heart seeks knowledge." Successful people read. Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body. A person's character is to a large extent developed by the books he reads. Readers make leaders. Invest in renewing your mind. Buy Christian books.

"The Bible is worth more than all the other books which have ever been printed."

The truly wise man is he who always believes the Bible against the opinion of any man.

The Bible is the number one bestselling book in all of history. The Bible has inspired the greatest literature, the greatest art, the greatest examples of architecture, charity and self-sacrifice in history.

"Whatever there is in civilisation that is worthwhile rests on the Bible's precepts."

Prayer is to the soul what breathing is to the body. If you are too busy to pray then you are busier than God wants you to be. Nothing is beyond the reach of prayer - except that which is beyond the will of God. So the Discipleship Handbook goes to the Puritans to learn how to balance head and heart, doctrine and devotion, for a dynamic prayer life.

"If you remain in Me, and My Word remains in you, ask whatever you will and it will be given you." John 15:7

If God can change you, then God can use you to change some part of this world. Until we know the Word of God, we can be easily misled. Truth is not determined by majority opinion, but by the Word of God.

History has a goal. Time has meaning. Our calendars should reflect that. If something is important then we need to work it into our calendar.

All animals belong to God. Jesus is *"the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."* Jesus is *"the Lion of the tribe of Judah."* We are answerable to God for our treatment, care and protection of animals. *"A good man is kind to his animals, but the wicked are cruel to theirs."* Proverbs 12:10

Africa's Greatest Need - Discipleship

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. Protect the rights of all who are helpless." Proverbs 31:8

"I will set before my eyes no vile thing..." The average child watches over 2000 hours of TV every year. Violence in the media fuels violence in society.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for a good man to do nothing."

We need to redeem the media by supporting good films and refusing to support the bad. Redeem the time. Clean the screen. Know before you go.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is His good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:1-2

Adversity builds character. Everything is a test of character. Extreme situations expose and bring out the best, or the worst, in people. A person's character is accurately measured by his reaction to unfairness or bad treatment. Guidelines on responding to criticism and conflict resolution are also part of the book.

"You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You." Isaiah 26:3

Missions require suffering and sacrifice. ***"All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."*** 2 Timothy 3:12

We seldom consider our personal suffering or world events in the light of eternity. Wherever there is danger - there are unique opportunities for serving God. God's army often advances on its knees in prayer and on its back in pain.

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. If you aim at nothing any road will get you there. In the light of eternity - what are my priorities? The Discipleship Handbook includes worksheets and questionnaires to help organise your priorities and your time.

Where God guides, He provides. Time is life - squander time, and you squander life. **Don't settle for less than God's best.**

Let us lay solid foundations and let our spiritual roots go deep into God's Word for a fruitful life of discipleship.



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WAKING UP TO THE UNSAVED WORLD

Dr. James Kennedy is one of the most listened to ministers in the world with a radio and television ministry reaching over 156 countries. The congregation he pastors, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, has a membership of over 9,000, and Dr. Kennedy has authored over 45 books. He is Founder and President of Evangelism Explosion International, the Chancellor of Knox Theological Seminar and the Founder of the Centre for Reclaiming America. Yet, I learned that every Thursday night Dr. Kennedy goes out into the streets and engages in door-to-door, personal evangelism. So, the first time I met Dr. Kennedy, I asked him: *“I hear that you are still involved, every week, in door-to-door evangelism. I am surprised that you have the time, considering your radio, T.V., writing and preaching ministry.”*

Dr. Kennedy responded to me with intensity: *“Peter, that’s the most important thing I do. All these ministries around me, I doubt that many of them will endure long after I am gone, but Evangelism Explosion, this ministry of multiplication, reaching the lost, bringing them to Christ and training them to reach others also, this is far more important than all my radio, T.V., and writing ministries.”*

Perhaps you thought that there is nothing particularly important that you can do, at least nothing as important as those who have high profile ministries? However, I have found numerous prominent ministers who are convinced that the most important thing that anyone can do is personal, one-on-one evangelism.

American evangelist, D.L. Moody in the 19th Century, preached to huge crowds in America and England, however, he did not consider his day to be complete unless he had engaged in one-on-one personal evangelism. He undertook never to go to bed without having witnessed to one person that day. Preaching to huge crowds in the city hall or a sports stadium, did not qualify. There are numerous funny stories of D.L. Moody wandering the streets late at night in his dressing gown looking for a stranger to witness to. On these occasions he had apparently been prepared for bed, only to remember that he had not yet completed his day’s duties by personal, one-on-one evangelism.

Yet, tragically, the vast majority of churchgoers do not engage in any evangelism at all.

I have made it a principle to incorporate Evangelism Workshops and practical outreaches in our leadership training courses, particularly the **Great Commission Course**. When they register, participants of our various courses are asked: *“Have you ever led someone to Christ?”* Most participants respond: *“No.”*

Yet, at the end of our courses, most participants write in their Response Forms that the highlight of the course was the personal, one-on-one evangelism on the streets, in the prisons, hospitals, townships, door-to-door evangelism, and leading someone to Christ for the first time!

Many Christians are absolutely terrified of witnessing, and yet, when they are forced to try it, are amazed by how open and hungry so many people are for the Gospel of Christ.

I was brought up in a secular family. We never went to church, or Sunday school. There was no prayer or Bible reading in our home, not even grace before meals. When I was 17 years old I heard the Gospel for the first time – at a cinema, which had been

Waking Up to an Unsaved World

hired out by a local church for an evangelistic rally. As the visiting speaker, Rev. Rex Matthee, described the sacrifices and sufferings of Christ he challenged us: *“This is what Christ has done for you, **what have you ever done for Him?**”*

His challenge pierced my heart. I had done absolutely nothing for Christ. I had never even thanked God for His creation, for my life or for my health. I realised that I was a self-centred, lost sinner – truly deserving the condemnation of the Almighty God on the Day of Judgment. When the appeal was made at the end, I walked forward and publically committed my life to Christ. Right from the beginning of my adventure of discipleship, I could not help but be involved in evangelism. Door-to-door evangelism, tract distribution in the streets, ministering in old age homes, Scripture Union holiday missions, teaching in Sunday school, leading a youth group, running the booktable, evangelism at the railway stations, and when I was called up for military service I started a daily Bible study and prayer fellowship, out of which our mission Frontline Fellowship ultimately developed.

Coming from a non-Christian background, I knew that there were many hurting people out there who would respond to the Good News, if we would only take the time and make the effort to share it with them.

We can learn so much from how naturally children share the Gospel. When my oldest daughter, Andrea was just 5 years old, we were in an aircraft flying to Europe. It was just after takeoff, when Andrea shouted loudly for the entire aircraft to hear: ***“We’re Christians!”*** I put down my book, turned to Andrea and said: *“Yes, we are, but why do you bring it up right now?”*

Andrea answered: *“The lady was asking if there are any Christians, we should let her know.”* I thought for a moment and answered: *“I think that must have been, if there’s any questions, we should let her know!”*

Just before this trip, my mother had been taking Andrea shopping at Cavendish Square. She reported that when a magician called across the mall to Andrea: *“Hey, little girl, come over here – we have magic for you!”* Andrea replied: *“My Lord Jesus does miracles – and that’s better than your magic!”*

The magician stood there speechless, as did many of the shoppers passing by. *“Out of mouths of babes.”*

When my youngest son, Calvin, was 5 years old, he created quite a furore at the play school by asking some of the Muslim children: *“Why do your parents bow down to a rock in a box in Mecca? The Second Commandment says we shouldn’t bow down to anything – that’s idolatry!”*

Some of the Muslim parents complained to the teacher, who complained to my wife, who complained to me, and I congratulated Calvin and took him out to buy him a reward.

Calvin memorized the Evangelism Explosion Gospel presentation and has given it at numerous public meetings, conferences, seminars, and camps.

In fact, last year, he was the only *“speaker”* at a Carols by Candlelight service. A local church was organising an end of the year Carols by Candlelight. When one lady

The Great Commission Manual

requested the pastor to ensure that there was an evangelistic message for the many unchurched parents (who were only coming to see their Sunday School children dressed as shepherds and angels, etc.) the pastor responded that he didn't feel "*called*" to evangelism, found it very intimidating and difficult! This lady rebuked him and said: "*It's easy to evangelise, even a six year old can do it!*"

The pastor responded: "*You find me a six year old who can present the Gospel and I'll put him on the programme.*" That day I received a phone call from this lady who had heard that my son Calvin (then 6 years old) was quite bold in presenting the Gospel. I spoke to Calvin, reminded him that this would be an outdoor meeting with several hundred people at night, in the dark, with people holding candles and he would have to use a public address system. By God's grace, Calvin was still prepared to do it. I went over every aspect of the presentation with him numerous times beforehand, reminding him that as he stands up he will find his throat muscles tighten and the temptation will be to speak much softer than normal. Yet, he would have to project his voice nice and loud, clearly, even for the deaf old lady in the back row whose hearing aid is switched off!

My father-in-law, Rev. Bill Bathman, who has been a missionary for over 54 years, mostly to the persecuted churches of Eastern Europe, also coached his grandson in various speaking techniques.

We needn't have worried at all. When the day came, Calvin strode up on his own to the platform, stood in front of the microphone and flawlessly, word perfect, with clarity, and emphasis in all the right places, and with much passion and enthusiasm presented the Evangelism Explosion Gospel presentation to the stunned audience. Everyone sat absolutely riveted holding their candles and watching and listening to this enthusiastic 6 year old present the Gospel, call them to repentance and commitment, adding in numerous Scripture verses such as John 3:16 and John 14:6 and even led them in prayer.

When my youngest daughter, Daniela, was turning 13 we invited many of her friends to a sleep over at the local Girl Guide Hall. As we were getting them settled, I noticed some teenage boys on their skateboards hovering outside. I told my wife that I was going to threaten them with severe bodily consequences if any of them dared step over the threshold onto the Girl Guide property. On my way out I was amazed to see Calvin walking towards me from those very boys. Calvin told me: "*I've been talking to these boys. I told them the Ten Commandments, that they were lost and going to hell. I shared with them the Gospel presentation, and I think that some of them are ready to give their lives to the Lord. But I need your help. Can you come and pray with them please?*"

I was stunned. I also felt severely rebuked of the Lord. I wasn't thinking of their souls! In fact, I had no charitable thoughts at all at the time! Yet, Calvin, just 6 years old at the time, had taken initiative and had challenged these teenagers with the Gospel. I went over, and sure enough, they were most receptive and in a teachable frame of mind. I counselled and discussed with them the implications of surrendering their lives to Christ, and had the joy of leading three of them to Christ in prayer that night.

Later, I told Calvin: "*God really spoke to you tonight!*"

Calvin responded: "*But, I didn't hear Him!*"

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"But God did speak to you," I told him. "Just as Samuel thought that Eli had called him in the Tabernacle, so you need to remember what God's voice sounded like, so that you can recognise it next time: 'Speak Lord, for your servant listens.' Calvin, none of the rest of us were thinking of those boys' eternal destinies, but God spoke to you and you were the one who listened to what God's Spirit was saying."

My father-in-law later told me that Calvin came rushing over to him exclaiming: "Granddad, Granddad, God spoke to me tonight!"

You can have that joyful excitement of being guided and blessed by God as you reach out to your neighbours, co-workers, friends and family members with the life changing Good News of God's Law and God's love. Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life – no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6).

LIVING WATERS Africa

INSPIRING and EQUIPPING Christians in FULFILLING the Great Commission

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R265

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TO KNOW GOD AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were created and have their being.”

Revelation 4:18

We need to know God and we need to make Him known.

What comes into our mind when we think of God is the most important thing about us. No person is greater than his religion, and no religion is greater than its concept of God.

The essence of idolatry is the entertaining of unworthy thoughts about God. We must purify and elevate our concept of our Almighty God for He is gloriously infinite and majestically eternal. He is the righteous One, the God of justice, the God of wrath and judgment. He is the most holy God, the God of glory and grace, of love and mercy – the God of creation and salvation. Our worship – *in spirit and in truth* – depends upon our understanding of who God is.

The more we get to know the Word of God, the more we'll get to know the God of the Word. Love grows out of time spent together in a committed relationship. We need to deepen our relationship with God through spending more time seeking Him. ***“And you will seek Me and you will find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”*** Jeremiah 29:13

John the Baptist declared: ***“He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”***

Matthew 3:11-12

“For our God is a consuming fire.” Hebrews 12:29

A blacksmith keeps his iron in the fire long enough for the fire to be in the iron. We too need to be so immersed in God's Word and spend so much time in His presence that His fire burns in our hearts.

Love is much like fire: it needs fuel, heat and oxygen. It constantly needs more fuel and oxygen to keep it raging. Love is like life: it grows if fed and dies if starved. Our love for God feeds by faith on His Word, and in worship and in adoration. We need to experience His glorious presence and majesty through constant prayer and praise. Our soul should feed on His Word and drink of His spirit.

“Oh God, you are my God, and I long for You. My whole being desires You; like a dry, worn out and waterless land, my soul is thirsty for You.” Psalm 63:1.

When Jesus was asked what the greatest command was, He replied: ***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second most important command is this: Love your neighbour as you love yourself. There is no other commandment more important than these two.”*** Mark 12:30-31

Our Lord Jesus Christ demands wholehearted love – not with some of, or most of, our heart, but love God with **all**. Nothing less than everything we have is sufficient for our God. Nothing other than the best we have is worthy enough for our sovereign Lord who

To Know God and to Make Him Known

is our Creator and our Redeemer. Our hearts should be filled with love for God. We should get excited about Him and eagerly desire to experience His presence.

“Your presence fills me with joy and brings me pleasure forever.” Psalm 16:1

We need to consider how great is our God. He is infinite – without limitation. Without beginning and without end. He is eternal, self-existent. He depends on nothing and no one else. God is immutable – He is always consistent. *Yesterday, today and forever, the Alpha and the Omega.*

“Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples. For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; He is to be feared above all gods.” 1 Chronicles 16:24-25

Consider the Lordship of Yahweh. He is omnipotent – all-powerful; omnipresent – everywhere present, eternal both in time and omnipresent in space. He is omniscient – all knowing. He is the Truth. ***“He is the living God and He endures forever; His Kingdom will never be destroyed. His dominion will never end. He rescues and He saves; He performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He rescued Daniel from the power of the lions.”*** Daniel 6:26-27

We need to bow before the holiness of God. He is righteous and just. He is a God of wrath who hates sin. He is good and great. ***“Great and marvelous are Your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are Your ways, King of the Ages. Who will not fear You, Oh Lord, and bring glory to Your Name? For You alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before You. For Your righteous acts have been revealed.”*** Revelations 15:3-4

Have you experienced the love of God? God is *Agape* – love. He is gracious and merciful. He has provided for the Salvation of His people. In Him is forgiveness and full atonement for all sin. Our God is a Covenant keeping God. There is steadfast security and loyal love in Him.

“Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever.”

1 Chronicle 16:34

Out of love we should present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God to serve Him practically with our talents, abilities and strengths. By living for God, we show our love for Him. ***“That I reckon my own life to be worth nothing to me; I only want to complete my mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do.”***

Acts 20:24

We must love God with all our heart, seek Him with all our soul, obey Him with all our mind, and serve Him with all our strength.

“All I want is to know Christ.” Philippians 3:10

Everyone can tell who is a real Christian or not. Jesus said that the mark of a real Christian is real love (John 13:35).

We should love even as Jesus loved, and He showed us how much He loved us. He didn't just sing about it, or promise it; He proved it – by His actions. Jesus showed His love for us. Shouldn't we do the same for Him?

“Our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action.” 1 John 3:18

Jesus showed us by His great example that true love is measured by sacrifice and some of the most revealing indicators of our love for Him are the sacrifices that we make for Him. As one famous prayer expressed it:

*“Teach us, good Lord, to serve You as You deserve;
To give and not to count the cost,
To fight and not to heed the wounds,
To toil and not to ask for rest,
To labour and not to ask for any reward,
Save that of knowing that we do Your will.”*

Love gives and does not count the cost. Love rejoices in giving, and wants to give – not out of duty, but out of a glad and willing heart. Love entails intense enthusiasm, a longing to be near, and a desire to serve. **Do you love God like that?**

Do you get enthusiastic about Jesus? Does the thought of worshipping God and experiencing His presence excite you? Do you overflow with joy when you talk about Jesus? We must love God with **all** our heart.

Do you long to be near Jesus? Do you feel incomplete if you are separated from His presence? Do you eagerly long for the next worship service or quiet time with Jesus? We must love God with all of our soul.

Are you dedicated to serving God in every way possible? Are you determined to use your abilities, talents and energies for God?

*“Let me seek You in longing,
Let me long for You in seeking,
Let me find You in love,
And love You in finding.”*

Therefore: He is to be loved.
He is to be worshipped.
He is to be feared.
He is to be served.
He is to be proclaimed.

“Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” 1 Timothy 1:17



ANDREW

"Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as he walked, he said, 'Behold the Lamb of God!' The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, 'What do you seek?' They said to him, 'Rabbi (which is to say when translated, teacher), where are you staying?' He said to them, 'Come and see'...One of the two who heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother, Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah!' (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus." John 1:35-42

A Fisherman

Like his brother, Simon Peter, Andrew was a fisherman. John's Gospel states that they had come from Bethsaida, but at the time of Jesus's ministry, their home was in Capernaum, where they were in partnership in their fishing business with James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

A Disciple of John the Baptist

One day a rugged prophet appeared in the scene preaching repentance. Tax collectors, soldiers, priests, zealots, young and old, all kinds of people, went out into the wilderness to see this strange character dressed in camel's hair, eating wild honey and locusts, preaching the Law of God, the judgment of God, and repentance from sin. Andrew must have been thrilled by this gaunt and intense personality, and he became a disciple of John. He was baptised for the remission of sins and for a time he followed John the Baptist learning from him.

Pointed to Jesus

The day after the baptism of Jesus, John stood with two of his disciples and pointing at Jesus he declared: ***"Behold the Lamb of God!"*** Andrew was one of those two disciples of John, and he immediately followed Jesus. Jesus turned and challenged them: *"What do you seek?"* Andrew and the other disciple responded: *"Teacher."* It is believed that the other, unnamed disciple, was John, the author of the Gospel of John. Jesus challenged them to come and follow Him. John's Gospel mentions that when the Lord Jesus called Andrew: *"Come and see."* it was *"about the tenth hour"* (John 1:39). It was a significant hour for Andrew. An hour of decision. An hour of opportunity. An hour that was to change his life forever.

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation...?" Hebrews 2:3

The First Called

Andrew was the first named in the Gospel to believe and follow Christ. The early church called him *protoclete* (first called). It takes courage to be the first. Andrew showed that he wasn't afraid to follow his convictions. A never to be broken allegiance to Jesus was established in that first encounter. No persuasion was needed some time later when Jesus called him to full-time discipleship: ***"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."*** Matthew 4:19

Just as Andrew responded immediately to the opportunity to commit his life to Christ, so Andrew responded promptly to the call to consecration and service.

A Soul Winner

Andrew was consumed with an absolute conviction: *"Jesus is the Lamb of God, the long awaited Messiah."* And immediately on finding the Messiah, Andrew began his life long pattern of soul winning. First of all he wanted his brother to know. Andrew could only think of one thing - his brother Peter. Apparently he had always lived in the shadow of his elder brother. Simon Peter had gifts he did not. And his brother must meet Jesus! *"He first found his own brother, Simon, and said to him, 'We have found the Messiah!'"* John 1:41

We Have Found the Messiah!

There was no doubt, no question. Andrew was convinced. And convincing. Had he been doubtful, it is unlikely that Peter would have been impressed. Simon Peter was too strong a person to be moved by indecision or half-heartedness.

Andrew was adamant. We have found the Messiah!

At first, Simon would have seemed an unlikely prospective convert. But he listened to his younger brother. With all his boisterous personality and fiery extrovert nature, Simon listened to his younger brother Andrew.

Apparently Simon respected Andrew's quiet, reliable, consistent ways. Andrew communicated with such joyful discovery and with such certainty that Peter came to Jesus.

Praise God that Andrew was not like all too many in our time who may have halfheartedly whispered, "I think I saw a man who may possibly be the Christ, I could be wrong, but perhaps you should check it out for yourself, if it's not too inconvenient, and if you feel like it, perhaps..." Andrew absolutely affirmed that Jesus is the Christ.

Beginning at Home

Missionary work begins at home, often a difficult and discouraging field. Andrew began at home, and with a difficult brother who no doubt did not normally take well to being told what to do.

Later, Simon Peter would teach that when trying to win family members to Christ, our manner of life should be so convincing that observers would be won even without a spoken word (1 Peter 3:1-2). One can only conclude that Peter was thinking of his own brother Andrew as an example of that.

A Brave Brother

Though overshadowed by his brother, and regularly referred to in the Gospels as *"Simon Peter's brother"*, Andrew accepted his secondary role. The name Andrew means *"manly"*, or *"brave"*. Andrew certainly wasn't afraid to follow his convictions. In quick succession the Gospel records the conversions of Peter, Phillip and Nathaniel.

Behind the Scenes

Although Andrew came to Christ first, in two Gospels (Matt. 10:2; Luke 6:14) he is mentioned second, immediately after Peter and termed 'Peter's brother'. In Mark 3:18 and Acts 1:13, Andrew appears fourth in the listing of the Apostles. The Apostle Andrew worked quietly behind the scenes, winning people to Christ, one by one. His elder brother, Peter, was always in the limelight. On the day of Pentecost, Peter won 3000 to Christ with one sermon! If Peter is called the big fisherman, Andrew could be

Andrew

termed the little fisherman. But one should never forget that it was the little fisherman, Andrew, that landed Peter, the big fisherman. Because Andrew laboured privately, Peter preached publicly.

Contrasting Characters

The brothers were so different. While Peter roared, Andrew counseled quietly. While Peter was impetuous, Andrew was cautious. Peter led, while Andrew followed. We don't read of Andrew flinging himself emotionally at the feet of Jesus after the miraculous catch of fish. Nor did he daringly jump into the stormy sea to walk on water as Peter did. Nor did Andrew rashly intervene at the arrest of Jesus and hack off one of the assailant's ears with a sword! Rather, Andrew was solid, prudent and conservative.

A Dedicated Evangelist

Andrew was a dedicated personal evangelist. Thrilled to meet the Messiah, he couldn't keep the exciting discovery to himself. Every time we read of Andrew in the Gospels, he is introducing someone to Jesus. Andrew brought himself to Christ, then he brought his brother to Christ, then he brought a young boy to Christ, and finally we read of him bringing Greeks to Christ. He began his witness at home, and then worked outwardly - from family to foreigners.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8

A Hungry Crowd

A great crowd had followed Jesus around the Sea of Galilee. They were tired, hungry and far from home. The disciples suggested that the multitudes be sent away (Matthew 14:15). *"But Jesus said to them, 'They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.'"* Matt. 14:16. Phillip pointed out that *"two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them..."* John 6:7

A Young Boy with a Small Meal

Then the Scripture tells us: *"One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 'There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?' Then Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, a number of about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise as the fish, as they wanted. So when they were filled, He said to the disciples 'Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost.' Therefore they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves that were left over by those who had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did said, 'This is truly the Prophet Who is to come into the world!'"* John 6:8-14

Bringing People to Christ

Phillip had figured it out. It would have cost the equivalent of three hundred days' wages to have fed the multitude. But then Andrew spoke up: *"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish..."* Andrew saw the boy in the crowd. He had sought him out and befriended him. The first time he brought himself to Jesus, then he brought his brother to Jesus, now he is bringing a young boy to Christ. We need Andrews today to bring young girls and boys to Christ. The Lord Jesus can do a lot with a little. Jesus multiplied the small boy's lunch to feed over 5,000 people.

Bringing Gentiles to Christ

Towards the end of the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus, just a few days before the Crucifixion, on Palm Sunday, as Jesus entered Jerusalem in triumph, some men of Greek birth had come to Jerusalem, to the Feast of the Passover. They had heard about Jesus and wanted to meet Him. They went to Phillip, one of the disciples. But Phillip did not know what to do. Surely Jesus' ministry was to the Jews? Would He have time for the Gentiles? Perhaps Phillip considered asking Peter or John what to do. But then he asks Andrew. And Andrew and Phillip then introduce these Greeks to Jesus.

Doctor Luke

Church tradition identifies one of those Greeks introduced to Jesus by Andrew as doctor Luke, who would later accompany the apostle Paul on his great missionary journeys, and author the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts.

We Would See Jesus

The Greeks came asking: "*Sir, we wish to see Jesus.*" John 12:21. And Andrew introduces them to Jesus Who declares: "*The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Most assuredly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let Him follow Me; and where I am, there my servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honour...And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.*" John 12:23-32

Humble

Andrew must have been humble. Although he was the first to follow Jesus, he was never mentioned amongst the inner circle of three (Peter, James and John) who were with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, or were privileged to witness the raising of Jairus' daughter, or to join the inner three with Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane. Perhaps he learnt this humility from his mentor John the Baptist who declared: "*He must increase, I must decrease.*" John the Baptist was happy to be the voice, not the Word. The forerunner, not the Messiah. The Bridegroom's friend, not the Groom. Jesus must increase, I must decrease.

Saved to Serve

Andrew apparently thought more of service than of reputation. As one famous man declared: "There's no limit to how far you can go, if you don't mind who gets the credit." Do you mind if others get the credit for the work you have done? Apparently Andrew didn't mind. He quietly went about his job, winning people to Christ, one by one.

Operation Andrew

We need a new Operation Andrew to mobilise Christians to win the lost to Christ, one by one. Each one bring one, each one win one, the whole Church taking the whole Gospel to the whole world. Most people are brought to Christ through individual invitation and concern.

Not everyone can be a Peter or a Paul, but many of us can be an Andrew. Every now and then there is a Peter, and a Paul, a Martin Luther, a William Farel, a John Calvin, a George Whitefield, a Jonathan Edwards, a Charles Spurgeon. Those are the rare exceptions. But the church could not function without the humble, consistent,

hardworking Andrews who are introducing people to Christ one person at a time. **"He who wins souls is wise."** Proverbs 12:30

"Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:3

A Courageous Martyr

The church historian Eusebius records that Andrew preached to the Scythians, Sogdians and the Sacae. Bernard and Saint Cyprian mention the courageous confession and martyrdom of the blessed apostle Andrew. It is also recorded in *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*.

Confronting Idolatry

When Andrew, through his diligent preaching, had brought many to faith in Christ, Aegeas, the governor of the Edessenes asked permission of the Roman senate to force all Christians to sacrifice to and honour the Roman idols. Andrew was convinced that he should resist Aegeas, and he went to the governor telling him that a judge of men should first know and worship the Judge in Heaven. Andrew declared that while worshipping the true God, we should banish all false gods and blind idols from our mind.

Aegeas was furious at Andrew and demanded to know if he was the one who had recently overthrown the temple of the gods and persuaded men to become Christians, joining the superstitious sect that had recently been declared illegal by the Romans?

Andrew replied that the rulers of Rome did not understand the truth. The Son of God, Who came into the world for man's sake, taught that the Roman gods were devils, enemies of mankind, teaching men to offend God and causing Him to turn away from them. By serving the devil, men fall into all kinds of wickedness. And after they die nothing but their evil deeds will be remembered.

Faithful Unto Death

The proconsul ordered Andrew not to preach these things anymore or he would face a speedy crucifixion. Whereupon Andrew replied: *"I would not have preached the honour and glory of the Cross if I feared the death of the cross."* Andrew was condemned to be crucified for teaching a new sect and taking away the religion of the Roman gods.

Going toward the place of execution and seeing the cross waiting for him, Andrew never changed his expression. Neither did he fail in his speech. His body fainted not, nor did his reason fail him, as often happens to men about to die. He said: *"O cross, most welcome and longed for! With a willing mind, joyfully and desirously I come to you, being the scholar of Him Who did hang on you, because I have always been your lover and yearn to embrace you."* The year of Andrew's martyrdom was AD80 and the day was 30 November.

A Patron Saint

Numerous churches are named after Andrew including Dr. R. C. Sproul's congregation, St. Andrews Chapel. The town in Scotland, Saint Andrews is also named after him. Four countries claim Andrew as their patron saint: Russia, Greece, Germany and Scotland. 30 November is St. Andrews Day. Robert the Bruce declared St. Andrew the patron saint of Scotland in the 1300s.

The Great Commission Manual

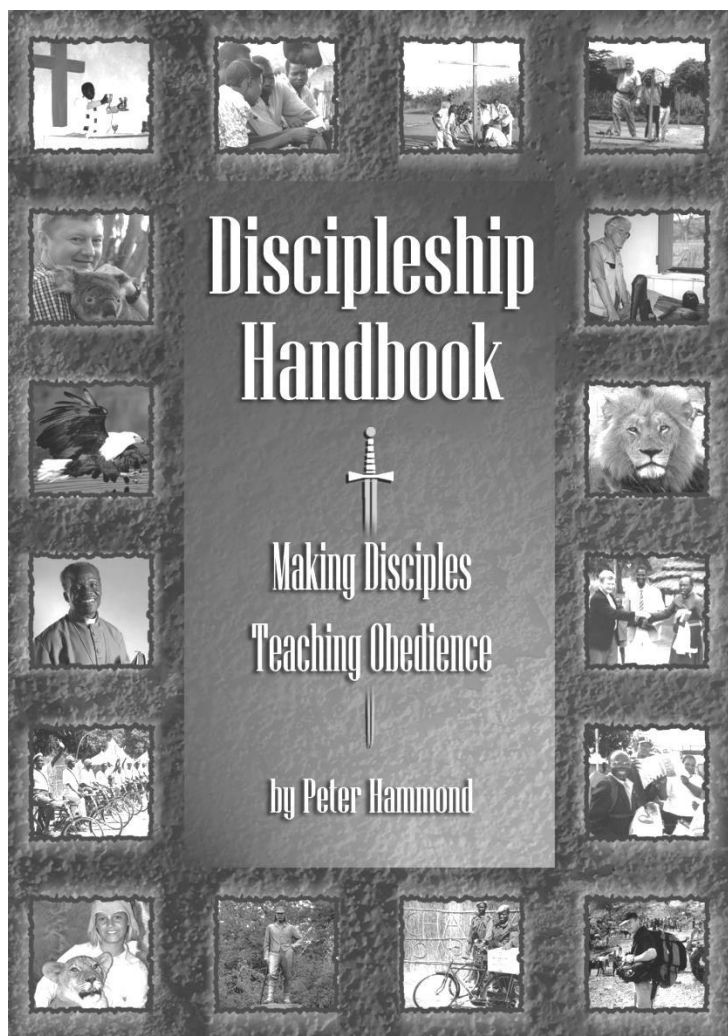
The Sattire cross of St. Andrew has been the national flag of Scotland since 1385. St. Andrew's Cross forms part of the flags of many nations including the Confederate States of America and the Union Jack of the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

In our family, Lenora and I named our first born, Andrea, after Andrew. In the first book I dedicated to a family member, ***Discipleship Handbook***, I wrote: *"This book is dedicated to my daughter, Andrea Hammond...may you, like the disciple Andrew you are named after, continually bring people to Christ."*

Andrew brought people to Christ. Are you introducing friends and family members to the Saviour? Are you speaking to strangers about the only One who can forgive our sins and transform us forever? Do you respond promptly to Christ's call to consecration and service? Are you convinced? Are you convincing? Are you humble? Are you decreasing and is Christ increasing in your life and witness?

"He who wins souls is wise."

"Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever."



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JOHN MARK

African Roots

John Mark was born in Cyrene in Africa. His Jewish parents belonged to the Levite tribe. They were described as righteous, God-fearing and wealthy. Early in John Mark's childhood nomadic tribes invaded the region robbing and pillaging, looting livestock and stealing valuables. Mark's parents suffered the loss of most of their possessions and so migrated to Jerusalem.

Privileged Upbringing

John Mark was given a good education and became fluent in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. His family was described as very religious and they were closely connected with the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry. The Apostle Peter was the cousin of Mark's father. Barnabas was Mark's cousin. His mother Mary played an active role in the early days of the church in Jerusalem. Her upper room was used for the Passover supper which was used by the Lord Jesus for His Last Supper with his disciples. It was in the same upper room that the Lord appeared to the disciples after His Resurrection. And it is also believed that it was in the same upper room that the church was gathered in prayer when the Holy Spirit came upon them on the Day of Pentecost.

Eyewitness for the Gospel

John Mark was present at the wedding at Cana in Galilee (John 2:1-11). Church tradition identified young Mark as one of the seventy disciples sent out to proclaim the Gospel (Luke 10:1-17). Mark was also identified as the man who had been carrying the jar when the two disciples were sent to prepare a place for the celebration of the Passover (Mark 14:13-14; Luke 21:11).

John Mark was the young man who, on the night that the Lord was betrayed and arrested, was following Jesus wearing a linen garment, and when they seized him he fled naked leaving his garment behind (Mark 14:51-52).

Active in Acts

John Mark accompanied the Apostle Peter on his missionary outreaches in Jerusalem and Judea. It was in his mother's home that the church met for prayer when the Apostle Peter was imprisoned (Acts 12:12).

When his uncle Barnabas (Colossians 4:10) and Paul returned from Jerusalem they brought John Mark with them to Antioch (Acts 12:25).

Desertion and Disgrace

When the Apostle Paul and Barnabas were sent off on that first great missionary journey by the Church at Antioch, John Mark went with them. After their successful outreach in Cyprus, they travelled to Perga in Pamphylia where John Mark left them to return to Jerusalem. The Scriptures do not mention his reasons. Whether it was the dangers or homesickness, whether his zeal had ebbed, or his courage had failed him, Mark deserted the elderly Barnabas and the sickly Paul, leaving them to scale the mountain passes to the Pisidian Antioch by themselves (Acts 13:13).

Disagreement and Division

When Paul and Barnabas set off on their second missionary journey *“Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with him, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas...”* Acts 15:36-40

Recovery and Restoration

Happily, however, that is not the last we hear of John Mark. Despite this unpromising beginning to his missionary career, John Mark came back and was later reconciled with Paul, proving himself in the field to become, in later years, a faithful co-worker with Paul. We read in Colossians 4:10: *“My fellow prisoner, Aristarchus, sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.”*

“Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.” 2 Timothy 4:11

From initially being a failure, a deserter, a quitter, a man who had put his hand to the plow but looked back and gone backward, causing a sharp disagreement and division between his cousin Barnabas and the Apostle Paul, John Mark had gone on to repent, to restore, to make restitution and to rebuild Paul's trust in him. So much so that Paul, in his pastoral letter to Timothy, describes Mark as *“helpful to me in my ministry.”* Paul also mentions Mark as one of his co-workers in his letter to Philemon.

Back to Africa

We need to turn to church history to find out what happened between that separation at the beginning of the second missionary journey, and the later reconciliation and restoration with the Apostle Paul.

Barnabas died and was buried on the island of Cyprus. After the death of his cousin, Barnabas, Mark was guided to go back to North Africa to preach the Gospel in Pentapolis, his birthplace in Cyrene.

Alexandria

After establishing a church in Pentapolis, Mark travelled to Alexandria in Egypt. At that time Alexandria was considered one of the greatest centres of culture and learning in world. It was certainly the greatest city in Africa. It's colonnaded streets were as wide as two hundred feet. The museum and library of Alexandria were some of the most impressive and imposing buildings anywhere on the continent. They contained some of the rarest and best of human achievements including several million scrolls and books. Greek philosophers, Hebrew Rabbis, Persian and Indian seers, and Egyptian teachers gathered to discuss and debate world and life views.

Yet, Alexandria at that time was also notorious for the drunkenness, decadence, debauchery and extravagant fashions of the very rich.

All day Mark walked through the market places and streets of Alexandria. Towards evening a strap of his sandal was torn and he turned to the first cobbler's shop. As the cobbler was working the awl pierced his hand and he took God's Name in vain. Mark picked up some clay and applied it to the wound, prayed for him and the man's hand was miraculously healed.

John Mark

Then, taking his cue from the cobbler's blasphemous statement, he started to talk to him about the Creator God, the Eternal Judge, and of His Son the Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ. The cobbler, Ananias, surrendered his life to Christ and invited the evangelist to stay in his home. Ananias and his family were baptised - becoming the first fruits of the church founded by the evangelist Mark. This was in 61 AD.

Soon many other Alexandrians were converted and the Christian faith grew dramatically. The authorities became alarmed and the local Christians pleaded with Mark to leave town until the threat has passed.

Called To Rome

Mark travelled to Pentapolis and visited the church that he had planted. It was about this time that he received the invitation from Paul to join him in Rome. Hearing that Mark had been forced to leave Egypt because of the hostility of the authorities, Paul had sent for Mark to join him in Rome. Later on, Paul testified to Mark's usefulness in his ministry (2 Timothy 4:11).

Writing the Gospel

Mark also later became a co-worker with the Apostle Peter (1 Peter 5:13). It was under the Apostolic authority of Peter that the Gospel according to St. Mark was written.

Laying Foundations for the Future

Both the Apostles Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome in 64AD. Mark returned to Alexandria in 65AD. He found the Christians firm in the Faith and growing in grace and boldness. Mark established the School of Alexandria to defend Christianity against the Philosophical School of Alexandria. He wrote the Liturgy of the Holy Eucharist which was later modified by Saint Cyril. Many miracles were attributed to his ministry and many converts were won to the Faith.

Persecution Erupts

In the year 68AD Resurrection Sunday fell on the same day as the Serapis Feast. A mob of heathen idolators who had gathered in the Serapis Temple in Alexandria were whipped up into a frenzy and poured out to attack the Christians who were celebrating the Resurrection. Mark was seized and dragged by ropes throughout the city. The mob chanted: *"The ox must be led to Baucalis"* Baucalis was one of the idols that was worshipped with sacrifices of oxen.

Light in the Darkness

In the evening the bruised and bleeding evangelist was thrown into a dark prison. There he was encouraged by an angel who told him: *"Now your hour has come O Mark, the good minister, to receive your recompense. Be encouraged for your name has been written in the Book of Life."*

Mark thanked God for sending His angel to him and then he had a vision of the Saviour Himself who declared: *"Peace be to you, Mark, my disciple and evangelist! Be strong, for tomorrow you shall receive the Crown of Martyrdom."* Mark rejoiced with loud shouts of praise to the Lord Jesus.

The Crown of Martyrdom

The next morning the pagans came in and this time tied the rope around his neck. Mark was dragged in the triumphal procession of Serapis throughout the city until his head was severed from his body. As the pagans fell upon his body to mutilate it, they

attempted to burn his remains. But the wind blew and the rain fell in torrents. Thunder and lightning dispersed the frenzied mob and the Believers were able to retrieve his body and head to bury under the church he had founded.

Mark and the Lions

The Gospel of Mark has always been symbolized by a lion. There are many stories that associate Mark with lions. One story related by the Coptic historian Severus Ebn-el-Mokafa described an event earlier in his life when John Mark was walking with his father Arostalls in Jordan. Two lions were striding towards them, and his terrified father instructed John Mark to flee for his life. However the young boy assured his father that the Lord God would protect them. He began to pray and the lions passed by without harming them.

An Enduring Legacy

From being one of the original seventy evangelists sent out by the Lord Jesus, John Mark preached the Gospel throughout Judea, Asia Minor, Italy, Cyrene and Egypt. The churches he established in Egypt have flourished, despite having endured nearly fourteen centuries of Islamic persecution. Many of the prayers and liturgies that he originally drafted found their way into the Book of Common Prayer compiled by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer during the English Reformation.

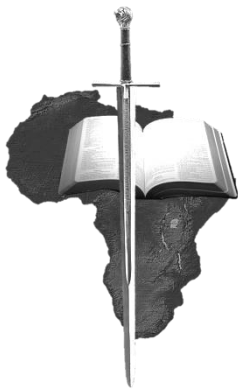
The Gospel of Mark was the first Gospel to be written, and it is the shortest. It also relates the most miracles.

The life of John Mark teaches us that failure does not need to be final. By God's grace, our sins can be forgiven and our weaknesses can be turned to strength in Him.

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders, and the sin that so easily entangles us and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes upon Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our Faith.” Hebrews 12:1-2

Sources: *The Story of the Copts* by Iris Habib El Masri, 1987

Introduction to the Coptic Orthodox Church, by Tadros Yacoub Malaty, 1993



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COLUMBA - MISSIONARY TO SCOTLAND

From an Illustrious Family

The handsome and hot-headed Columba was one of the most successful missionaries in history. In A.D 521 in Ulster, Northern Ireland, he was christened Colum (from the Latin word for Dove). Columba's grandfather, Conarl, had been baptised by the great missionary to Ireland, Patrick. Columba's parents were both Christians; his father was a member of the royal O' Neill family, from which the High King of the Irish was chosen at Tara. His mother, Ethme, was a descendant of a king of the Irish province of Leinster.

Intelligent and Energetic

Columba was described as a robust child, full of mischief and energy and combative. He was described as a *"fine figure, his splendid colour and his noble manliness made him beloved by all."* Tall and strong, his first rate mind and zeal for learning, combined with a powerful voice and a well developed sense of humour, made him very popular.

Evangelistic Zeal and Missionary Vision

Columba loved reading and praying the Psalms and, as his relationship to Christ developed, he began a systematic study of the Scriptures and entered monastic life. Columba was ordained to the priesthood and studied further. Columba developed a fervent calling to missionary outreach and began to conduct evangelistic campaigns. He established monasteries throughout Ireland. His reputation as a Godly and scholarly Christian increased.

Conflict

However, in the year of 561, a traumatic incident occurred that altered the direction of Columba's life. Eager for Scriptural knowledge and for the best Bible texts, he copied (without permission) a manuscript of Jerome's translation of the Psalms and Gospels. When the authorities learned of this, they demanded that his copy of the rare text be destroyed. When Columba refused to do this, a judgment was sought from the High King, Ataru, who decided against Columba. When he still refused to surrender his precious copy of the Psalms and Gospels, a civil war erupted between Columba and his cousin the High King.

The Battle of Culdrevmey

Columba and his allies were victorious at the Battle of Culdrevmey in which more than 3,000 men were killed.

Missionary Restitution

Columba felt such remorse over the carnage he had caused that he left Ireland determined to convert the same number of souls in Scotland as those whose deaths he felt responsible for in Ireland. Selecting 12 companions from among his old and trusted friends, Columba set out and established a mission station on the island of Iona, about half a mile off the Scottish mainland. From this missionary base camp, Columba and his co-workers launched missionary outreaches amongst the war-like Picts and Scots.

Iona Mission Base

Columba himself lived a Spartan lifestyle in austerity, sleeping on a bare rock, with a stone pillow. Under his leadership the Iona community was a place of constant activity where the monks engaged in agricultural work, carpentry, prayer and study – with evangelistic preaching and missionary work in nearby Scotland.

Missions to Europe

From A.D 563 – 597, Iona was the centre for the evangelisation of Scotland and Northern England. Using the political contacts of his royal lineage, Columba developed relationships with the chiefs and kings to aid in the conversion of their subjects. Columba and his monks founded possibly more than 100 monasteries throughout Europe. Columba and his men undertook missionary outreaches as far afield as France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy.

Confrontations

He feuded with popes, kings, bishops and even his own followers. At one point, he had a conflict with the polygamous king, Theuderic, and his mother, Brunhilde, and was expelled from Gaul.

Winning Scotland for Christ

From Iona, Columba and his missionary monks spread out to make an immeasurable impact for the Gospel on Scotland and the entire Celtic Christian world.

Psalms and Prayer

On his last day, at age 75, after a day spent transcribing a Psalter, he rose from his stone bed to join his brethren at their traditional midnight service. He collapsed while kneeling in prayer at the altar, revived briefly to give his beloved monks a farewell blessing and died peacefully in the early hours of Sunday 9 June A.D. 597.

Work, Prayer and Study

Columba's life served as a model of devotion and dedication for future generations of Christians. To Columba his ideal of the Christian life consisted of "*Work, prayer and reading.*" This was the heart of his monastic code and central for his converts.

Living the Bible

Columba's emphasis was living the Bible. His preaching was direct, simple and Biblical. He called on his hearers to submit to Christ as Saviour and Lord, living the rest of their lives in devotion and service for Him.

Celtic Christianity

Columba left an indelible mark on Irish and Scottish Christianity, bequeathing to his converts a love for books, especially for the Bible. Columba's emphasis on bold evangelism and missionary vision inspired thousands of missionary volunteers from Scotland and Ireland through the centuries.

Discipling Nations

Columba had a passion for missions. He preached, practised and lived missions. He wrote poetry and instilled his love of poetry and music into his converts. He emphasised the evangelistic impulse in Christianity and promoted it in every way he could throughout his productive life.

"And so I have made it my aim to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation" Romans 15:20

BONIFACE - THE APOSTLE TO THE GERMANS

The Founder of the West

Boniface (originally called Winfrith) has been described as *“The Founder of the West”* and *“The Apostle to the Germans.”* Boniface was undoubtedly one of the most successful missionaries of the first millennium. He not only converted many individuals, but he disciplined an entire nation.

Diligent and Disciplined

Boniface was born to Christian parents in the Saxon kingdom of Wessex in England. At an early age he became preoccupied with spiritual matters. Boniface proved to be a zealous student of the Bible and was devoted to disciplined prayer. He was a gifted scholar who excelled in his studies, and served as a noted teacher, poet and grammarian in a Saxon monastery. Boniface grew in purposeful holiness and became a powerful Gospel preacher.

Frustration and Failure

In 716, at the age of 43, Boniface set out on a mission to Europe. He had learned that the pagan Friesian king, Radbod, had wiped out the evangelistic work of Saxon missionary Willibrord in Friesland (what is today the Netherlands). This first missionary journey of Boniface was frustrating and unsuccessful. Radbod was involved in a war with Charles Martel, the king of the Franks, and the conflict undermined all attempts at missionary work in Friesland.

Determined to Avoid Distractions and Deviations

When he returned home to England, he was offered the prestigious position of being head of the monastery. Boniface had written the first Latin grammar produced in England, several poems and a treatise on metrics. However, Boniface’s heart was set on missions, and he turned down this appointment. Boniface was determined to be a missionary.

Missionary to Europe

In 722, he sailed away from England for the last time and worked with Willibrord in Friesland. When King Radbod died, the work in Friesland was able to advance. This freed Boniface to go further south to the pagans of what are now the German states of Hesse and Thuringia. Under the protection of Charles Martel, Boniface *“more than any other individual became God’s instrument to carry Christianity into Germany.”*

Fearless Perseverance

A contemporary described Winfrith as: *“he seemed to glow with the salvation bringing fire which our Lord came to send upon the earth.”* He *“surpassed all his predecessors in the extent and results of his ministry.”* With fearless ardour and indomitable perseverance he sought to evangelise the pagans.

Bold Evangelism

Boniface was zealous in evangelism and in suppressing heresy. He established churches and monasteries, destroyed idols, baptized heathens and opposed corrupt and immoral clerics. He dealt decisively with heresy and made many enemies, being described as *“difficult, prickly and tactless.”*

Confronting Paganism

In a dramatic confrontation with the pagans of Hesse, Boniface hacked down the Sacred Oak of Donar in Geismar. The huge oak was a shrine to the pagan god, Thor. As the tree fell to the ground it broke into four pieces and revealed itself to be rotten from within. Thor's lack of response in the eyes of the pagans established the authority of the Christian God. This led to thousands of conversions.

Destroying Idols

The historian, Willibald, described the scene: *“A great throng of pagans who were there cursed him bitterly among themselves because he was the enemy of their gods.”* However, when they saw the rottenness of the felled oak, *“they stopped cursing and believing, blessed God.”* Boniface used the wood from this felled oak to build a chapel in Fritzlar, which became the centre of his new mission station.

Working for Reformation

As Boniface continued to clash with pagans, heretics and fellow Christians, he became convinced that the church needed to be reformed. No church councils had been held in the Frankish realm for decades before his arrival. Boniface convened 5 councils between 742 and 747.

Boniface took the lead in removing corruption from the existing churches, causing much friction with the Frankish clergy. Most of the Frankish clergy resisted Boniface's work of reform and evangelism and he had to send word to England to recruit more Saxon missionaries to support his dynamic mission. Having thoroughly evangelised Thuringia and Hesse he now turned his attention to Bavaria.

Germany is Won to Christ

Fulda became the spiritual hub of Christianity in Germany. Boniface and his followers travelled throughout the land destroying pagan shrines, building churches and baptizing many thousands. He established a vast network of schools and mission stations.

Faithful to the End

In 754, Boniface prepared a new missionary campaign to the pagans in the North. Already an old man, Boniface took not only his books, but also a burial shroud, anticipating that this could be his last mission. On the Wednesday of Pentecost Week, at Dorkum on the River Borne, while Boniface was teaching 52 new converts, they were surprised and massacred by a horde of unconverted barbarians. Boniface died as he had lived, a soldier of Christ. In seeking to destroy pagan worship and save pagan souls, he incurred the wrath of those whom he had come to seek and help.

Converting his Enemies

Next to the martyred missionary was found a copy of Ambrose's book: *“The Advantage of Death”* with two deep slashes in it. This book is still on display in Fulda, Germany. Many of the pagans who had been part of this attack were so struck by his courage that they repented and were converted to Christ.

A Martyr for Christ

By suffering martyrdom at the end of his long and productive life, Boniface sealed his ministry in a unique way. He left a legacy of dedication, hard work and Christian courage in defence of the Christian faith that would live long after him. Boniface gave German Christianity a distinctively militant character, reflected in the Christian chivalry and military orders of the Middle Ages.

A Challenge

As Boniface had declared: *“Let us die for the holy laws of our fathers. Let us not be dumb dogs, silent spectators, hirelings who flee from the wolf, but faithful shepherds, watchful for the flock of Christ. Let us preach the whole counsel of God to the high and to the low, to the rich and to the poor, to every rank and age, whether in season or out of season, as far as God gives us strength.”*

Pentecostal Power

Throughout his ministry, Boniface hungered and thirsted for the Pentecostal power of the Holy Spirit. He consciously disciplined his life to follow faithfully the example and teaching of Christ and he eagerly embraced the suffering that comes from preaching and living the Gospel. He proved to be an effective missionary, an exceptional organiser, a superb administrator and a courageous Reformer.

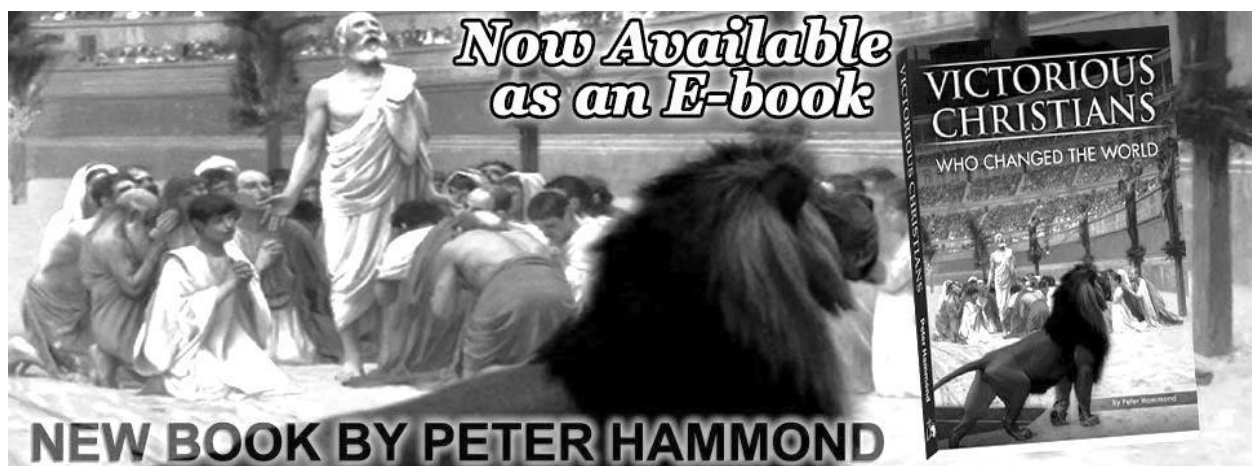
An Inspiration and Example

Through his extensive, dynamic missionary outreaches, his reform of the Frankish churches, his uniting of the churches in Southern and Central Germany, and the revitalizing of nominal Christians throughout Northern Europe, Boniface became one of the most prominent role models for later missionaries, and a key figure in the creation of medieval Christian Europe.

Apostolic Impact

In bringing the light of the Gospel to a Europe darkened by barbarianism, Boniface earned the titles: *“Apostle to the Germans”* and *“The Founder of the West.”*

“Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the Gospel’s will save it.” Mark 8:34 – 35



HOW THE VIKINGS WERE WON TO CHRIST

The Scandinavians were the last great group of Teutonic people to abandon heathenism and embrace Christianity. The Viking marauders from the pagan North wreaked havoc throughout Northern and Western Europe. Throughout the 9th and 10th centuries Vikings raided, killed and plundered. They also established strong Viking settlements in Normandy, England, Scotland, Ireland, Iceland, Greenland, throughout the Baltic and in Russia.

Terror from the North

Alcuin wrote of the shocking Viking raid on the monastery at Lindesfarne in AD 793: "Never before has such terror appeared in Britain as we have now suffered from a pagan race. Nor was it thought possible that such an inroad from the sea could be made. Behold, the Church of Saint Cuthbert splattered with the blood of the priests of God, despoiled of all its ornaments. A place more venerable than all in Britain has fallen prey to pagans."

The Fury of the Northmen

Soon a new prayer was added to the church liturgy: "From the fury of the Northmen, O Lord, deliver us!"

Conversion

At the time, probably nobody could have predicted that the violent Vikings would be conquered by the Prince of Peace and become some of the most enthusiastic missionaries for the advance of Christianity.

The Viking Era

The Viking era is normally dated from the Lindesfarne raid of AD 793 to the battle of Hastings of AD 1066.

Impacting Culture

Although the Vikings were famous for their hit and run raids, many Vikings actually settled in the British Isles and deeply influenced English culture. The fact that we have a seven day week is due to the Biblical account that God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh. However, the days of the week were originally named by the Romans after the seven main celestial planets: The Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn. The Anglo Saxons replaced four of these with the names of Viking deities: Tuesday is named after the Viking war god, Tyr (or Tiw); Wednesday after the Viking war god Wodin (Odin); Thursday is named after the Viking god of war, Thor; and Friday after the Viking fertility goddess Frigg (Frey).

Viking Words

Many English words have their roots in Scandinavian speech including: anger, die, scant, ugly, loose, wrong, low, sky, take, window, husband, happy, thrive, ill, beer and anchor. The word beserk is actually from the name of a Viking soldier.

Ansgar –The Apostle of the North

When the Vikings were the terror of Europe God placed a great missionary burden on young Ansgar. With his own money Ansgar redeemed several Danish youths who were slaves. He educated them to be his co-workers in bringing the Gospel to their countrymen.

How the Vikings Were Won to Christ

Denmark

Harold, King of Denmark, had been driven from his throne and had sought refuge at the court of Louis I, King of the Franks. While at Louis's court King Harold heard the Gospel and turned to Christ, submitting himself to being baptised. On the king's return to Denmark, Ansgar eagerly joined the king to preach the Gospel to the Danes. At Hedeby Ansgar built a small wooden church, but persecution forced him to flee the country.

Sweden

Ansgar responded to a request from King Bjorn of Sweden. This was early in the 9th century when the Vikings were raiding, plundering and burning the coastal cities of Northern and Western Europe. Ansgar narrowly escaped with his life when Norsemen burned the churches and monasteries in Hamburg. With two co-workers Ansgar crossed the Baltic Sea to begin ministering in Sweden. On the way the vessel was plundered by pirates and they arrived destitute in Sweden. King Bjorn welcomed the Christians to Sweden and the first church was built in the country.

Stronger than Thor

At an assembly of the people a question was debated as to whether the missionaries should be allowed to continue to preach Christ and so invite the anger of the old Viking gods. At a critical part in the discussions, an old Viking stood up and declared with great force that it was clear that the Christian God was stronger than Thor. This decided the matter and the missionaries received freedom to continue to preach the Gospel in Sweden.

God's Judgment

More than any previous invasions and crises faced by the Christian church, the Viking raids wrought desolation throughout the western Christendom. The Vikings laid waste to monasteries and churches, shaking the churches to their foundations. A decline and decay in faith and morals had set in before the Viking invasions and many saw the fury of the Norsemen as a judgment of God upon a backslidden, and often apostate, church.

Resistance in Wessex

Churches and monasteries were destroyed, clergy and monks were slain, church buildings lay vacant until, in the South of England the West Saxons were rallied by King Alfred the Great to steadfastly resist, and ultimately defeat, the great Danish invasion.

Conversion of the Vikings

In 878, after King Alfred defeated the Danish army at Ashdown, he required its King Guthrum, and 30 other of his leaders, to be baptised as Christians. In 882 another Viking leader in the lower Rhine region abandoned heathenism and embraced Christianity receiving baptism in the Name of Lord Jesus Christ. Duke Rollo of the Vikings, and some of his followers, received baptism and created the Duchy of Normandy.

Impressed by Christ

The ethics of Christianity were so radically different to traditional Viking culture that it took centuries for the Scandinavian people to be thoroughly evangelised and discipled. One of the chief attractions was the conviction that Christ is a mighty Victor who has risen triumphant over death. The power of Christ impressed the hardened Viking warriors. In Norway the king commanded his people to be converted to Christ or be prepared to die. However, in Denmark and Sweden the Vikings were converted by

persuasion not force. Pioneer missionaries Willibrord and Liudger attempted to take the Gospel to the Vikings, but with little visible success initially.

Ansgar – Missionary to the Vikings

It remained for Ansgar, born of Saxon parents in the North West of France in 801, to succeed where others had failed. Ansgar was described as a sensitive child who led a devout life. He experienced visions and dreams and possessed “a combination of humility, of self-forgetfulness, and of undaunted courage and energetic initiative.”

Winning Sweden to Christ

King Harold of Denmark was baptised in 826 in Mainz. Some of the first pagans in Sweden to request baptism included the leader of Birka, an Island in Lake Malar, not far from the present capital Stockholm. Despite serious reverses, violence and destruction of churches, Ansgar did not give up, he persevered and soon Danish missionaries were being sent to establish churches in Sweden. Ansgars' faithful work was continued by his disciple, Rimbert, who ministered both amongst the Danes and the Swedes. Rimbert was succeeded by Adalgar.

Opposition and Persecution

Early in the 10th century, King Gorm of Denmark, a determined enemy of Christianity, attempted to banish Christianity from his realm. Many ministers and missionaries were martyred, numerous churches burned to the ground.

Saxons Champion the Christian Cause

As the Saxons grew in strength they became champions of the Christian cause. When Henry became King of the Germans in 919 he sponsored numerous missionary outreaches to the Danes. After his victory over the Danes in 934, King Henry compelled their rulers to accept Christianity. Unni was encouraged by the king to renew the work of Ansgar. Gorm's successor King Harold looked with favour upon Unni's attempts to reassemble the scattered remnants of Christian communities on the Danish Isles and to bring in ministers to rebuild these congregations.

Reform and Revival

King Henry's son, Otto the Great, became king in 936 and in 962 was crowned emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Under royal favour the churches experienced a wave of reform with a tremendous revival of devotion and enthusiasm. King Harold of Denmark extended his realm to become overlord of Norway. As he himself was baptised he encourage the spread of Christianity throughout his realms.

Growth Despite Opposition

Harold's son, Sweyn, attempted to bring about a pagan rebellion against his father who died in the struggle (986). Sweyn severely persecuted Christians and repeatedly invaded England where he died in 1014. In Sweden a pagan King, Eric, arose, hostile to Christianity. Yet the church continued to grow. The missionary Poppo won many thousands to the Christian faith in Denmark. Odinkar was a missionary from Denmark who strengthened the Gospel work in Sweden.

King Canute Sponsors Missions in England and Denmark

Under King Canute the church was firmly established in Denmark. Canute later became king of all England. Under his support missionaries from Germany established more churches in Denmark. He commanded his subjects to learn The Lord's Prayer and to be

How the Vikings Were Won to Christ

faithful in Communion with the Lord. The church in Denmark grew and deepened with strong ties to the Saxon churches in Germany and England.

Missions to Norway

The conversion of the Vikings in Norway was far more stormy than that of Denmark. Throughout the 10th century Saxon missionaries from England laboured throughout Denmark establishing many mission stations and congregations. From the time of King Alfred the Great the revived churches in England evidenced a dynamic vitality in missions to the Vikings.

The Kingdom of Norway

The Norwegian kingdom was the creation of Harald Haarfager (fair hair) who died in 933. By much combat he had established himself as the overruler of all Norway. His sons Eric Bloodaxe and Haakon the Good struggled over the succession. Haakon had been sent to England to study and there had been converted, baptised and discipled as a Christian. By 935 the young, tall, handsome and athletic Haakon had established his supremacy through combat and was accepted as king of all Norway.

Royal Mission to Win the Vikings

Haakon then attempted to win his people to the Christian faith. Most of his immediate court were soon baptised. Later he sent to England for missionaries and began to build churches in Norway. By the year 950 after he had been reigning 15 years, Haakon proposed to the assembly of landowners that they adopt Christianity. Most of the landowners responded with great hostility and vehemently refused to abandon the old pagan ways. They began to place great pressure on the king to compromise and participate in their pagan sacrifices. Facing open rebellion King Haakon, very reluctantly, ate some of the meat in their ceremonial feast organised by his landowners. Later, after been wounded in battle, on his death bed, in 961, Haakon declared his great remorse over that compromise and his desire to do penance for his sins.

A Rocky Road and Reverses

His nephew, Harold Graafell, succeeded to the throne of Norway. While not as enthusiastic a Christian as Haakon, Harold Graafell did pull down pagan temples wherever he went. However misrule and bad seasons led much of the people to resent the faith which he had violently championed. In 970 Harold Graafell was lured to Denmark and killed. King Harold Bluetooth of Denmark then made himself the overlord of Norway and encouraged the spread of Christianity there.

Olaf Trygvesson

Olaf Trygvesson was the son of the King of Norway. His great grandfather, Harald Haarfager (Fair-hair), had initially established the Kingdom of Norway. When Olaf's father was murdered in 968, Olaf fled the country with his mother. Vikings captured their ship and sold the boy into slavery. Olaf ended up in the court of Russia's Tsar Vladimir I, where he became a favourite of the Queen. When Olaf was just twelve years old, the Tsar put a dozen ships under his command and sent him off into battle.

A Viking without Equal

By the time he was twenty one years old, Olaf Trygvesson was renowned as the ultimate Viking, tall, strong, handsome, and unequalled in martial skill. He led a huge army of Swedish Vikings, in a fleet of almost ninety ships to loot Holland. After devastating the Dutch, he went to fight the French and left a massive amount of death and destruction wherever he went.

Extortion in England

His next target was England where, after the battle of Maldon, near the mouth of the Thames, he forced the Anglo Saxon King, Ethelred the Unready, to pay a tribute of 10,000 pounds of silver. After this he moved North plundering Northumberland and Scotland. He attacked the Hebrides and the Isle of Man. He conducted raids of Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, and France again. With a fleet of over ninety-four ships he again attacked England, killing and looting wildly until King Ethelred offered him a further 22,000 pounds.

Seeking Sorcery

Off the coast of Cornwall Olaf heard of a local fortuneteller who was renowned to have a gift of prophecy. Olaf rowed to the remote rocky retreat and asked the prophet if he could foresee anything in his future.

A Word of Prophecy

“Thou wilt become a renowned king and do celebrated deeds. And that thou not doubt the truth of this answer, listen to this ...” The old man predicted that Olaf would soon suffer a mutiny from his men, in which he would be wounded and carried to his ship on his oblong shield. After seven days he would recover and he would be baptised as a Christian. Many men wilt thou bring to faith and baptism, and both to thy own and others’ good.”

Mutiny

When the mutiny, wounding and recovery happened, precisely as the hermit had predicted, Olaf sought the old man again to enquire how he could possess such knowledge. The man humbly confessed: “The God of the Christians has blessed me.”

Conversion

When King Ethelred heard of the conversion and baptism of his tormentor, King Olaf, he sent his bishop and officials to present him with royal gifts and to offer Christian fellowship.

Confronting Apostasy

In 995, news from Norway reached Olaf that the leader Earl Haakon, the very man who had murdered Olaf’s father, had caused an uproar in the land by demanding the daughters of respected leaders of the community. Although Earl Haakon had originally accepted Christianity, under threat from the German Emperor Otto, he had since reverted to heathenism, restoring many heathen temples and persecuting Christians. Earl Haakon the Apostate had even gone so far as to offer his best horses and his youngest son, a seventeen year old, as sacrifices to a heathen goddess.

For the Love of Justice

It was at this opportune time that Olaf, the great grandson of King Harald Haarfager, determined to leave England and avenge the death of his father, the exile of his mother, the slavery of his youth and to end the pagan misrule of Earl Haakon.

Norway for Christ

With just five ships Olaf landed in Norway and claimed it for Christ. Soon word reached him that Earl Haakon had angered two landowners by attempting to seize their wives for himself. The growing resistance was greatly strengthened when word reached them that Olaf Trygvesson was on his way to claim the throne and deal with Haakon. Olaf was renowned as the Viking warrior without parallel. His height, strength, athletic stature,

How the Vikings Were Won to Christ

superior skills in all the warrior arts, his boldness and ruthlessness were renowned throughout the land. Earl Haakon the Apostate fled and hid in a pit beneath a pig sty, where he was killed by his slave.

At a national assembly Olaf was proclaimed King of all Norway. He then travelled throughout the land consolidating his rule and attempting to Christianise the people.

Repent or Perish

Many of his relatives became his first converts and he appointed them as "Christ's captains." "I shall make you great and mighty men for doing this work. All Norway must be Christian or die."

Greater than Thor and Odin

The scattered settlements on the West and East shores of the Oslofjord readily accepted baptism, but the people in the Northern part of the Vic resisted the Gospel. King Olaf challenged the followers of Thor and Odin to combat and by the end of the year he had convinced everyone that Christ was greater than Thor and Odin.

Conversion by Contest and Combat

As King Olaf moved to the Western and Northern fjords of Norway he challenged the heathen to swimming races, archery contests and mortal combat. Olaf's message was to the point: Repent or die! Those who chose to fight were quickly defeated by Olaf's superior strength and skill.

War against Heathenism

King Olaf declared that the heathen gods were demons. The powers behind the idols were evil spirits. All sorcerers, and those who promoted idolatry and heathenism, were to be banished.

Those wizards and priests who resisted were killed and some other incorrigibles were marooned on a rock far off-shore at low tide.

Heathen Sacrifice

At Trondheim, which had been the stronghold of the late heathen King Earl Haakon, Olaf burned the heathen temples and destroyed the idols. The local chiefs rose in rebellion against him. Olaf mustered a large army, and with thirty ships anchored in the River Nid, Olaf invited the local chiefs to a feast where he indicated that he would be willing to perform a heathen sacrifice. When the chiefs were gathered together, Olaf declared: "If I am to return to making heathen sacrifices then I will make the greatest sacrifice of all. I will not sacrifice slaves but men. I will sacrifice the greatest of men only." Olaf named the most prominent leaders of the opposition.

Baptism or Battle

As the horrified heathen howled in protest, Olaf gave them a straight challenge: "Baptism or Battle". He held eleven leaders hostage until everyone was baptised. At nearby Trondheim the local Chief Ironbeard demanded that the king offer sacrifices, as other kings before him had done. Olaf said he would make a sacrifice, walked into the temple and smashed the idol of Thor to pieces with his axe. He then killed Ironbeard and persuaded the rest of the village to abandon their heathen ways and to be baptised as Christians.

Defeating all Resistance

Further North Olaf faced the strong opposition of Chief Raud the Strong. Raud mobilised his army and a fierce sea battle was fought. Olaf's forces overwhelmed Raud's rebels. Raud escaped to take refuge in an island hide-out in Saltenfjord. The narrow channel to the fjord was turbulent and for a week no ship could enter. As Raud attempted to mobilise his witchcraft against the king, Olaf summoned his bishop to read the Gospels and pray. By some miracle his ships managed to negotiate the treacherous and turbulent rocky entrance to the fjord. Soon Raud was apprehended and brought before the king who ordered him to submit to Christ. "I will not take your property from you but instead will be your friend, if you make yourself worthy to be so." When Raud rejected this offer, with vile blasphemies, Olaf had his men force an adder down his throat.

Crusade Completed

This was the last resistance to Olaf's crusade to eradicate paganism in Norway. Now he focused on winning Iceland and Greenland to Christ. But before he could do so, in the year 1000, King Olaf was killed in the spectacular sea battle of Svold. The pagan queen Sigrid the Haughty, was furious that Olaf had spurned her advances. She mobilised two pagan kings to trap Olaf off the coast of Denmark. Olaf died as courageously as he had lived, rejoicing that he had succeeded in his mission to convince the Vikings of Norway to abandon heathenism, to destroy their idols and to commit to following the Christian Faith.

Olaf Haraldsson

Another prominent Norwegian king who consolidated the Christian Faith in Norway was Olaf Haraldsson. In 1007, when he was just twelve years old, Olaf Haraldsson was sent out as a sea king to raid Sweden. Later, in Denmark, Olaf joined forces with Thorkel the Tall. They together launched raids on Jutland, Freisia, Holland and England. They tormented King Ethelred the Unready, who had already suffered much at the hands of the earlier Olaf Trygvesson. In 1009, Olaf and Thorkel attacked London and East Anglia. They martyred the archbishop of Canterbury and plundered the Cathedral. Thereafter Olaf raided Brittany, France and Spain.

Transformed

Then Olaf had a traumatic spiritual experience and he saw a terrifying vision of Christ. Olaf abandoned his heathen ways and committed to being a Christian. In 1015 he arrived in Norway and proclaimed himself king. He immediately proclaimed the Christian Faith throughout Norway and built numerous churches. Olaf became known as a great lawgiver. With Bishop Grimkell he established the Moster Law. While most of Norway accepted this, Trondelag continued with their pagan practices and incurred the wrath of King Olaf, who descended on the area fining or executing offenders.

Smashing Idols

At Gulbrandsdal, local pagans confronted him with their huge wooden idol of Thor. Olaf distracted them by drawing their attention to the bright sunrise behind them as a herald of his God. As his enemies turned to face the sunrise, one of Olaf's warriors smashed the idol of Thor and revealed that its wood was rotten. As gold spilled out, large rats, which had evidently been living off the food offerings, scattered. King Olaf pointed out that the gold they had wasted on offerings to Thor's rotten idol would look far better as jewelry on their wives and daughters.

How the Vikings Were Won to Christ

Winning Enemies to Christ

This demonstration of Christ's superiority over Thor convinced the locals to be baptised. As a contemporary report noted: "They who met as enemies, parted as friends."

Ending Piracy and Plunder

For twelve years King Olaf ruled Norway and saw that Iceland and the Faeroe Islands were discipled in Christianity. Most unpopularly of all he outlawed the Viking raids, which had been considered an essential way of life.

A Warrior to the End

It was at this point that Denmark attempted to regain control over their previous colony and Olaf was forced to flee. In 1030 Olaf attempted to liberate his country from the Danes. At the battle of Stiklestad, heavily outnumbered, more than three to one, Olaf inspired his men with a battle cry: "Fram, Fram. Kristsmenn, Kraossmenn, Konungsmenn!" (On. On. Christ's men, Cross men, kings' men!) Olaf and his men fought boldly and bravely, but were overwhelmed by superior numbers.

Success and Sainthood

As Danish taxes and oppression intensified the Vikings grew to regret their betrayal of King Olaf. Within a year Olaf was popularly proclaimed a Saint and his remains enshrined in Saint Clement. What he had failed to do in life, he achieved in death, to unite and inspire his people to win his country's freedom from Denmark and to be united as an independent Christian kingdom. The cathedral in York was dedicated to Saint Olaf. Olaf was regarded by many medieval leaders as an example of the ideal ruler. A church in Constantinople was dedicated to the memory of King Olaf and the sword that he had wielded at the battle of Stiklestad was hung over the high altar. Olaf is the last Western saint to be accepted by the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The Vikings Surrender to Christ

And so, by a combination of pioneer missionary work, royal favour and combat the ferocious Vikings were convinced to abandon heathenism, destroy their idols, abandon their aggression, cease their violent raids, submit to baptism and commit to following the Christian Faith.

Christ Triumphant

The Vikings came to be convinced that the Christian God is more powerful than all other gods. They saw how He answered the prayers of the Christians. They witnessed miracles. They saw how Christian kings and missionaries were able to destroy idols and defy the heathen gods and taboos - without suffering any ill effects. They saw that their pagan gods were powerless before the all powerful Jesus Christ. Christ was honored and worshiped as the mighty Warrior who had triumphed over all the powers of death, hell and the grave. He is the risen ascended Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, with all other authorities in subjection to Him.

"Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." Psalm 72:11

Scandinavia for Christ

The prominence of the Cross in every Scandinavian flag serves as a dramatic testimony to the conversion of the Vikings.

The Great Commission Manual

For further reading:

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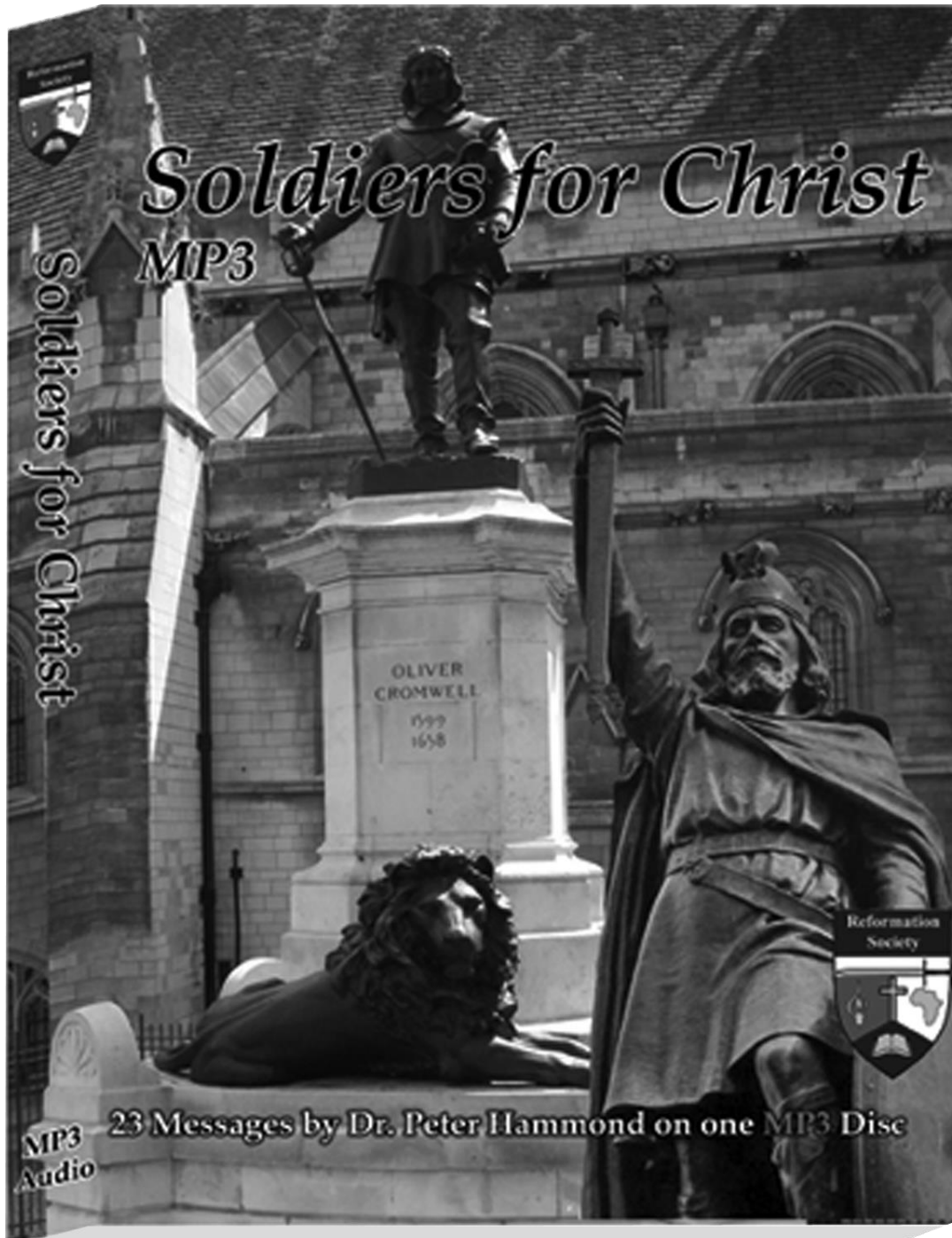
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WOLRAAD WOLTEMADE

Wolraad Woltemade is a name synonymous with self-sacrificing courage. Wolraad was born in Hesse-Schoumberg in Germany. As an adult he had migrated to the Dutch settlement at the Southern tip of Africa where he worked as a dairy farmer for the Dutch East India Company.

The Cape of Storms

It was a stormy winter night in June 1773. All night the storm raged. The five ships in Table Bay were buffeted all night and pounded by the turbulent waves. Bright streaks of lightning lit up the imposing Table Mountain and the little settlement of Cape Town. Few of the sailors got much sleep that stormy night as the wooden ships creaked and groaned and strained at their anchors.

De Jonge Thomas

Captain Barend Lameren was concerned as his ship, *De Jonge Thomas*, broke its moorings and began to drag its anchor. There were 270 men, women and children on board the ship, along with a valuable cargo from the East. As the storm intensified, just after midnight on 1 June 1773, the Captain ordered the ship's cannon fired to warn the people on shore that they may need help.

Shipwreck

Shortly after 5 AM *De Jonge Thomas* broke loose from its last anchor and began to be forced onto the jagged rocks of Salt River mouth. With a loud crash the stricken ship broke in half and passengers and sailors began falling into the raging sea. Many drowned attempting to swim to shore. Only the strongest swimmers succeeded in reaching safety against the current of the river mouth.

Soldiers and Spectators

Soon a platoon of 30 soldiers came marching up. Governor Van Plettenberg had ordered them to prevent looting and to assist survivors of the shipwreck. The youngest son of Wolraad, Corporal Christian Ludwig Woltemade, was one of those soldiers. The officer in charge warned people who had gathered on shore not to go near the turbulent waters. Some had come to watch. Some to try and help. Others were opportunists seeking to loot cargo washed upon the shore.

Woltemade and Vonk

Just then an old man on a large black horse rode up. He was 65 years old, Wolraad Woltemade. His horse's name was Vonk (Sparkle). Throwing off his coat and shirt, Woltemade took a rope and galloped into the freezing waters of the turbulent sea. As he and his horse reached the ship he threw out the rope and made for shore towing two men behind. As they reached the shore, bystanders hurried to help the survivors out of the swirling surf.

Saving Lives

Immediately, and without a word, Woltemade turned his horse around and plunged back into the icy sea. Seven times, he rode and swam out to the ship rescuing 14 people. This took several agonizing hours. The sea was icy cold, the waves were mountainous and the current very strong.

Once More

The bystanders and soldiers on the shore insisted that he could not carry on. His horse was too exhausted and the storm was too intense. But the cries from the ship spurred Wolraad Woltemade on. "Once more", he said. Though exhausted he plunged back into the sea an eighth time, swimming through the wild waves to the stricken *De Jonge Thomas*. This time 6 men leapt from the ship, and grabbed hold of the horse's mane, bridle, saddle and tail. It was too much, Wolraad Woltemade and his gallant horse, Vonk, plunged beneath the waves under the weight of so many panicking people. They all sank beneath the waves and were drowned.

Heroism Honoured

In honour of Wolraad Woltemade's unselfish sacrifice and bravery, the Dutch East India Company named a ship after him: *De Held Woltemade*. Later, the Republic of South Africa made the Wolraad Woltemade the highest civilian award for bravery in the country. His name was also given to a number of streets and suburbs in South Africa and to one of the most powerful salvage tugs in the world, built in 1976.

The Woltemade statue by Mitford-Barbeton can be seen in the grounds of Old Mutual in Pinelands.

Inexplicably though, the inspiring true story of Wolraad Woltemade has been removed from school history books.

To Christians, Wolraad Woltemade stands out as an example of dedication to saving the lost.

Rescue the Perishing

"Rescue the perishing, care for the dying, snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;

Weep over the erring one, lift up the fallen, tell them of Jesus, the Mighty to save.

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying; Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save...

Rescue the perishing, duty demands it; strength for thy labour the Lord will provide;

Back to the narrow way, patiently win them; tell the poor wanderer a Saviour has died."



GOD AMONG THE ZULUS

60 Incredible Years of Ministry

Conversion

This year Rev. Erlo Stegen celebrates 60 years in ministry. Probably no man of God in South Africa since Andrew Murray has had such Revival blessings accompany his ministry. The Revival in Zululand since 1966 has resulted in spectacular conversions of witchdoctors, murderers and people from every walk of life, transformed lives and launched dynamic ministries throughout the world.

Evangelism

When Erlo Stegen was converted he lost all interest in parties, dances and the obsession to make money. The things of the world receded and the promises of the Scripture became very precious. After studying in Bible school, Erlo Stegen preached amongst the Zulus for 12 years and although thousands responded to his calls for public commitment to Christ, he was deeply disappointed in his ministry.

Hunger for Holiness

Erlo Stegen hungered for Holiness and sought the Lord for Revival. He could not reconcile his experience, and those of his converts, with the Biblical standard in the Book of Acts. *"The early Church didn't tolerate sin, they had no room and no time for sin, and dealt with it most severely. We worship God and tolerate sin in our midst!"*

Revival Fire

Through much Bible study, soul searching, intensive prayer and agony of heart, Erlo Stegen sought the Lord for Revival. It was Christmas 1966, when the Revival broke out at Maphumulo. They were praying in a cow shed when they heard a noise like a great wind. *"Everybody was conscious of the presence of God. All I could do was bow down and worship the God of Heaven."* Rev. Erlo Stegen observes: *"When I was seeking God for Revival, I expected Him to start with the heathen, instead, He started with the biggest sinner of all – me."* *"Revival is not churches filled with people, but people filled with God."* *"The Holy Spirit is not recognised through signs and wonders, but by His Holiness."*

Delivered!

Then a witch, who was in charge of a training school for witches, came to the young missionary. She said: *"I need Jesus. Can He save me? I am bound with the chains of hell. Can He break these chains?"* Erlo Stegen and his co-workers began to sing hymns of victory, of the Risen Christ, the Mighty Victor who has overcome the devil, conquered sin and death, paid the price with His own Blood! As they sang, the woman flung herself on the ground on her hands and knees, and the evil spirits left her. She was transformed and shone like a saint: *"Jesus has set me free! Jesus has broken these chains of hell!"*

Transformed Lives

Soon hundreds of sick, troubled and demon-possessed people came in to Rev. Stegen for counsel and prayer. Hardened sinners wept like children. *"It was as if the Day of Judgment had dawned. The conviction went so deep that some of them couldn't believe that Jesus could forgive them. They came with tears and they left with joy. Their lives were changed and all things became new."*

KwaSizabantu

Testimonies of healings, deliverances and transformed lives spread like wild-fire and soon the little Zulu congregation in Maphumulo had to move to a larger location, at what is today called KwaSizabantu (*the place where people are helped*). Today the Mission has buildings that can house 4,500 people, but it constantly has the problem of too little accommodation. The auditorium at KwaSizabantu Mission can seat 10,000 people. The Mission station is a hive of activity: Intensive farming in hothouses, a vast spring water bottling plant, a Dairy which produces one of South Africa's most successful dairy products, a bakery, a clinic, a Teacher Training College which provides a four year Degree, Radio Khwezi, one of the largest Christian community radio stations in the country, and the Domino Servite School, which has had the distinction of producing some of the top students in the country.

International Ministry

KwaSizabantu Mission is one of the most extraordinarily successful Mission stations on the continent of Africa. Rev. Erlo Stegen, and his team of over 150 missionaries, have established mission stations, schools and congregations throughout South Africa, and as far afield as France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Romania and Russia.

Rev. Erlo Stegen teaches: *“The first thing that happens when the Holy Spirit comes into a person's life is that He convicts that person of sin. There is brokenness. The Word of God comes alive. It smites us and pierces our heart. The Word of God is like a hammer that breaks the rocks into pieces. We cannot worship God and tolerate sin in our midst. We need to get serious with God and His Word.”*

Tugela River Valley Mission

On a recent visit to KwaSizabantu Mission, I had the privilege of joining Rev. Erlo Stegen on a visit to their thriving new Mission Outreach at Maqhogo in the Tugela River Valley. We had to descend over 2,500 feet from KwaSizabantu to the valley, which was barely 500 feet above sea level. The dramatic rise in temperature was startling.

The Mission's impact on the communities and landscape in the valley was astounding. In areas where the local people said that only thorn bushes could grow, Erlo Stegen and his co-workers have successfully planted, and harvested, pineapples, bananas, mangoes, and every kind of vegetable. It was crystal clear where the Mission outreaches were, each was an oasis in the wilderness.

Everywhere we travelled the people warmly welcomed Uncle Erlo with great joy and broad smiles. Their respect and affection for Rev. Erlo Stegen was overwhelming. The local people told us how Uncle Erlo had provided them with jobs, food, hope and the Gospel. “The government promised us so much, but we got nothing. No roads, no electricity and no plumbing. Now, since Mkhulu (Grandfather) Stegen came, our children have enough food, we have work, we have money and we have joy in God.”

Through the initiative and energy of KwaSizabantu missionaries, roads have been repaired, farms irrigated, and much of the wilderness has been turned into a paradise. A Thriving church has already been established in this once witchcraft dominated area.

For more information, to invite a speaker, or to arrange to visit the Mission, contact KwaSizabantu Mission: 032-481-5500; mail@ksb.org.za; www.ksb.org.za.

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

“Listen to Me, you islands; hear this you distant nations... you are My servant Israel.. to restore the tribes of Jacob.. I will make you a light for the gentiles, that you may bring My salvation to the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 49:1-6

To the Ends of the Earth

“The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness...” Psalm 24:1

Our Creator, and Redeemer, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the eternal Judge is ***“The God of all the earth...”*** Isaiah 54:5

“The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness.” 1 Corinthians 10:26

“The whole earth is full of His Glory...” Isaiah 6:3

It is the earnest prayer of all believers: ***“Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and Your Glory above all the earth.”*** Psalm 108:5

Our Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray: ***“Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”*** Matthew 6:10

The Lord’s Word is to be proclaimed ***“to the end of the world...”*** Isaiah 62:11

“The heavens declare the Glory of God.. there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out throughout all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” Psalm 19:1-4. By ship, by aircraft, by vehicle, by bicycle, by foot, by radio broadcasts and through literature the Word of God has been proclaimed to the end of the earth.

The Lord Jesus promised His disciples: ***“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*** Matthew 5:5

Before His Ascension our Lord Jesus Christ declared: ***“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*** Acts 1:8

The Apostle Paul declared that their words had indeed gone out to the ends of the world (Romans 10:18).

The Blessings of Abraham

It is the most inspiring drama imaginable. How God has led and guided and protected the children of **Abraham**. How God has spoken to, and through, the descendants of Abraham. How God has guided His people, made them into a great nation, blessed them, made their name great and made them a blessing to all the families of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3).

“Since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.” Genesis 18:18

The Angel of the Lord declared to Abraham: ***“I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gates of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”***

Genesis 22:17-18

Indeed history testifies how God has blessed and multiplied the descendants of Abraham and they, more than any other, have possessed the gates of their enemies.

In the history of the Church it is clear that all the nations of the earth have been blessed by the faithful children of Abraham, who have proclaimed God’s Word to the ends of the earth.

The Apostles of Christ

Paul was the first to proclaim the Gospel in Europe. **John Mark** established the Church in Egypt. **Matthew** proclaimed the Gospel in Ethiopia. **Thomas** established churches throughout Babylonia and India. **Nathaniel** preached the Gospel in India and Armenia. **Philip** proclaimed the Gospel throughout Gaul and Asia Minor. **Simon the Zealot** preached the Word of God throughout Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia. **Andrew** proclaimed the Gospel throughout Greece and all the way to Scotland.

Called and Commissioned

Almighty God restated His Divine call and commission to Abraham’s son, Isaac: ***“In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My Laws.”***

Genesis 26:4-5

Throughout the centuries Isaac’s sons have faithfully contended for the Faith, preserved and translated God’s Word, reformed the church and proclaimed God’s Word to the ends of the earth.

Patrick – Missionary to Ireland and Columba – Missionary to Scotland

In the 5th Century, **Patrick** succeeded in establishing over 300 congregations and baptising 120 000 people in Ireland. In the 6th Century, **Colomba** and his missionaries mobilised the effective evangelisation of Scotland from their mission base at Iona. Colomba and his men undertook missionary outreaches as far afield as France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy.

Boniface – The Apostle to the Germans

In the 8th Century, **Boniface** left Wessex to labour as a missionary to the Germans. Through his bold, courageous and persistent labours, Boniface succeeded in bringing to Christ multitudes in Frisia, Thuringia and Hesse. Boniface was undoubtedly one of the most successful missionaries of the first millenium. He not only converted multitudes of individuals, but he disciplined an entire nation.

In a dramatic confrontation with the pagans of Hesse, Boniface chopped down the sacred oak of Donar in Geismar. The huge oak was a shrine to the pagan god Thor. Boniface used the wood from this felled oak to build a chapel in Fritzlar. Boniface destroyed idols, baptized heathen, established churches and mission centres, opposed corrupt and immoral clerics, decisively dealt with heresy and worked tirelessly to reform the church. He established a vast network of schools and mission stations.

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Boniface declared: *“Let us die for the holy laws of our fathers. Let us not be dumb dogs, silent spectators, hirelings who flee from the wolf, but faithful shepherds, watchful for the flock of Christ. Let us preach the whole counsel of God to the high and to the low, to the rich and to the poor, to every rank and age, whether in season or out of season, as far as God gives us strength.”*

Boniface hungered and thirsted for the Pentecostal power of the Holy Spirit. He disciplined his life to faithfully follow the example and teachings of Christ, and he eagerly embraced the suffering that comes from preaching and living the Gospel.

King Alfred’s Fight for Faith and Freedom

King Alfred the Great of Wessex lived through tumultuous times and is recognised as one of the most intelligent, devout, industrious and effective of all medieval monarchs. Alfred was soldier and scholar, lawmaker and educator, author and reformer. For most of Alfred’s 30 years reign he was a soldier king leading his people in a desperate war for survival against great odds as the Danish Vikings overwhelmed most of the British Isles. Alfred personally commanded in 54 pitched battles. In just the first 5 months of 870AD, Alfred fought 9 pitched battles against the Danes.

As Winston Churchill commented on the strategic victory of Alfred at the Battle of Ashdown in 874: *“If the West Saxons had been beaten, all England would have been sunk into heathen anarchy. Since they were victorious, the hope still burned for a civilized Christian existence in this Island.”*

To beat these sea faring Danes, Alfred contracted Frisian seamen to build a fleet superior to any that had previously been seen. Alfred has justly been called “The father of the English Navy.”

The Common Law

King Alfred was determined to build this nation upon the Law of God. The Doms of King Alfred began with The Ten Commandments, the Laws of Moses, the Golden Rule of Christ and other Biblical principles from the Sermon on the Mount. Alfred succeeded in instilling such a great respect for law and order in the kingdom that it was said that a traveler might hang a valuable jewel on a bush by the roadside and no one would dare touch it.

Winning the Vikings for Christ

Through virtue and valour, tactics and tenacity, King Alfred fought the Viking invaders to a standstill and then worked to bring them to Christ.

Winston Churchill marveled that Alfred should have: *“wished to convert these savage foes... this sublime power to rise above the whole force of circumstances, to remain unbiased by the extremes of victory or defeat, to persevere in the teeth of disaster, to greet returning fortune with a cool eye, to have faith in men after repeated betrayals, raises Alfred far above the turmoil of barbaric wars to his pinnacle of deathless victory.”*

King Alfred stands out as the model king, the perfect knight, a dedicated Christian, a Protestant before the Reformation, a soldier and scholar, lawmaker and educator, author and Reformer. He successfully fought against spiritual decay within the English church as well as against the Danish invaders, creating the first English Navy, authoring English literature, ensuring the survival of Christianity in England and beginning the great process of converting the bloodthirsty Vikings to Christianity.

The Morning Star of The Reformation

Professor John Wycliffe was the Morning Star of the Reformation. When Oxford was the greatest university in the world, John Wycliffe was its greatest professor. Wycliffe championed the independence of England from papal control and supported King Edward III's refusal to pay taxes to the pope. Then Wycliffe attacked the corruptions, superstitions and abuses of the friars and monks. He exposed their supposed powers to forgive sins as fraudulent.

“Who can forgive sins?” Wycliffe taught: ***“God alone!”***

He exposed indulgences, purgatory and transubstantiation as unBiblical heresies.

Wycliffe translated the New Testament from Latin into English and mobilized lay preachers (Lollards) to travel throughout the land to read these handwritten Bibles, preach in the market places and sing the Scriptures – in English.

Wycliffe's writings and example inspired Jan Hus the Reformer of Prague and the great Saxon Reformer, Dr. Martin Luther.

William Tyndale and The Battle for The Bible

The man, whom God used to translate the Bible into English, from the original languages, was **William Tyndale**. Tyndale was a gifted scholar and linguist, a graduate of both Oxford and Cambridge Universities. Prevented by law from translating the Bible into English in England, Tyndale sailed for Germany in 1524, never to return to his homeland. In Hamburg, Cologne, and Worms, Tyndale worked to translate, and to print, the Bible in English. The first printed edition of the English New Testament needed to be smuggled into England. Most of these were discovered and destroyed, by order of the Bishop of London, Cuthbert Tunstall.

Yet Tyndale persevered to produce a better translation. Finally he was betrayed, arrested and imprisoned for 500 days in a cold, dark and damp dungeon. On 6 October 1536 he was burned at the stake. His last reported words were: *“Lord, open the King of England's eyes.”*

The Lord did indeed answer the dying prayer of Tyndale in a most remarkable way. Within two years, by order of King Henry VIII, every parish church in England was required to have a copy of the English Bible available to its parishioners.

Not only can William Tyndale be described as the father of the English Bible, but in a real sense the foremost influence on the shaping of the English language itself. Because Tyndale's translation was the very first from the original Hebrew and Greek into the English language, Tyndale went back to the original Saxon. He rescued English from the French and Latin words and trends, which were swamping the English language at that time.

Tyndale's translation of the Bible established English as an extension of the Biblical Hebrew and Greek worldview. The clarity, simplicity and poetic beauty which Tyndale brought to the English language through his translation served as a linguistic rallying point for the development of the English language. And so, every person in the world who writes, speaks, or even thinks, in English is, to a large extent, indebted to the Reformer and Bible translator William Tyndale.

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It is also extraordinary while English was one of the minor languages of Europe in the early 16th Century, with less than 3 million speaking it, today it has become a truly worldwide language with over 2 billion people communicating in English.

Thomas Cranmer – Reformer and Martyr

The first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, **Thomas Cranmer**, began the work of transforming the Roman Church in England into the Protestant Church of England. This he accomplished through his *Book of Homilies*, the *Book of Common Prayer* and *The 42 Articles*, which were later revised into *The 39 Articles*. Under Queen Elizabeth, these became the official foundational statement of the Church of England worldwide. By Thomas Cranmer's immense learning, ecclesiastical authority and hard work, he dominated the Reformation in England, rescued the church from Rome and propelled England into the Protestant camp.

Amongst his last words, before being burned at the stake in Oxford, Thomas Cranmer declared: "*As for the Pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and anti-Christ, with all his false doctrines!*"

Faith and Courage

On 16 October 1555, two Protestant bishops were burned at the stake in Oxford. The Bishop of London, Nicolas Ridley, respected as one of the finest theologians in England, and the Bishop of Worcester, Hugh Latimer, one of the most powerful preachers of his day, were chained to a stake surrounded by firewood piled high at its base. As the flames began to rise, Bishop Latimer declared: "*Be of good cheer, Master Ridley and play the man! We shall this day light such a candle, by God's Grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out!*"

Candles Burn in Africa

Indeed, more than 450 years later we can rejoice that the Protestant Faith of Bishops' Ridley and Latimer burns brightly in Africa. Every Sunday there are more than 2 million Anglicans gathered in church in Sudan alone. Millions more in Uganda and Kenya. Nigeria has 18 million Anglicans gathered in church every Sunday. There are now vastly more Anglicans who are faithful to *The 39 Articles*, and follow *The Prayer Book* order of service set out by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, in Africa, than in all North America and Great Britain combined.

The Counter-productive Counter-Reformation

The Counter-Reformation persecutions and oppression under Mary Tudor were counter-productive. The fanatical obsession of Bloody Mary to return England to Catholicism spectacularly backfired. As *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* recorded, neither of the hundreds of prominent executions of Protestant leaders, nor all the cruelties, torments, tortures and oppression unleashed under Bloody Mary were sufficient to crush the Protestant Reformation in England. By attempting to exterminate the Reformation, Bloody Mary only succeeded in entrenching it, convincing the vast majority of Englishmen in their resolution and determination never again to succumb to such tyranny, superstition, intolerance and error.

The Rise of England as a World Power

Under Queen Elizabeth I's 45 years reign England was united, strengthened and entrenched as a Protestant nation. It prospered and flourished until it defeated the great military super power of the age, Spain. Elizabeth encouraged English enterprise and commerce, establishing a consistent legal code. Her reign was noted for the

English Renaissance, an outpouring of poetry and drama led by William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser and Christopher Marlowe.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 marked a great watershed in world history. It signaled the decline of Catholic Spain and Portugal and the rise of Protestant England and Holland. Before 1588 the world powers were Spain and Portugal. These Roman Catholic empires dominated the seas and the overseas possessions of Europe. Only after the English defeated the Spanish Armada did the possibility arise of Protestant missionaries crossing the seas. As the Dutch and British grew in military and naval strength, they were able to challenge the Catholic dominance of the seas and the new continents. Foreign missions now became a distinct possibility. By the Grace of God, the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588 saved the Protestant Reformation in England from Spanish invasion, oppression and the inquisition.

It was during the reign of Elizabeth that North America was first claimed for the Protestant cause, with Sir Walter Raleigh's naming of Virginia after the virgin Queen of England and pioneering the first English settlement in what was to become the United States of America.

A Golden Age

Under Queen Elizabeth, England flourished spiritually, militarily and economically. The Elizabethan years saw some of the greatest soldiers, explorers, scientists, philosophers and poets ever produced. Under Elizabeth Parliament flourished and the Protestant Reformation became entrenched in the Church of England and through the Puritan movement. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is life changing, history making and nation transforming!

The Father of Modern Missions

In 1793, the modern missionary movement was launched by **William Carey**. In just 100 years Bible translations multiplied from 60 to 537 and mission organisations from 7 to 100. Protestant missionaries were sent to the ends of the earth. Whole tribes were converted and nations disciplined. The world went from being 25% evangelised to 51% evangelised. Within a century, by 1900, the number of professing Christians had more than doubled from 215 million in 1800 to 520 million by 1900.

A Sermon that Changed the World

On 31 May 1792, in Northampton, William Carey preached one of the most influential sermons in history. His text was Isaiah 54:2-3 and his challenge: ***"Expect great things from God! Attempt great things for God!"*** inspired the formation of *The Particular (Calvinist) Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Heathens*.

Teaching Nations and Translating the Bible

William Carey and his co-workers started over 100 Christian schools for over 8000 Indian children of all casts. He launched the first Christian college in Asia, Serampore College, which continues to this day. Carey succeeded in translating the entire Bible into six languages and the New Testament and Gospels into 29 other languages!

Transforming India

William Carey successfully fought against *Sati* (widow burning), child sacrifice, child prostitution, slavery and other social evils. Carey established the first newspaper ever printed in an Oriental language, and the first savings banks. He introduced the steam engine to India and pioneered the idea of lending libraries. Carey founded that the

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Agric-horticultural Society in the 1820's (30 years before the Royal Agricultural Society was established in England!). 50 years before the government made its first attempt at Forest Conservation, Carey was already pioneering Forestry Conservation in India.

Against all Odds

Despite being brought up in abject poverty, and never having had the benefit of High School, through his insatiable thirst for knowledge and wide reading, Carey taught himself Latin by age 12. He went on to master, on his own, Greek, Hebrew, French and Dutch. He eventually became Professor of oriental languages, Bengali, Sanskrit and Marathi, at the prestigious Fort William College in Calcutta, where the civil servants were trained. William Carey certainly lived his challenge to expect great things from God and to attempt great things for God! As William Carey time and again stated: **"God's cause will triumph!"**

It is interesting to note that, in the 200 years since William Carey launched the modern missionary movement, English speakers have made up 85% of Protestant missionaries worldwide.

Opening up Africa for the Gospel

Scottish missionary **David Livingstone** became the best friend Africa has ever had. Livingstone was a great missionary pioneer pathfinder. Three themes dominated his life: Evangelisation, Exploration and Emancipation.

He listed, Member of Parliament William Wilberforce's book, **Practical Christianity**, as one of the most influential books he ever read. Livingstone determined, at his conversion at age 12, to devote his life to the alleviation of human misery. To this end he trained as a medical doctor and went out under the London Missionary Society. Initially Livingstone had been planning to go to China, but he was redirected to Africa by Robert Moffat's inspiring description of *"The smoke of a thousand villages that have not yet heard the Gospel of Christ."*

Livingstone walked across Africa, from coast to coast. *"I shall open up a path to the interior or perish!"*

Livingstone the Liberator

"Shame upon us missionaries if we are to be outdone by slave traders!" Battling rains, chronic discomfort, rust, mildew and rot, totally drenched and fatigued, laid low by fever and attacked by hostile tribes, yet David Livingstone persevered on foot across the continent.

"Can the love of Christ not carry the missionary where the slave trade carries the trader?"

"These privations, I beg you to observe, are not sacrifices. I think that word ought never to be mentioned in reference to anything we can do for Him, Who though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor."

Livingstone confronted and exposed the sickening sights of the Islamic slave trade: burned out villages, corpses floating down rivers and long lines of shackled slaves being herded through the bush. Many hundreds of slaves were set free by David Livingstone's direct intervention. In his public speaking engagements, between missionary tours in Africa, Livingstone regularly spoke of his two primary concerns: to

enlighten people of the evils of the Islamic slave trade, and to spread the Christian Gospel amongst the heathen. He dedicated his life to bringing the Christian Faith and Freedom to Africa.

Livingstone was the first to map the great Zambezi River and many other parts of the vast hinterland of Africa. He was the first scientist to make the connection between mosquitoes and malaria and he pioneered the use of quinine as a treatment.

The challenge of David Livingstone rings out to us today: ***“Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay... it is emphatically no sacrifice! Say rather, it is a privilege!”***

The Challenge

In one of his last meetings in England, David Livingstone presented this challenge: *“I beg to direct your attention to Africa; I know in a few years I shall be cut off in that country, which is now open; do not let it be shut again! I go back to Africa to try to make an open path for Commerce and Christianity; it is for you to carry out the work, which I have begun. I leave it with you!”*

Mission to Calabar

One of the daughters of Abraham whom God sent as a missionary to Africa, in response to the challenge of David Livingstone, was **Mary Slessor**. Born, the second of seven children, into a poor and troubled home in Scotland, Mary was brought up in abject poverty sleeping on the floor in a one roomed home that had no plumbing, no lighting and hardly any furniture.

Like her great example, David Livingstone, Mary began working at the cotton mill at age 10. The news of the death of David Livingstone in 1874 galvanized Mary Slessor into missions. She left her home in Dundee for missionary training in Edinburgh and was appointed by the United Presbyterian Church as a missionary teacher for Calabar (present day Nigeria).

Courage and Compassion

Red headed Mary confronted the rampant witchcraft, drunkenness, immorality and slave trading in Calabar. She cared for the many abandoned children, treated the sick and fed the starving. She set up schools and interposed herself between the feared witchdoctors and their victims.

Mary is particularly revered in Nigeria as *Eko Kpukpro Owa* – the mother of all the people. She passionately campaigned against the Nigerian practice of killing twins. Twins were believed to be bewitched and so they were killed in a most cruel manner. Mary rescued these doomed infants and raised them as her own children. At one point Mary moved to the Itu, which were notorious as slave traders, and where cannibalism was still practiced. Because of her tireless and courageous efforts, many schools and churches were established, the killing of twins ceased, slave trading in Calabar was eradicated, drunkenness, killing and witchcraft diminished and most of the people came to embrace the Gospel of Christ.

Cricketer Converts Cannibals in the Congo

As the famous English cricketer turned pioneer missionary to China, India and Africa, **C.T. Studd** declared: ***“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.”***

As he suffered malaria and other attacks, C.T. Studd wrote: ***“Some like to live within sound of church or chapel bell, I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell.”***

“Only one life, it will soon be passed. Only what’s done for Christ will last!”

China Inland Mission

Hudson Taylor stated that his life was based upon three facts: *“There is a living God. He has spoken in the Bible. He means what He says and He will do all that He has promised.”*

“The battle is the Lord’s and He will conquer. We may fail, do fail continually, but He never fails.”

“The Will of God will never lead you where the Grace of God cannot keep you.”

Setting the Captives Free

One of the many fruits of William Wilberforce’s life long crusade against slave trade was the rescue of **Samuel Ajayi Crowther**. Samuel was born in 1807, the year Great Britain abolished the slave trade. At age 13 Samuel Crowther was captured by slave traders and sold to Portuguese traders for transport across the Atlantic. But he was rescued by a British Naval squadron.

“About the 3rd year of my liberation from the slavery of man, I was convinced of another worse state of slavery, that of sin and satan. I was admitted into the visible Church of Christ here on earth as a soldier to fight manfully under His banner against spiritual enemies.”

Every Tongue and Tribe

Samuel was converted to Christ, received an education, both in Sierra Leone and England and in 1843 was ordained as a minister of the Church of England for service with the Church Missionary Society. One of the first converts Samuel baptized was his own mother – who took the Christian name Hannah. His language, Yoruba, became the first African language to have The Book of Common Prayer translated into it. To this day the Church of England in Nigeria uses Samuel Crowther’s Yoruba translation for their liturgy.

A Legacy of Liberty

In 1864, in an overflowing Canterbury Cathedral, Samuel Ajayi Crowther was ordained as the first African Bishop of the Church of England. His first mission was along the Niger River as a follow up to the anti-slavery expeditions of Wilberforce’s successor, Sir T. Foxwell-Buxton. Of the 145 Europeans on that expedition 130 were struck down with malaria and 40 died. Yet, the expedition succeeded in establishing a mission base at Fourah Bay for training liberated slaves to evangelise West Africa. It was built in the very place where the slave market had once stood. The rafters of the roof were made up almost entirely from the masts of old slave ships captured by the Royal Navy.

With over 120 million people, Nigeria is the largest nation in Africa. Despite having suffered under a succession of Muslim dictators, more than half of the population of Nigeria claim to be Christians.

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God has certainly made the Saxons a light for the Gentiles to bring Salvation to the ends of the earth. And just as God's Word has gone out from these British Isles to the very ends of the earth, setting captives free, blessing all the families of the nations of the earth in so many ways, so now from the ends of the earth the Word comes back to these Isles, declaring: *"Here are the ancient paths – walk in them. Contend for the Faith once delivered unto the saints. Listen, you Islands, hear this you distant nations... you are My servant Israel to restore the tribes of Jacob..."*

A Macedonian Call to Moruland

On my first mission to Sudan I received a Macedonian call from Rev. Kenneth Barringwa. He had tracked me down and with great intensity, he urged me: *"You must come to Moruland!"*

On my next trip, after having driven a heavily laden diesel truck through the night to the border of Sudan, we chartered an aircraft to fly over the rolling hills, rocky mountains and wide expanse of the Nile River to Moruland. We landed with 1 200 Bibles at a remote bush landing strip and were welcomed by an enthusiastic choir of singing and dancing Christians.

We were informed that the battlefield – the nearest Muslim garrison – was a mere 15 miles away. Because their last church gathering had been subjected to aerial bombardment they had constructed a special conference venue in the bush outside of town. I was most impressed with the high standards of civil administration, church structures, community organisation, hygiene and spiritual favour maintained in this district. The Commissioner explained that the reason for all this was that a Scottish missionary couple – Dr. Kenneth Fraser and his wife Eileen – had come and firmly planted the Gospel in Moruland in 1920.

From Scotland to Moruland

Kenneth Fraser had run away from home at age 14 and joined the British Army. He was converted to Christ while stationed in South Africa during the Anglo Boer War. When his unit was sent to India he met his future wife, Eileen, who was the daughter of an Irish pastor. Eileen had a strong sense of call to pioneer missionary work in Africa and she communicated this vision to Fraser. They returned to Scotland determined to follow in the footsteps of Dr. David Livingstone and so began to study medicine and theology.

No sooner had Kenneth and Eileen married in 1914 then the First World War broke out. Dr. Fraser returned to the Army as a Major and was sent to Turkey where he was involved in some of the fiercest battles. By the end of the War he had been promoted to Major General and was much loved and admired by his men. For her part, Eileen Fraser had enrolled as a nurse and cared for war wounded in France.

After the war, the Frasers completed their training with the Church Missionary Society and travelled up the Nile to Sudan. They were welcomed to Moruland by Chief Yila at Lui on 22 December 1920. The local people had suffered much at the hands of the Arab slave traders and were very suspicious of foreigners. However Dr. Fraser's

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medical skills created a sensation and they had to construct a hospital to care for the great number of patients. Soon Dr Fraser built the first school, then the first church. He trained the first teachers, nurses and pastors. He drilled all the people in physical training early each morning. By the time General Doctor Rev. Fraser had passed away in 1935 he had laid solid foundations for continual growth and expansion.

Through the Fire

The fruit of Dr. Fraser's ministry in Moruland was impressive. Despite decades of devastation at the hands of the National Islamic Front (NIF) government of Sudan, the resilient Moru believers were standing firm.

The Islamic government of Sudan had repeatedly attacked the villages and farms of Moruland as part of their scorched earth campaign. Widespread destruction and suffering had been caused by aerial bombardments and ground offenses. The systematic burning of crops and looting of livestock led to severe man made famine.

Moru churches, schools and hospitals were attacked by high flying bomber aircraft and rocketed and strafed by low flying helicopter gunships. Captured Moru Christians had been tortured, maimed and murdered. Yet the tenacious Moru Christians were steadfast in resisting the Arabisation and Islamisation policies of the government of Sudan.

On one of my mission trips I arrived to find our venue for our Muslim Evangelism Workshop destroyed. Two helicopter gunships had rocketed and destroyed the Episcopal church in Kotobi. Yet the pastors still gathered in the burned out wreckage of their church to receive training in how to evangelise their Muslim neighbours.

A Hospital for Moruland

On another occasion I saw further fruit of the legacy of the sacrificial and far sighted work of the Frasers. I had prevailed upon Franklin Graham to send an exploratory team from Samaritans Purse to consider establishing a hospital in Moruland. I explained to the team that Dr. Kenneth Fraser had planted the first hospital in the region at Lui. And as this area had recently been liberated by the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA), they could have the opportunity to rehabilitate this historic facility. At that time there was no hospital for the millions of people in Western Equatoria. There was no doubt that thousands of lives could be saved by an efficient hospital in the area.

A Test

To persuade this skeptical team that this was the right location for such a hospital, I told of the magnificent ministry of Kenneth Fraser and how honest the Moru people were. *"You could leave your wallet on the road outside the marketplace and someone would bring it to you"*.

Well the next day as we were driving out of Kotobi to show the team the newly liberated town of Lui, and Dr. Fraser's hospital, the team leader challenged me: *"Do you really believe what you told us? That you could leave your wallet on the road by the marketplace and someone would bring it to you?!"*

"Yes!" I replied.

“Come on”, he extended his hand to me “*give me your wallet!*” As I reluctantly handed over my wallet, he threw it out of the window onto the road, just as we passed the marketplace. There was much laughter from the others in the vehicle.

My heart sank, it was not that I was so concerned about what was in the wallet, it wasn't that much money from my perspective, but the fear gripped me that perhaps I had overstated the case and what if some refugee from another tribe was passing by that day?

So much was at stake. Throughout that busy day as we explored the ruins of Lui, which had been under Arab occupation until just the month previously, my mind continually returned to my wallet in Kotobi and I prayed feverently that whoever found it would be honest.

That night when we returned there was no word. I tossed and turned under my mosquito net considering what a terrible testimony it would be if someone had chosen to keep the wallet.

However, by God's grace the next morning, just before the Sunday service, Canon Reuben came up to me with two boys next to him and held out my wallet: “*Is this yours?*” he asked. “*These two boys here found it outside the marketplace.*”

As there was an identity card with my picture in the wallet it hadn't been hard for them to work out to whom it belonged. As I took the wallet I turned and saw the wide-eyed, shocked expressions of the Samaritans Purse team with their jaws wide open in disbelief. They were impressed.

The Fruit of Integrity

Within the month Samaritans Purse was back in Lui fully committed and restoring Dr. Frasers hospital. SP poured millions of dollars into this project and after 10 years and treating hundreds of thousands of patients, saving thousands of lives, they handed the hospital over to the local church.

I've often thought that those two young boys could not have known how important it was that they responded with integrity that day. How many lives and limbs had been saved? How many people blessed and families enriched as a result of the long and productive ministry of Samaritans Purse in that community? Yet I am convinced that had those youngsters stolen that wallet that day, they would have robbed not only me of my wallet, but the entire community of more than 10 years of magnificent health care, with so many other ripple effects to the great benefit of their community.

Let the Earth Hear His Voice

Kenneth Fraser translated the Gospels and the Book of Acts into Moru before his death in 1935. One of his disciples, Canon Ezra Lawiri, dedicated his life to translating the rest of the Bible into Moru. In 1991 Canon Ezra was shot and killed in an ambush by the Arabs on the road to Juba. Amongst his last words were a solemn charge to his deacon Bullen Dolli: “*My work on earth is complete. See that the Bible is printed.*”

What I found out that the whole Bible was translated into Moru but was still needing sponsorship for printing, I determined that Frontline Fellowship should finance the printing of the first Bibles in the Moru language. By God's Grace, in the year 2000, I

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had the privilege of delivering the first shipments of the first complete Bible in the Moru language to Kotobi and Lui.

Bombed In Sudan

On that Sunday morning, while presenting the first copies of the Moru Bible to the community at Jamba, close to where the Bible translator was killed and buried, we were bombed by the NIF government. Eight bombs were dropped in two strafing runs by a Soviet antanov. All landed within a hundred meters of the church. Yet, despite eight bombs landing in an area about the size of a football field, not one of the congregation were killed. I was about the only casualty with a few cracked ribs.

The trees were pockmarked with shrapnel. Fragments of the bombs were found on all sides of the church. Yet not only did the church building remain standing, but soon it was packed full again. Not only did we not lose anyone. We gained many people. There were more people in the church after the bombing than there were before!

The Battle for the Bible

The highlight of this service was as we presented the first Moru Bibles to this community near where the Bible translator lay buried. I reminded them that William Tyndale, who printed the first New Testaments in the English language, had been burned at the stake for that crime.

Here we were, just a few miles from where the Bible translator lay buried, and the Sunday morning that we were presenting the Bible he dedicated his life to translating, we were bombed at church. How much clearer could it be that the Bible is a message of life and death? Some people hate it so much that they are willing to kill to destroy it. Others love the Word of God so much they are willing to give their life to advance it.

Jesus Christ is building His Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

A Mighty Fortress is our God

On one occasion a Frontline Fellowship mission team was in Cuando Cubango province in Angola. This was such a remote section of Angola that the Portuguese called it "*the end of the earth*". Well, here our team was, at the end of the earth, and as they drove into this remote village they could hear singing. Although they did not know the words they immediately recognised the tune. The village was singing *Ein Festa Burg* – A Mighty Fortress is our God - in Ovimbundu. Martin Luther's great battle hymn of the Reformation was being sung at the ends of the earth in Ovimbundu!

We were then informed that it was 31 October, Reformation Day. The village was celebrating the Reformation. School children had made out posters with sketches of the great Reformers: Dr. Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, William Tyndale, John Knox and John Calvin. The Latin battle cries of the Reformation were boldly displayed on banners: *Sola Scriptura, Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Solus Christus* and *Soli Deo Gloria*.

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the Kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations. All ... shall bow before Him ... a posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation. They will come and declare His righteousness, there are people who will be born, that He has done this." Psalm 22:27-31

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF VICTORY OF THE GREATEST CENTURY OF MISSIONS

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the Kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations." Psalm 22:27-28

The Greatest Century of Missionary Advance

The greatest era of missionary advance was the 19th century. The considered judgement of church historian Kenneth Scott Latourette is that: *"Never had any other set of ideas, religious or secular, been propagated over so wide an area by so many professional agents maintained by the unconstrained donations of so many millions of individuals."*

A World to Win

At the beginning of the 19th century, Protestant Christianity was concentrated in Europe and North America. Except for some small Christian enclaves, Asia was almost untouched by the Gospel. Africa was still the *"dark continent"* - except for the ancient Copts in Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan and a small number of Dutch settlers at the Southernmost tip of Africa, at the Cape.

Unprecedented

However, by the end of the 1800s, Christianity was a world religion with churches established in almost every country on earth. The vigorous energy and momentum of the Protestant missionary movement in the 19th century was unparalleled in human history. The 19th century missionary movement had a revolutionary influence upon cultures - out of all proportion to its modest numerical strength.

Making Disciples of Nations

It reduced hundreds of illiterate languages to writing, produced libraries of books, pioneered tens of thousands of schools, developed movements for the relief and prevention of human suffering, introduced modern medical skills to save millions of lives from tropical and other diseases, introduced advanced methods of agriculture to provide adequate food for millions of previously malnourished people, and brought an end to cannibalism, human sacrifice, infanticide, burning of leprosy patients, widow burning, slavery and numerous other prevalent social evils. The result of this momentous missionary enterprise was the rapid expansion of Christianity throughout Africa, Asia and the Pacific Islands.

Against All Expectations

Yet the success of this bold missionary endeavour was by no means certain. From the beginning sceptics laughed at the audacity of these pioneers, discounting any possibility of success. The British East India Company's attitude was published in these words: *"The sending out of missionaries into our Eastern possessions (is) the maddest, most extravagant, most costly, most indefensible project which has ever been suggested by a moon struck fanatic! Such a scheme is pernicious, imprudent, useless, harmful, dangerous, profitless, fantastic."* (20 Centuries of Christianity, page 279).

Mission Impossible

Pioneer missionary, William Carey, and his co-workers, were belittled as *"fools, madmen, tinkers, Calvinists and schismatics!"*. Their preaching was stereotyped as *"puritanical rant of the worst kind."* (William Carey, S. Pearce Carey, 1923). *The*

The Eschatology of Victory of the Greatest Century of Missions

Edinburgh Review editorialised: "We see not the slightest prospect of success; we see much danger in making the attempt".

Against All Odds

In light of the incredible obstacles, overwhelming distances, very real dangers and relentless opposition involved, how do we explain the sustained explosion of Protestant energy aimed at winning the world for Christ?

A Vision of Victory

In Calvin's Institutes, the Swiss Reformer wrote of "*the Magnificence*" of Christ's reign prophesied in Daniel 2:32-35; Isaiah 11:4; Psalm 2:9 and Psalm 72 where Christ will rule the whole earth. "Our doctrine must tower unvanquished above all the glory and above all the might of the world, for it is not of us, but of the living God and His Christ" who will "*rule from sea to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth*" Calvin's missionary zeal is attested to by the fact that within 25 years - from the time John Calvin began his ministry - there were 2000 Calvinist churches and about half a million Calvinists, in France alone! Calvin sponsored missions throughout Europe and even as far afield as Brazil.

Struggling to Survive

However the 16th and 17th centuries were primarily a battle for survival for the Protestants. While they succeeded in winning whole nations to Christ (Hesse, Saxony, Prussia, England, Scotland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark) they had to fight for their lives against Catholic repression, invasions and intrigues.

The Catholic Superpower Threat

During the first century of Protestant history the world powers were Spain and Portugal. These Roman Catholic empires dominated the seas and the overseas possessions of Europe. Only after the English defeated the Spanish Armada (1588) did the possibility arise of Protestant missionaries crossing the seas. As the Dutch and British grew in military and naval strength they were able to challenge the Catholic dominance of the seas and the new continents.

Courageous Pioneers

Some Protestants ventured out across the oceans to extend God's kingdom, including John Eliot (1604-1690). Eliot mastered the Algonquian language of the Indians in Massachusetts and became a pioneer Bible translator. Eliot's biography: "*The Triumphs of the Reformed Religion in America: or the Life of the Renowned John Eliot*" written by Cotton Mather and published in 1702 was to inspire many others into missions in succeeding generations - including David Brainerd and William Carey.

A World Vision

Under Oliver Cromwell, in 1649, the English Parliament established the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England. Over £15 900 (an enormous sum of money in the 17th century) was donated towards this first Evangelical Missionary society. Cromwell proposed a comprehensive plan for world evangelism - dividing up the world into four great mission fields. Unfortunately the death of Cromwell and the restoration of the monarchy in England under Charles II set back the cause of missions.

Bold Initiatives

During the 18th century there were several Protestant attempts to reach distant peoples with the Gospel. These efforts were mostly carried out by Pietists like the Moravians of

Count Von Zinzendorf. Their work focused on converting individuals in or near some European colony. The Christian groups created by these Pietists were tiny islands of believers engulfed in oceans of heathens.

A Comprehensive Vision

However, the missionary movement launched by William Carey thought in comprehensive terms of evangelising whole countries and discipling whole populations. Carey was the first to articulate the need for Christianity to be firmly rooted in the culture and traditions of the land in which it is planted. For these and many other reasons Carey is called "*the Father of Modern Missions*".

Mobilising English Speaking into World Evangelisation

The launch of the modern missionary movement by William Carey and the "*Particular (Calvinist) Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Amongst the Heathens*" marked the entrance of Great Britain into world missions. Throughout the 19th century Britain was to contribute more men and money to the cause of Protestant missions worldwide than any other country. K.S. Latourette in "*A History of the Expansion of Christianity*" (1945) records that in 1900, of the 13,607 Protestant foreign missionaries, 5,901 were from the British Isles and 4,110 from the United States. In that one-year - 1900 - of the \$17,161,092 donated to Protestant missions, \$8,225,645 was from the British Isles and \$5,403,048 from the United States. The concept of Britain as a Christian nation with a God given responsibility for world evangelism was deeply rooted in 19th century Victorian society.

Acts 13 Breakthrough

The means used to accomplish the tremendous task of world evangelisation was innovated by William Carey (and inspired by Acts 13:1-5). When he wrote his Enquiry he asked: What would a trading company do? Carey proposed the formation of companies of dedicated Christian pastors and laymen. These companies should appoint committees to collect and evaluate information, to raise funds and to select suitable missionaries to send to the foreign mission fields.

Voluntary Societies

These voluntary societies transformed 19th century society. It made possible interdenominational action together for clearly defined purposes. It altered the traditional power base by encouraging lay leaders and tapping into the wealth of talents of rank and file Protestants. It also inspired countless other voluntary societies - to fight the slave trade, improve working conditions for children, establish Sunday Schools and a host of other causes.

Persuasion Not Compulsion

The Protestant missionary movement of the 19th century was also remarkable because it advanced (with very few exceptions) without either state control or state support. Unlike the Catholic missions of Xavier, Las Cases and Ricci, the Protestant missionaries were financed by voluntary donations and only advanced by the power of prayer and persuasion. Since the time of the Emperor Constantine, the propagation of religious beliefs had tended to be carried out with the active support of kings and princes. Mass conversions, such as under Clovis, king of the Franks, Prince Vladimir of the Russians or King Olaf of the Vikings, were the accepted means of extending the Faith. The Protestant missionaries of the 19th century, however, had found a way to engage in missions while upholding religious freedom.

The Impetus of the Greatest Century of Mission

However, we still need to ask: **What inspired the pervasive determination in 19th century Protestant churches to firmly plant the Gospel in every nation on earth?** The answer is: Calvinism and Post-Millennialism.

Reformation and Revival

The passion to preach the Gospel in every nation and to win heathen tribes to Christ sprang from those Reformed churches, in England and America, which had been most deeply influenced by the Great Evangelical Awakening of the 18th century. These Revivals were based upon the study and proclamation of the Reformed teachings of the Puritans. The two primary human instruments whom God was pleased to use in the 18th century revivals were Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield.

The Power of Puritanism

Edwards was a Calvinist whose books reasserted the faith and conduct of the Puritans. His sermon, *"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"*, was used by God to spark the Great Awakening. Edwards' book *"The Life and Diary of Rev. David Brainerd"* (published in 1749) was mightily used to inspire the 19th century Missionary movement. Jonathan Edwards himself invested the last seven years of his life as a missionary amongst Indians and frontiersmen at a frontier settlement in America.

Extraordinary Prayer

One of Jonathan Edwards books was *"A Humble Attempt to Promote an Explicit Agreement and Visible Union of God's People through the World, in Extraordinary Prayer, for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth..."* (a rather long title, but a very descriptive one). When William Carey set sail for India one of his treasured possessions which he carried with him was this book by Jonathan Edwards.

Reformation Roots

All the founders and Missionaries of the original prototype Baptist Mission launched by William Carey in 1792 were Reformed. When they came under criticism for their *"strict Calvinism"* and being *"followers of Jonathan Edwards"*, Carey's colleague, Andrew Fuller, responded that if their critics *"preached Christ half as much as Jonathan Edwards"* had, then *"their usefulness would be double what it is!"* He added that it was most significant that the mission to the East had originated with men of Reformed principles and if it ever fell into the hands of men who rejected these principles it would become ineffective for God's Kingdom. (Life of Andrew Fuller by John Ryland).

The Doctrines of Grace

The Serampore Mission Principles explicitly committed all their missionaries to the Reformed doctrines of Grace. Similarly, the London Missionary Society (founded in 1795), which was thoroughly interdenominational, was most outspoken that *"the doctrines of grace generally known as Calvinism, provided a common platform for the best missionary action."* The first generation of LMS missionaries had no difficulty with signing the full Westminster Confession.

Pioneers

Robert Morrison, the pioneer missionary to China in 1807 was a strict Calvinist from the Church of Scotland. Henry Martyn who sailed for India in 1805 was also Reformed. His pioneer Bible translation ministry in Persia was cut short by his death at age 31, in 1812.

George Whitefield

George Whitefield, whose ministry along with Jonathan Edwards was so inextricably linked to the great revivals out of which the 19th century missionary movement was launched, was unashamedly a Calvinist: *"You know how strongly I assert all the doctrines of Grace as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and in the (Thirty Nine) Articles of the Church of England."* (Whitefield, Tyerman). Whitefield testified that he learned much of his Theology from Puritan books such as Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible.

Puritan Publications

During the great 18th century Revivals many Puritan books were reprinted: John Owen, John Bunyon, Hooker, Shephard, Guthrie and many others. This revival of interest in the Puritans led Augustus Toplady (author of *"Rock of Ages"*), John Newton (who wrote *"Amazing Grace"*), Charles Spurgeon and many other churchmen to become Calvinists. The British Museum catalogue lists eleven editions of Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible and two American reprints. It is calculated that more than 200,000 single volumes of Matthew Henry's commentary had been circulated prior to 1840 alone.

Extraordinary Energy

This revitalised Protestantism, refreshed with Calvinistic writings and preaching, rose to the challenge of world evangelisation with a zeal and boldness never before seen in history. Many Christians had engaged in Evangelism and Missions before, but *"never before had the followers of any faith formulated comprehensive plans covering the entire surface of the earth to make these purposes effective."* (A History of the Expansion of Christianity, by Latourette)

The Puritan Hope

Ian Murray in *"The Puritan Hope"* concludes: *"The Theological impetus which lay behind the new missionary era came from the Puritan books of the seventeenth century, which must be classified as Calvinistic."*

An Eschatology of Victory

An additional distinctive which characterised the greatest century of Missionary advance was the eschatology of victory. This optimistic view of the future was often spoken of by Whitefield: *"when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas"* Habakkuk 2:14.

Jesus Shall Reign

In the immortal words of Isaac Watts' hymn published in 1719 (based on Psalm 72):

*"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journey run;
His Kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more"*

Mobilising Missions

The first generation of missionaries of the 19th century were overwhelming post-millennial. The driving power of this prophetic hope was prominent in the speeches and sermons at the inaugural meetings of the Baptist Missionary Society (1792), the London Missionary Society (1795), the New York Missionary Society (1797), the Church Missionary Society (1799) and the Glasgow Missionary Society (1802), amongst many others.

The Eschatology of Victory of the Greatest Century of Missions

The Serampore Vision

William Carey wrote in the Form of Agreement at Serampore: *"He who raised the Scottish and brutalised Britons to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, can raise these slaves of superstition, purify their hearts by faith and make them worshippers of the one God in spirit and in truth. The promises are fully sufficient to remove our doubts, and make us anticipate that not very distant period when He will famish all the gods of India, and cause these very idolaters to cast their idols to the moles and to the bats, and renounce forever the work of their own hands."*

"The Lord will be awesome to them, for He will reduce to nothing all the gods of the earth; people shall worship Him, each one from his place, indeed all the shores of the nations." Zephaniah 2:11

Missionary Hymns

Not only was the 19th century the greatest century of missions, but probably also the greatest century for composing some of the best-loved hymns. Many popular hymns of that time echoed this eschatology of victory, including *"All Hail the Power of Jesus Name"*, *"Zion's King Shall Reign Victorious"*, *"Jesus Shall Reign"* and *"From Greenland's Icy Mountains"*. This hymn was composed by Reginald Heber who gave his life for the Gospel of Christ in Calcutta, India:

*"Can we, whose souls are lighted
With wisdom from on high;
Can we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation, O Salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim
Till earth's remotest nation
Has learnt Messiah's Name."*

Empowered

Energised with doctrines and hymns such as these, the Protestant churches in the 19th century were inspired to *"expect great things from God and to attempt great things for God"*.

The Noblest Object

In the words of Alexander Somerville in 1886, this was *"a new enterprise on behalf of the noblest object that can engage the enthusiasm of man - the salvation of millions!"*

Moving Mountains

Scotland's first foreign missionary, Alexander Duff, declared: *"Oh, what promises are ours, if we had only faith to grasp them! What a promise is that in the Great Commission - Go and make disciples of all nations, and lo I am with you, even to the end of the world! We go forth amongst the hundreds of millions of the nations; we find gigantic systems of idolatry and superstition consolidated for thousands of years ... they tower as high mountains. But what does faith say? Believe and it shall be. And if any Church on earth will realise that faith, to that Church will the honour belong of evangelising the nations, and bringing down the mountains."*

Nation Transforming

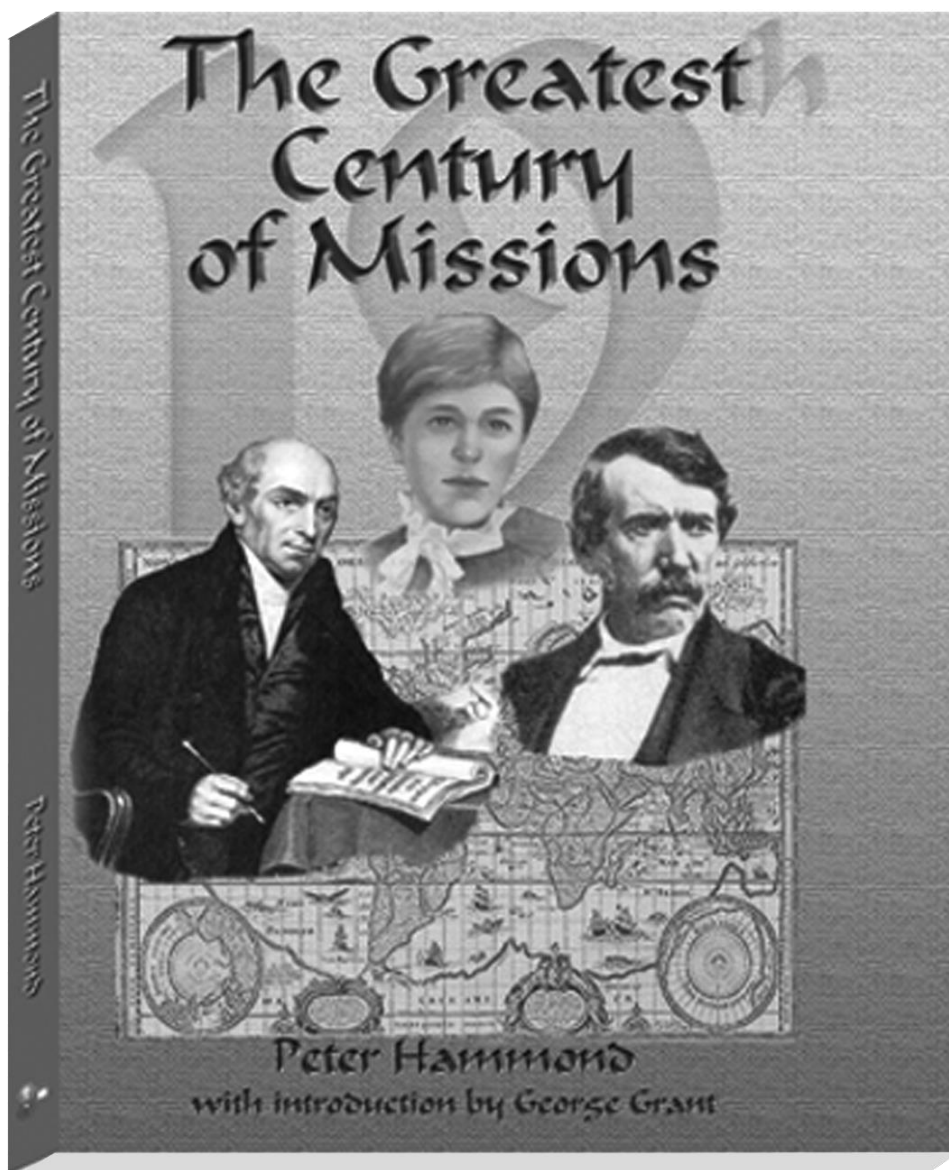
So they went out - thousands of pioneer Protestant missionaries. They expected their life-transforming message to change history - and it did!

Pray For Revival

May God be merciful to grant a Revival of those Biblical doctrines that will inspire a similar Missionary vision and effectiveness in the 21st century. By God's grace, and inspired by the same Biblical principles and missionary vision of the 19th century missionary movement, the 21st century may become an even greater century for fulfilling the Great Commission.

"In His days the righteous shall flourish.... He shall have dominion also from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. Those who dwell in the wilderness will bow before Him, and His enemies will lick the dust ... Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him... All nations shall call Him blessed... let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen."

Psalm 72:7-19



SUFFERING

“For to this you were called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His steps.” 1 Peter 2:21

Often, when we are suffering illness, injustice, unfair treatment, frustrations and traumatic situations, we cry out ‘Why?’ Why do bad things happen to good people? For what reason am I suffering?

Perhaps we should ask ourselves why Christ suffered. He was the only truly good, perfect and completely unselfish person who has ever walked this earth. Yet Christ suffered. Jesus was misunderstood, slandered, falsely accused and lied about. People accused him of being insane (Mark 3:21). He was accused of being demon possessed! (John 7:20). Some accused him of being a glutton and a drunkard (Matthew 11:19). He was accused of teaching people not to pay their taxes, and of inciting riots (Luke 23:2-5). None of which was true.

Jesus was hated and betrayed. The Lord warned us: ***“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”*** John 15:18-19

The religious leaders made plans to kill Jesus (John 11:53). One of his handpicked disciples, Judas, betrayed Him (Luke 22:48).

Jesus was forsaken by His friends and followers. Many of His disciples turned back and would not follow him any more (John 6:66). When Jesus was arrested all of His disciples left Him and ran away (Mark 14:50).

Jesus was unjustly arrested, illegally tried and wrongly condemned (Mark 14:55-56; Luke 23:14-16; John 19:15).

Our Lord Jesus Christ was mocked, insulted, slapped, beaten, whipped and crucified (Mark 14:65; Luke 23:11; Matthew 27:26; Matthew 27:39).

Christ Himself suffered for us and left us an example to follow in His steps.

Many people may consider teaching on suffering to be negative. It is not negative to teach on the reality of everyday life. To recognise that suffering is inevitable is not discouraging at all. The Lord does not keep us **from** suffering, He keeps us **in** suffering. And the Lord has never expected us to do anything for Him that He has not already willingly done for us. Our Lord and Saviour has led from the front, by example.

The Apostles taught: ***“We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God.”*** Acts 14:22. In this way Paul and Barnabas strengthened the followers of Christ and encouraged them to continue in the Faith.

It is always a privilege to suffer for our Lord Jesus Christ. The suffering is temporary, but the glory is eternal. We should note the example of the Apostles, who, rather than

claim comfort, safety and luxury at home, chose rather to suffer for Christ while obeying the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

After a lifetime of church planting, the Apostle **Peter** was crucified upside down in Rome.

After fearless preaching, **James** the elder was beheaded by Herod in Palestine.

After preaching the Gospel in Greece, **Andrew** was crucified.

After preaching to the Gauls, **Phillip** died as a Martyr in Asia minor.

Nathaniel preached the Gospel in India and Armenia before being flayed alive and beheaded.

Thomas established churches throughout Babylon and India before being axed to death.

Matthew was burned to death for preaching the Gospel in Abyssinia.

James the younger was crucified while evangelising in Egypt.

Jude preached the Gospel throughout Syria and Persia before being martyred.

Simon the Zealot preached the Word throughout Syria and Mesopotamia and was sawn in half in Persia.

Matthias was crucified on a missionary outreach in the Crimea (present day Ukraine).

John was banished in exile to Patmos. (He was the only one of the Apostles who was not martyred.)

The Apostle Paul described some of his sufferings in these words: ***“In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, imprisoned more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils amongst false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness – besides the other things, what comes upon me daily; my deep concern for all the churches.”*** 2 Corinthians 11:23-28

The Apostle Paul was inspired to write this injunction: ***“You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”*** 2 Timothy 2:3

“Yes, and all who desire to live Godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” 2 Timothy 3:12. Not some. Not many. Not even most. All. And not *may* suffer persecution, but will.

And so many of us can say with the Apostle: ***“We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the life of Jesus Christ also may be manifested in our body.”*** 2 Corinthians 4:8-9

So what then is the purpose of suffering in the Christian life? The Apostle Peter wrote: ***“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, that is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.”*** 1 Peter 1:6-7

Suffering

The Apostle James encourages us: ***“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience....Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”***

James 1:2,3,12

Suffering purifies us and prepares us for special service. All of God's great men knew great suffering while God purged and prepared them for His service. **Joseph** experienced twelve years in slavery and prison before being raised up to be governor of Egypt. **Moses** was forty years in the desert before becoming the deliverer of Israel. **David** was an outlaw and a fugitive for years before becoming the King of Israel. The Bible is full of examples of great men of Faith, enduring sufferings for the Lord. There is no shortcut to maturity.

As Joseph was able to say to his brothers who had sold him into slavery: *“What you meant for evil, God used for good”* (Genesis 50:20).

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

Peter exhorts us: ***“Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His Glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.”*** 1 Peter 4:12



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REMEMBER THE PERSECUTED

“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them – those who are mistreated – since you yourselves are in the Body also.” Hebrews 13:3

Persecution Worldwide

Over 400 million Christians live under 66 governments which restrict religious freedom and persecute believers. Every year an average of 200,000 Christians are killed for their Faith.

In the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John was given a glimpse into Heaven. He sees the martyrs, and he hears their prayer. What are the martyrs who have died for Christ praying?

The Martyr's Prayer

“When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the Word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘how long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.” Revelation 6:9-11

Praying for Justice

Here we obtain a glimpse into Heaven. Those who had been faithful to God's Word, and had been slain for the testimony that they had maintained, are in the very presence of God and they are praying: ***“How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”*** Throughout the world I have come across many people who are praying for peace. However it is notable that the martyrs in Heaven are praying for justice.

And how does the Lord respond to these prayers? Does He rebuke them? No! Each of them is given a white robe signifying their right standing with Almighty God. They are told to be patient for a little while. When the full number of their fellow servants and brethren have died for Christ, their prayer for justice will be answered.

The Wrath of the Lamb

The rest of Revelation 6 illustrates that judgment: ***“And the kings of earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the Wrath of the Lamb! For the Day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”*** Revelation 6:15-17

If the World Hates You

The Lord Jesus warned us: ***“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the Word that I said to you, ‘the servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.”***

John 15:18-20

The Testimony of the Apostles

Indeed, all of the Apostles suffered severe persecution for Christ:

Peter was crucified upside down in Rome after much outreach.

James the Elder was beheaded by Herod in Palestine after fearless preaching.

John, after a life of evangelism, was boiled in oil and banished in exile to Patmos.

Andrew was crucified in Greece while spreading the Gospel there.

Philip died as a martyr in Asia Minor after preaching the Gospel to the Gauls.

Nathaniel preached the Gospel in India and Armenia before being flayed alive and beheaded.

Thomas established churches throughout Babylonia and India before being axed to death.

Matthew was burned to death while preaching the Gospel in Ethiopia.

James the younger was crucified while evangelising in Egypt.

Jude preached the Gospel throughout Syria and Persia where he was finally martyred.

Simon the Zealot preached the Word of God throughout Syria and Mesopotamia and was sawn in half in Persia.

Matthias was crucified on a missionary outreach in the Crimea (in what became the Soviet Union).

The Sufferings of Paul

The Apostle Paul testified: ***“In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness – beside the other things which come upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.”***

2 Corinthians 11:23-28

The Suffering is Temporary

The Apostle Paul wrote: ***“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”*** Romans 8:18. The suffering is temporary – the glory is eternal.

Following in His Steps

The Apostle Peter wrote: ***“For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.”*** 1 Peter 2:20-21

Tested by Fire

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your Faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour and glory at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:6-7

Will Suffer Persecution

“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”

2 Timothy 3:12

The Scripture does not say *some*, nor does it say *many*, nor even *most*. ***“All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”***

The Scripture does not say *may* or *could* suffer persecution. ***“Will suffer persecution.”*** Brother Andrew writes of a mission behind the Iron Curtain to Hungary where a pastor asked him if there were any pastors in prison in Holland. Brother Andrew replied that, no, he was not aware of any pastors who were in prison in Holland.

“What then do your churches do with 2 Timothy 3:12?”

Brother Andrew reported that he had to admit that their churches did nothing with this verse.

Faithful Under Fire

Yet, surely, if we are seeking to be faithful to our Lord Jesus, we will suffer some persecution for it? By God’s grace, perhaps, not the violent and vicious persecution which Christians in communist and Muslim lands have suffered. However, if we remain faithful to the Lord, there will be times when we will be misunderstood, slandered, discriminated against, threatened and abused. Whether from family or friends, neighbours or co-workers, whether at school or at the work place, those who maintain a consistent testimony for the Lord are bound to suffer some abuse.

Watch and Pray

When the Lord warned his disciples of coming persecution (Matthew 16:21-16; 26:31-35), they responded with disbelief. Because they did not believe Christ’s warning, they did not ***“watch and pray.”*** As a result, they denied the Lord and ran away (Matthew 26:40-46; 56; 60-75).

The Apostle Paul strengthened the disciples and encouraged them to remain true to the Faith by teaching: ***“We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God.”***

Acts 14:22

Rooted in the Word

Jesus taught that many believers would forsake Him (Matthew 24:9-10) when trouble or persecution comes because of their superficial commitment. Those with no roots in God’s Word would fall away quickly (Matthew 13:21).

In response to the clear warnings of these Scriptures, and in the light of the increasing hostility towards Christianity in so many circles, it would be wise for every Christian to study what the Word of God has to say about persecution.

Victorious Faith

“And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb and by the Word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” Revelation 12:11...

Christians can overcome satan by the Blood of Christ’s atonement and by the Word of God. Not only by the Word known and memorised in our hearts and minds, but by our living testimony, applying the Word of God to every area of life. Our Lord Jesus Christ

Remember the Persecuted

taught that we should not be afraid of those who can only kill the body and after that can do no more. The Lord told us whom we should fear. We must fear God, who after the killing of the body has power to throw both body and soul into hell, forever (Luke 12:4-5).

Courage

And it is this kind of courage that we see in the apostles in the Book of Acts. When Peter and John were dragged before the Sanhedrin they courageously responded: ***“Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God’s sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”***

Acts 4:19-20.

In response to the threats of the Sanhedrin, Peter and John gathered with the other disciples and prayed for the boldness to continue to proclaim God’s Word ***“Now Lord, look on their threats, and grant to your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your Word...”*** Acts 4:29

And the Scripture records that ***“when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness.”*** Acts 4:31

To Obey God or Man?

Then you read that the High Priest rose up with great indignation and arrested the apostles, casting them into prison. ***“Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this Name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man’s blood on us!”*** But Peter and the other apostles answered: ***“We ought to obey God rather than men.”*** Acts 5:28-29

Suffering Shame for His Name

The Sanhedrin then had the apostles flogged and commanded them not to speak in the Name of Jesus. We read that the Apostles left the council ***“rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”***

Acts 5:41-42

The Steadfastness of Stephen

We then read of the martyrdom of Stephen who is described as ***“full of Faith and power”*** and who did great wonders and signs among the people (Acts 6:8). The people were stirred up against Stephen and false witnesses were produced. Stephen’s courageous stand before the Sanhedrin is recorded in Acts 7: ***“You stiff necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and the murderers, who have received the Law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.”*** Acts 7:51-53

Scattered by Persecution

We read that ***“a great persecution arose against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria...those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word.”***

Acts 8:1-4

The Martyrdom of James

In order to please the people, King Herod had James, the brother of John, beheaded. He then ordered the Apostle Peter to be arrested. However, God opened prison doors and set the captive free - in answer to prayer. And God judged Herod. ***“An angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died. But the Word of God grew and multiplied.”*** Acts 12:23-24

Power Amidst Persecution

Throughout the Book of Acts we see peace and power amidst persecution. Paul and Barnabas boldly proclaimed the Gospel and responded to persecution with joy.

“But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 13:50-52

Singing in the Cells

In Acts 16 we read of Paul and Silas seized and dragged before the authorities, ***“Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailor to keep them securely...he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing Hymns to God and the prisoners were listening to them.”*** Acts 16:22-25

Triumph Amidst Tribulation

Stripped and beaten, flogged and imprisoned, chained in the prison cells, Paul and Silas determined to praise God amidst their persecution. ***“Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were loosed.”*** Acts 16:26. By God’s grace Paul and Silas were able to see their captor converted and his entire family brought to Salvation.

Refusing to Worship Caesar

Foxes Book of Martyrs records many testimonies of courageous Christians who suffered for the Faith. It is important to note that Christians were not persecuted in the Roman Empire for worshipping Jesus. The Romans were polytheists. They had an entire pantheon of gods. If the early Christians had registered their religion with the state and if they had burnt incense before an image of Caesar, they would have been left alone.

However, by refusing to participate in Emperor worship and declare *“Caesar is lord”* Christians came under suspicion and violent persecution. They were not persecuted because they worshipped Christ, but because they refused to revere Caesar.

Christian Courage

It is extraordinary to read these testimonies in *Foxes Book of Martyrs* of dynamic believers responding to persecution with joy.

Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius of Antioch, when sentenced to death by the Emperor Trajan responded: *“I thank Thee O Lord, that they has vouchsafed thus to honour me. I am God’s grain, to be ground between the teeth of wild beasts, so that I may become a holy loaf for the Lord.”*

Polycarp of Smyrna

When Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, was arrested he declared: *“God’s will be done!”* He provided food for his captors before they escorted him before the Roman consul. The consul was struck by how old Polycarp was: *“Pity your grey hairs, old man, just burn some incense before the Emperor and you can go free.”*

Polycarp responded: *“If you think for a moment that I would do that, then you pretend not to know who I am. Hear it plainly, I am a Christian!”*

“Then do this, old man, just curse Christ and I will set you free.”

Polycarp responded: *“86 years I have served my Christ, and He has never done me any wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?”*

“I have wild beasts” threatened the pro-consul.

“Bring them” Polycarp said. *“I would change my mind if it meant from going from the worse to the better, but not from the right to the wrong.”*

“If you despise the wild beasts, I will have you burned”, warned the consul.

“You threaten me with a fire that burns for but an hour and then is extinguished. But you know nothing of the fire of Eternal Judgment which will never be extinguished. Bring what you will.”

As Polycarp was led into the arena he was heard to pray: *“Lord God, Father of our blessed Saviour, I thank Thee that I have been deemed worthy to receive the crown of martyrdom, and that I may die for Thee and Thy cause.”*

Cyprian of Carthage

Cyprian of Carthage, when sentenced to be beheaded, exclaimed: *“Thanks be to God!”*

Perpetua – Forever Faithful

Perpetua was a Christian noblewoman living in Carthage (North Africa). In A.D. 202 when Perpetua was a 22-year old mother, she was one of the first to be arrested in a new wave of persecution. When her pagan father visited and pleaded with her to deny that she was a Christian, Perpetua responded that it was impossible that she be *“called anything other than what I am, a Christian.”*

When the governor ordered Perpetua to worship the emperor her response was decisive: *“I will not.”*

“Are you a Christian then?” asked the governor.

“Yes I am!” Perpetua’s determined response brought immediate condemnation. The governor condemned her and her friends to be thrown to the wild beasts and to die in the arena.

When Perpetua and her friends entered the stadium they were singing Psalms in such a joyful demeanour that the crowd demanded that the Christians be scourged first. This was done.

As the mob screamed abuse, Perpetua was heard to say: *“You have condemned us, but God will condemn you.”*

Perpetua encouraged the other Christians: *“You must all stand fast in the Faith and not be weakened by what we have gone through.”*

Witnesses in the stands described Perpetua in the arena as *“young and beautiful”, “a pure and modest Christian lady”, “with shining countenance and calm step, as the beloved of God, as a bride of Christ, putting down everyone’s stare by her own intense gaze.”*

Her bold testimony: *“I am a Christian and cannot deny Christ”* was repeated throughout the Empire. Her example of Christian resolve and Christian courage, choosing to suffer and die with a clear conscience, rather than deny her Saviour, inspired generations of Roman Christians to stand firm in the face of relentless persecution.

“Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.” Revelation 2:10

The Blood of the Martyrs

As Tertullian famously declared: *“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”* For every Christian killed in the arena multitudes were converted in the stands.

Converting the Persecutors

In time the slaves of the Roman Empire were converted, the nobles of the Roman Empire were converted, the barbarian invaders were brought to Christ, and even the bloodthirsty Viking invaders were won to Christ.

The Waldensians

The Waldensians of Southern France, Northern Italy and Switzerland endured much persecution between the 12th and the 17th Century, courageously standing firm and enduring as the oldest community of Protestants in the world today.

Wycliffe and the Lollards

Professor John Wycliffe of Oxford University, and his itinerant evangelists (the Lollards), despite severe persecution continued to translate the Scriptures into English and to proclaim and sing the Gospel in English in the market places. They were the field workers of the Reformation, sowing the good seed of the Word of God and laying solid foundations for the mighty move of God’s Spirit in the Reformation.

Jan Hus of Prague

Professor Jan Hus of Prague courageously worked for Biblical Reformation and was burned alive in 1415. His final prayer was: *“Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit. I am willing, patiently and publicly to endure this dreadful, shameful, and cruel death for the sake of Thy Gospel and the preaching of Thy Word.”* He died singing praises to God.

Remember the Persecuted

William Tyndale

The Reformer William Tyndale of England was burned alive at the stake for the crime of translating the Bible into the English language. His last words, his dying prayer: *“Lord, open the King of England’s eyes!”* was wondrously answered as the very King, Henry VIII, who had condemned Tyndale for his work of Bible translation, within two years of Tyndale’s death, had authorised that same Bible in English to be placed in every parish in the land, accessible to the common people, in the common tongue.

George Wishart

Patrick Hamilton and George Wishart of Scotland were burned at the stake for preaching Biblical Reformation. George Wishart prayed an Imprecatory Prayer against the cardinal who had condemned them. Within three months that cardinal had met a violent death.

John Knox

Reformer John Knox of Scotland was imprisoned and chained as a slave in a galley for nineteen months. At one point he refused to kiss an idol of Mary. Throwing it overboard, he declared: *“She is light enough, let her learn to swim!”*

The St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre

The Huguenots of France endured vicious persecution and massacres, particularly the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre of 24 August 1572.

Condemning a Nation

At one point in the 16th Century the Spanish Inquisition condemned the entire nation of Holland (3 million men, women and children) to death as heretics! By God’s grace, and through the courage of Prince William the Silent and his followers, the Dutch succeeded in throwing back the Spanish invaders and winning freedom for Protestant Holland.

The Greatest Century of Persecution

You may be surprised to know that more Christians died for Christ in the 20th Century than in all previous 19 centuries combined. The Christian World Encyclopedia calculated that at least 28 million Christians had been martyred in the 20th Century. The total martyrs since A.D. 33 was calculated at 43 million. The encyclopedia calculated that atheists in secular governments had murdered 25 million Christians. Muslims and Islamic governments had murdered at least 6 million Christians. And Roman Catholics and RC governments had murdered 4½ million Protestants.

Serving the Persecuted

During the last 30 years of missionary work I have had the privilege of serving the persecuted Church in Mozambique, Angola, Romania, Albania, Rwanda, Sudan, Northern Nigeria, the Congo and Zimbabwe. During this time I have endured aerial bombardments, ambushes, artillery and rocket barrages, and I have been arrested and imprisoned for missionary work.

Speaking up for the Persecuted

Some of what Christians suffer in Marxist and Muslim lands has been documented in [*Faith Under Fire in Sudan*](#); [*Holocaust in Rwanda*](#); [*In the Killing Fields of Mozambique*](#); [*Slavery, Terrorism and Islam*](#); and in documentary films that we have helped to produce such as: [*Sudan: The Hidden Holocaust and Terrorism and Persecution – Understanding Islamic Jihad*](#).

Angola's Agony

On numerous occasions, Cuban soldiers in Angola have placed the heads of cattle, or an AK47, on altars or pulpits demanding that the Christians commit idolatry and bow before them. They have walked into services, and taken the Bible off the pulpit and thrown it by the door and demanded: *"You may all leave – one by one – just spit on the Bible and you can go free. If you don't – we will kill you!"*

Communist troops have burst into church services declaring: *"You Christians – you say that you worship the Lamb – well here is a lamb!"* The Cubans taunted the worshippers as they started pouring the blood of this lamb over the believers saying *"the blood of the lamb is shed amongst you – worship the lamb!"* The head of the lamb was placed mockingly on the pulpit and people were dragged and forced to their knees to bow down before it.

Christians who have escaped from communist concentrations camps and prisons have told how they were often tortured by the Marxists. One prisoner told me of a time in Angola when they were near breaking point and one of them shouted out: *"Why don't you just kill us, and get it over with?"*

The response of the communist concentration camp guards was most enlightening: *"Oh no, we don't want to kill you! We don't want to send you to Heaven to be with God! No, we want you to curse Christ and to come to hell with us, for all eternity!"*

The Aim of Persecution

The aim of persecution is not to kill Christians. There is no victory to the kingdom of darkness for Christians to go to Heaven. The aim of persecution is to intimidate Christians into silence. To persuade believers to compromise. To terrify Christians, to giving in to cowardice. If the devil cannot stop us being converted, he at least wants to divert us and distract us so that we are not effective in fulfilling the Great Commission and winning other souls to Christ. As long as you refuse to be intimidated into silence, neutrality and compromise, persecution fails.

"Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'if anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? And what will a man give in exchange for his soul?'" Matthew 16:24-26

Sabrina Wurmbrand

The wife of Romanian Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, Sabrina Wurmbrand, testified that before she went to prison she was very poor. But once she went to prison she became very rich. This was because she was poor in the things of the world, but rich in the things of God. When she came to prison she had the only currency that was of any value, she had much of the Word of God memorised and stored up in her heart and mind. Therefore in prison she was able to make many people rich!

After years in the slave labour camps of Romania, Sabrina was finally released. Some time later a man came to her claiming to have been in prison with her husband, and having a message from him to share with their congregation. Knowing how the communist state sought to infiltrate congregations by infiltrating spies and blackmailing members into being informers, Sabrina was cautious. *"Please, before we go any further, would you lead us in prayer?"* She bowed her head.

Remember the Persecuted

There was an awkward silence and then the man, who claimed to have a message from her husband, stuttered and stammered. Sabrina Wurmbrand looked up and, gazing directly into the man's eyes, said: *"Now then, aren't you ashamed of yourself? Wouldn't you like me to explain to you how you can become a real Christian?"*

What can we do to help these persecuted believers?

To Prison with Praise

In 1987, while leading a Frontline mission team across the border, we were arrested. This was my first prison experience. We were stripped and beaten. Thrown into cells covered with human filth. Deprived of water and food, blindfolded and transported from Livingstone to Lusaka. There we were thrown into an overcrowded prison. The cells, which were 15 feet by 25 feet, were crammed with an average of 60 prisoners per cell. There were no beds, furnishings, plumbing or electricity in these cells. The whole prison seemed to be one big stinking disease factory. With our shoes taken away, walking barefoot, with cut and bleeding feet, amongst this filth, we could only imagine how many infections and diseases God protected us from.

Falsely Accused

In our prison cell there was Isaiah Moyo, a 26 year old black South African, who had been imprisoned on trumped up charges of being a South African spy! Actually, he had lent money to some ANC refugees in Lusaka, who had decided, rather than repay him, to accuse him of being a spy!

Tortured

Isaiah had been severely tortured. He had 26 pussy sores on his body where red hot poker had been pushed into his skin. His knees were calloused from the many hours he spent kneeling on the concrete floor praying to the Lord.

When, by God's grace, international prayer and pressure forced the Zambian government to open the prison doors and let us free, I determined to campaign for the release of Isaiah Moyo.

Publicising the Plight of the Prisoners

American Christians that I met in Cape Town encouraged me to come overseas and testify of the reality of communist persecution in Africa. I received an invitation to speak at the International Society for Human Rights Conference in Frankfurt, Germany and used that as the launching pad for my first overseas ministry trip. This involved radio and TV ministry in the USA, testifying to government officials of the atrocities I had witnessed and documented in communist Mozambique and Angola, and speaking on the BBC World Service.

Later I heard that prison wardens had rushed with their radios to Isaiah Moyo in Lusaka Central Prison shouting: *"Isaiah, that white South African missionary who was locked in here, he is speaking on the radio – and he is talking about you!"*

Isaiah heard the tale end of my interview as I gave people his prison address, and requested people to send care packages, with salt, soap, sugar, vitamins, pens, pencils, paper, etc.

Isaiah told us later that from that time on he was never mistreated again. Mail sacks of letters and parcels were dragged into the cell. He became the most popular person in

prison. He had so many trading items which everyone wanted. People couldn't do enough favours for him.

The BBC World Service radio programme had raised him to celebrity status in the prison. The prison guards treated him with great respect, and soon he was set free and allowed to travel back to South Africa to be reunited with his wife and two children.

Publicity Provides Protection for the Persecuted

This was my first experience of seeing what an influence Western Christians can have through prayer and pressure. Publicity provides protection for the persecuted. As our Lord Jesus taught in Luke 18:1-5, even an unjust judge will do what is right in response to persistent prayer and pressure.

As virtually every Marxist dictatorship in the world is a beneficiary of vast amounts of foreign aid from Western nations, this provides leverage. Most dictators prefer foreign aid to foreign prisoners. If given a choice, they will let the prisoners go free in order to continue to receive the Western dollars, pounds or euros.

Setting Captives Free

Whatever we bind will be bound, whatever we loose will be loosed. By the power of prayer, and through persistent pressure, we can see the powers of darkness limited, prison doors opened and captives set free.

Jesus said: ***“For I was hungry, and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or imprisoned and come to You? And the King will answer and say unto them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, in as much as you did it to one of the least of these brethren, you did it to Me.’”*** Matthew 25:35-40

“And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually.” 1 Corinthians 12:26-27

“Remember the prisoners as if chained with them – those who are mistreated – since you yourselves are in the Body also.” Hebrews 13:3



MISSIONS IN THE PSALMS

The Psalms are the middle Book of the Bible, the largest Book in the Bible. The Hymn Book and the Prayer Book of the Bible

The Psalms are alive with a burning devotion to God. To read through this collection of religious poetry is to be overwhelmed by the intense enthusiasm of the psalmists for God. The spirit of praise is invigorating, and I always find myself refreshed and inspired after reading through its pages.

Like a fast-flowing mountain stream, the waves of faith in, and love for, Almighty God wash over our thirsty souls as we soak in its words of worship. *"Every Psalm is a direct expression of the soul's consciousness of God."*

The Psalms were written by men who loved God with a depth seldom found in today's superficial society. They are vibrant with the faith of those who knew God in their own experience. Men like David, Moses and Ezra recorded their prayers to God, their meditations on God's Law, and their songs of worship to, and about, the Lord God in this devotional Prayer Book of the Bible. David was described as a man after God's own heart. Reading, singing and praying the Psalms shows us why.

"They set forth the attitude of the soul in the presence of God when contemplating past history, present experience and prophetic hope."

As we catch a fresh glimpse of the awesome glory and majesty of our almighty Sovereign God in the Psalms, we can only join in the worship:

"I will extol You, my God, O King; And I will bless Your Name forever and ever... Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable... My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord, And all flesh shall bless His holy Name Forever and ever." Psalm 145:1,3,21

The more we see of God in the Psalms, the more we want to praise Him, the more we need to worship Him, the more we have to proclaim His Glory to others. The God we read about in the Psalms is a God worth praising. He is worth serving. He is worth proclaiming. He is worthy of all sacrifice, honour and glory.

The more we praise the Lord, the more we find the burning desire to share His Glory with others. His Greatness demands my worship - and not my worship only, but the worship of every creature, everywhere, in all nations, throughout the world.

"The Lord is Great and most worthy of praise... Let every creature praise His holy Name."

The message of the Psalms is God and the very nature and perfections of God demands that He be exalted and praised, proclaimed and glorified, worldwide, to every person, in every nation, to each succeeding generation (Psalm:145:4,12).

That message of the Psalms is the message of Missions!

Missions in the Bible

It is through the Bible that God has entrusted us with the responsibility to Evangelise the world (Romans 10:14,15). It is in the Bible that God gives us a Gospel to proclaim, and guidelines on how to proclaim it (1 Corinthians 2:1-5). It is this Word of God that promises us God's power for the task of world Missions (Matthew 28:18-20).

A central text of the New Testament proclaims that: *"God so loved the **world**..."* (John 3:16). The Bible is full of associated texts, such as: *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the **world** through Him"* (John 3:17). *"God was reconciling the **world** to Himself in Christ"* (2 Corinthians 5:19); *"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the **world!**"* (John 1:29); *"He is the propitiation for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole **world**"* (1 John 2:2).

Clearly God sent His Son, our Saviour and Lord, to be the Saviour of the **world** (John 4:42). Jesus Christ Himself commanded all believers to go to **all people everywhere** and make them His disciples (Matthew 28:19); to go throughout the whole world and preach the Gospel to **every creature** (Mark 16:15); His messages are to be preached to **all nations** (Luke 24:47); We must be witnesses **to the ends of the earth** (Acts 1:8).

"So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'" John 20:21

No Christian, then, could doubt the New Testament clearly teaches and commands us to be involved in world Evangelisation. However, there does seem to be a tendency to believe that there is no Missionary message, or vision, in the Old Testament. Yet, throughout the Books of the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets we can find some of the most powerful statements of Missionary call ever made.

Missions in the Old Testament

In His very first dealings with mankind in The Creation Mandate, God revealed His worldwide plan:

"Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth." Genesis 1:28

Through Noah, when the human races were given a fresh start, the Lord repeated the same command to spread throughout the whole world.

Yet in Genesis 11 we find mankind, in rebellion, planning to build a city with a tower that reached the heavens, in order to: *"Make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."* Genesis 11:4

They were not concerned for God's Name, but for their own. They were not willing to scatter over the face of the earth, but wanted to get comfortable, centralised and strong enough to live without God.

Against the background of the *"table of nations"* in Genesis 10 we find God choosing a man (Abram) for His Missionary purposes:

"Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing... and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Genesis 12:1-3

Missions in the Psalms

Clearly God's intention was that this chosen Missionary was to produce a family and a nation that would become a channel of God's blessing to *"all the families of the earth."*

This Divine purpose was spelt out at Mount Sinai to all Israel: ***"Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine."*** Exodus 19:5-6

Israel was God's chosen nation - but she was chosen for service. The privileges Israel possessed gave her the responsibility to share the blessings of God with *"all peoples on earth."* *"Freely you have received, freely freely give!"* *"To whom much is given, much will be required."*

Although Israel selfishly failed to fulfil God's expressed purpose to reach *"all nations"* (Malachi 1:10-11), there are several fine examples of missionary leaders in the Old Testament. Abraham was sent to Canaan, Joseph to Egypt, Moses to Egypt, Jonah to Nineveh, Daniel to Babylon, Esther to Persia, and many more.

We find Ruth the Moabite, Rahab from Jericho, Naaman the Syrian general, and the Queen of Sheba, among many others, coming to Israel voluntarily as they were attracted by God's blessings to the nation of Israel. By attracting gentiles to Israel, and by forcing the Hebrews to go to the gentile nations (for example, to Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia during the captivities), God forced His people to share the Faith with many nations.

Several other examples of gentiles coming to faith in the Old Testament readily come to mind. Jethro, the Midianite, demonstrated his commitment to the Lord in Exodus 18. Balaam changed from being an enemy of Israel to the place where he even wrote two chapters of the Bible (Numbers 23 and 24). All Nineveh repented after one Hebrew prophet proclaimed God's judgement (Jonah 3).

Throughout the Old Testament God reminds His chosen people that: ***"Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, that You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"***

Isaiah 49:6

In the light of the above, it is clear that God's purpose, throughout the ages, has always been Missionary. Yet many Christians would probably be surprised to find the strongest Missionary outlook of the Old Testament in the Psalms!

The Treasury of David

Jesus referred to them as *"The Psalms"* in Luke 24:44, and Peter called it *"The Book of Psalms"* in Acts 1:20. The Hebrew title of the entire collection was *"The Book of Psalms"* or *"Praises."* The word Tehillim properly signifying *"Psalms of Praise."*

Although there are several examples of Psalms in other parts of the Bible (notably in Exodus 15, Judges 5, Isaiah 12, Lamentations, Jonah 2, Habakkuk 3, Luke 1 and Revelation 5), the inspired collection of 150 sacred poems that make up the Book of Psalms are unsurpassed as the devotional Prayer and Praise book designed to lead us into communion with God. The Psalms are definitely in a class of their own, as they lead our hearts into the very sanctuary of God's presence.

The Great Commission Manual

The shepherd King wrote seventy-three Psalms and so the book is often referred to as the "*Psalms of David*" and the "*Treasury of David*". Solomon is mentioned in two titles (Psalms 72 and 127), and Psalm 90 is attributed to Moses. Ezra wrote Psalm 119. The Levitical family, "*the sons of Korah*" who were temple gatekeepers, wrote twelve Psalms. Assaph, a Levite choirmaster, wrote another twelve psalms. Ethan and Heman the Ezrahites, both Levite choirmasters, wrote one each.

Corresponding with the five books of the Law (the Pentateuch), the Psalms are arranged in the following five sections or books:

- Book 1 – Psalm 1-41 (Genesis)
- Book 2 – Psalm 42-72 (Exodus)
- Book 3 – Psalm 73-89 (Leviticus)
- Book 4 – Psalm 90-106 (Numbers)
- Book 5 – Psalm 107-150 (Deuteronomy)

In every section there are many references to God's Missionary purpose.

"Tell the nations what He has done... His commands are for all the world."

God's Missionary Purpose Revealed in the Psalms

1. The Whole World Belongs to God

"The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness, the world, and those who dwell therein." Psalm 24:1

The first reason why we should Evangelise the world is the sovereignty of God. "*He reigns over the nations*" (47:8), and the fullness of the earth belongs by right to the Almighty Creator, who reigns over all. Mankind is in rebellion to God. As the Psalms so clearly proclaim, the Lord is worthy of all worship, honour, glory and praise. God's people must go throughout God's earth and lead God's creatures to give unto God the reverence and worship He so clearly deserves. Yet Psalm 2 states that the nations are in rebellion to God. The leaders of the world conspire against God.

2. The Nations are the Inheritance of the Messiah

"I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'you are My Son, today I have begotten You.' Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession." Psalm 2:7-8

The Kingdom of the Messiah is founded upon an eternal decree, a statute, of God the Father. Since God's rule is worldwide the inheritance of His Son is the whole earth. This verse was fulfilled in Luke 3:22 at Jesus' baptism, when God said "*You are My Son*" (see also Hebrews 1:5).

In this verse Christ is shown to have a two-fold title to His Kingdom - that of His inheritance as God's eternally begotten Son and by virtue of His office as Intercessor.

It was because of this that Jesus could say:

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." Matthew 28:18-19

3. The Messiah Died for all the Families of the Nations

"My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Psalm 22:1

In Psalm 22 we have a graphic portrayal of the sufferings of Christ during the crucifixion. As Christ quoted part (and possibly all) of the Psalm on the Cross, we should give attention to the prophecy at the end:

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You... It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, they will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has done this." Psalm 22:27,30-31

As a direct result of the sacrificial death of the Messiah, the Kingdom of God will be extended to the ends of the earth. Already we can see this prophecy being fulfilled. The Gospel has been proclaimed and is rooted in every part of the world and many generations have thrilled to hear the Good News of the Messiah's sacrificial death and resurrection for our sins. Yet the complete fulfilment of this prophecy that *"all the families of the nations"* will submit to Him, will only come about as the Church faithfully carries out the responsibility of world Missions. In the Book of Revelation the final victory is gloriously confirmed:

"You are worthy... for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your Blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation." Revelation 5:9

4. The Only Hope for the World is in the Lord

"O God of our salvation, You who are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of the far-off seas." Psalm 65:5

God is the only Saviour there is. He alone is God, the Creator, the all-powerful, wonderful Lord. This sinful world is doomed without the grace and mercy of the Lord. That is why we are commanded to:

"Declare His deeds among the people." Psalm 9:11

5. His Commands are for All the World

"Oh, give thanks to the Lord! ...Make known His deeds among the peoples!"

Psalm 105:1

The Lord and His commands were not for Israel alone but for all the world. God's people were to proclaim God's greatness to the nations. It is thrilling to see how many nations have already embraced Christianity as the true Faith. Today Christianity is the leading religion of many third world nations. No longer are God's commands for Israel alone, we all may share the joy of obeying the Lord.

6. The Lord is Worthy of All Praise, Worship and Honour

"Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, give to the Lord glory and strength."

Psalm 96:7

The Lord is Great (8:1), His Majesty is in all the earth (8:9). We must sing of His glorious acts (96:3) and praise His Holy Name (145:21). His dominion and Kingdom must be proclaimed (22:28). We must worship His awesome greatness (47:2), and praise Him for His saving power (98:2). Let us speak of His unfailing love (33:5), and announce His victory (98:2).

God is worthy of all praise, honour and worship and, just as we must love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, so too must the whole world. Our worship is insufficient and inadequate unless it is done by every part of our whole being. In the same way God is not adequately worshipped unless every creature, everywhere, throughout the entire world exalts and praises His glory with every breath (150:6).

7. The Prophecies Must Be Fulfilled

"Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; All nations shall serve Him... All nations shall call Him blessed." Psalm 72:11,17

The Scriptures do not speak of "some", or "many", or even "most". God says that **all** nations will one day serve Him.

Yet these prophecies that the Psalms record on the future triumphs of the Gospel have, to some extent, already come true, in many parts of the world, in different generations. They all foreshadow the final complete triumph of God's purposes at the end!

When we read the Scripture: *"Kings will bow down to Him"*, We should think of the conversion of Emperor Constantine the Great (in 312 A.D.); and of the Emperor Theodosius (380); Clovis, King of Franks (496); Boris, King of the Bulgars (870); the King of Poland (966); Jagiello, King of the Lithuanians (1386); the King of Benin (1491) and so many others.

The Scripture: ***"Envoys will come out of Egypt; Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God."*** Psalm 68:31 was initially fulfilled when the King of Nubia was converted in 543 A.D. In fact, three ancient kingdoms in the Northern Sudan (Dotawa, Alwa and Nubia) accepted Christianity as the only true religion. Egypt was for a thousand years a country where Christians formed the majority of the population.

The prophecies: *"Nations will be blessed by Him"* and *"Kingdoms of the World, sing praise to the Lord"* were fulfilled in Edessa (Urfa) when in the year 200 A.D., Christianity was made the official state religion. So many people came to Christ in Armenia that they also officially converted to Christianity (287). In this way other nations also submitted themselves to the Bible as God's revealed truth and Jesus Christ as our only Saviour, England and the Roman Empire (380), Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, and Bulgaria (870), Ukraine (987), Hungaria (997), Bohemia (1000), Poland (1000), Norway and Sweden (1000), Denmark (1000), Iceland (1016) and countless others.

Today, in two-thirds of the World's 223 countries, Christians officially form the majority (over 50%). In 100 of those countries nominal Christians number over 90%. This is

surely an incredible achievement when one considers that 2000 years ago the Faith of Abraham was accepted by only 2.3 million people. Today over 2.2 billion people claim to be Christians.

Yet, not even those amazing advances are enough, for God's will is that:

"All flesh shall bless His holy Name forever and ever." Psalm 145:21

8. The Commands Must Be Obeyed

"Sing to the Lord, bless His Name; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples." Psalm 96:2-3

Time and time again the Psalms record God's clear command to *"tell the nations what He has done"* (105:1). God's concern for a lost world is seen throughout the Holy Scriptures. It is, however, the sad fact that God's people have seldom taken these commands seriously and even today billions live in bondage and deception to false religions. *"How can they hear without a preacher?"* Yet the Psalms do look forward to a great mobilisation of missionaries:

"The Lord gave the Word; Great was the company of those who proclaimed it."
Psalm 68:11

9. The Blessings of Abraham Must Be Shared

"God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us."
Psalm 67:1

This Missionary Psalm (67) is derived from the prayer of Aaron found in Numbers 6:24-26. However, the Psalmist substitutes *"Elohim"* (= God, the Name used of God in His relationship to all men, nations and creation) in the place of *"Yahweh"* (= Lord, the personal Name of God used in terms of Israel and the covenant). It is significant that this Psalm has applied what God gave through Aaron and the priests to *"all peoples."*

"Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You." Psalm 67:3

The purpose for the Aaronic blessing is clearly seen in verse 2: **"That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations."** Psalm 67:2

The prayer was: May God bless us – so that we can be a blessing to *"the peoples"*, to *"all the peoples"* throughout *"the nations"* to *"the ends of the earth"*. In this way Psalm 67 (often called the *"Pater Noster"* or *Our Father* of the Old Testament) links the Aaronic benediction of Numbers 6 with God's Covenant with Abraham as recorded in Genesis 12:1-3.

In fact, the structure is a very close replica of Genesis 12:2-3. Bless us... Bless us... Bless us... so that all the ends of the earth might know the Lord.

God clearly intended Israel to be a channel of His blessings to the world. The tragic fact of history is that all too often the blessings were selfishly hoarded, and jealously guarded.

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Psalm 67 was regularly sung at the Feast of Pentecost. This would make it even more significant as that was the event when God poured out His Spirit in Jerusalem, gentiles from *"every nation under heaven"* heard and 3,000 were converted. Deliberately the Psalmist makes a reference to *"the land yielding its harvest"*. No doubt this regards the agricultural harvest as a down payment, promise and symbol of the spiritual harvest of *"first fruits"* that was still to come in AD 30. Yet this challenge to Israel and now, to the Church also, contains a promise that *"all the ends of the earth"* will come to God.

The Word of God declares that:

"And men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed." (Psalm 72:17) - that is all 12,000 ethnic linguistic people groups;

"And all the families of the nations shall worship before You." (Psalm 22:27)

There are over 12,000 distinct people groups/cultures
7,010 languages; and
17,000 dialects in the world.

The time will most certainly come when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

10. God's Will Must Be Done

"I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" Psalm 46:10

As we read these Psalms we can hear God's call in Isaiah 6:8: *"Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?"* The Book of Psalms ends most appropriately with the climactic call:

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." 150:6

OUTLINES

1. What is Missions?

Mission is:

an act of **Obedience** (Psalm 96:1-3)
an act of **Thanksgiving** (Psalm 57:9)
an act of **Love** (Psalm 33:5)
an act of **Worship** (Psalm 86:9)
a fulfilment of **Prophecy** (Psalm 22:27)
and obedience to **God's Will** (Psalm 46:10).

2. An Act of Worship

Worship involves:

Thanking God among the nations (Psalm 57:9)
Praising God among all peoples (Psalm 57:9)
Singing God's praises throughout the earth (Psalm 96:2-3)
Proclaiming His greatness to the nations (Psalm 105:1)

3. God's Strategy for Missions

This Strategy includes:

God's Chosen **Plan** (Genesis. 12:1-3)
God's Central **Priesthood** (Exodus 19:5-6)
God's Clear **Purpose** (Psalm 67)

Missions in the Psalms

"Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession." Psalm 2:8

"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your Name in all the earth, who have set Your glory above the heavens!" Psalm 8:1

"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your Name in all the earth!" Psalm 8:9

"Sing praises to the Lord, who dwells in Zion! Declare His deeds among the people." Psalm 9:11

"Therefore I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the Gentiles, and sing praises to Your Name." Psalm 18:49

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations." Psalm 22:27-28

"The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein." Psalm 24:1

"The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord... Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him." Psalm 33:5,8

"Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalm 46:10

"Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! For the Lord Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth."

Psalm 47:1-2

"For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with understanding. God reigns over the nations; God sits on His Holy throne." Psalm 47:7-8

"The joy of the whole earth... the city of the great King." Psalm 48:2

"You are praised by people everywhere, and Your fame extends over all the earth." Psalm 48:10

"Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; let Your glory be above all the earth... I will praise You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations."

Psalm 57:5,9

"O God of our salvation, You who are the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of the far-off seas." Psalm 65:5

"They also who dwell in the farthest parts are afraid of Your signs; You make the outgoings of the morning and evening rejoice." Psalm 65:8

"All the earth shall worship You and sing praises to You; They shall sing praises to Your Name." Psalm 66:4

**"Oh, bless our God, you peoples! And make the voice of His praise to be heard."
Psalm 66:8**

"God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, that Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, and govern the nations on earth. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Then the earth shall yield her increase; God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him." Psalm 67:1-7

**"The Lord gave the Word; great was the company of those who proclaimed it."
Psalm 68:11**

**"Envoys will come out of Egypt; Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God. Sing to God, you Kingdoms of the earth; Oh, sing praises to the Lord."
Psalm 68:31-32**

"All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him... and men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed. And blessed be His glorious Name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory." Psalm 72: 11,17,19

"Arise, O God, judge the earth; for You shall inherit all nations." Psalm 82:8

"That they may know that You, whose Name alone is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth." Psalm 83:18

"All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, and shall glorify Your Name." Psalm 86:9

**"Oh, sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His Name; proclaim the Good News of His Salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples."
Psalm 96:1-3**

"Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, give to the Lord glory and strength. Say among the nations, 'The Lord reigns.'" Psalm 96:7,10

"The Lord has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth." Psalm 98:2,4

"Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! ...Come before His presence with singing." Psalm 100:1-2

**"To declare the Name of the Lord in Zion, and His praise in Jerusalem, when the peoples are gathered together, and the Kingdoms, to serve the Lord."
Psalm 102:21-22**

Missions in the Psalms

"Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His Name; make known His deeds among the peoples! ... His judgments are in all the earth." Psalm 105:1,7

"From the rising of the sun to its going down the Lord's Name is to be praised. The Lord is high above all nations." Psalm 113:3-4

"And I will declare Your greatness. They shall utter the memory of Your great goodness, and shall sing of Your righteousness. ... To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious Majesty of His Kingdom." Psalm 145:6-7,12

"All flesh shall bless His Holy Name forever and ever." Psalm 145:21

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6

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CULTURE AND CHRISTIANITY IN ACTS

Introduction

The Book of Acts is the inspired account of the origin and initial expansion of the Christian Church throughout the various cultures of the Roman Empire. In Acts we see Christianity, full of energy and power, in action conquering the pagan cultures of Asia Minor and Southern Europe.

In recording these beginnings of the cross-cultural missions of the Church, Acts clearly proves that Christianity is both for the Jews and for the Gentiles. It also shows how culture can be both an **obstacle** to or an **opening** for the communication of the Gospel.

Acts

As the sacred history book of the early church, Acts is one of the finest missionary manuals available. Acts is actually the second part of a two-volume history. The first part, the Gospel of Luke, tells of all Jesus **began** to do and to teach (1:1) and so the second part, Acts, tells of some of what Jesus **continued** to do through the power of the Holy Spirit.

It has been thoroughly accepted that Luke, the beloved physician (Col. 4:14; Phm. 24; 2 Tim. 4:11), is the author of Acts, and from as early as A.D. 180, church leaders, such as Irenaeus, have recognised this. Luke stands out as the only non-Jewish author in the New Testament. Probably written before the death of Paul and before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (as it makes no reference to either), this powerful account of the mission to the Gentiles could have played a part in mobilising the apostles in Jerusalem to go *“to the ends of the earth.”*

Although others wrote Gospels, only Luke wrote a history of the early Church, and written, as it is, in the style of the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint, we can assume that he was aware that he was recording sacred history. Based on eyewitness accounts (Luke 1:2, 3), Luke presents the historical basis for the Christian Faith and shows how the Gospel was meant for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews.

Luke clearly shows how the events recorded in Acts were brought about by the will and purpose of God, in fulfillment of the Scriptures and prophecies of the Old Testament, as directed by God Himself, who confirmed by signs and wonders that this mission was His work.

As Howard Marshall has summarised it:

“Luke stresses the Jewish origins of the church and its roots in Old Testament prophecy, but shows that it is a people of God, composed of believing Jews and Gentiles, in which Jews may find the fulfillment of Judaism and Gentiles are not required to become Jews.”

It is this cultural tension between the Jewish origins and the Gentile mission of the Church that Luke gives special attention to. It is possible that one of his purposes in writing Acts was to clear up misunderstandings and encourage support for the mission to the Gentiles, while still stressing that Christianity is the true and proper fulfillment of Judaism.

Acts 1:8 can be seen to summarise the contents of Acts:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

The main story line of Acts is its record of the spread of the Gospel from Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria to the Gentiles of Syria, Asia Minor and Greece. The account starts in **Jerusalem**, centre for Judaism and the **spiritual** capital of the world, and it ends in **Rome**, centre of the Gentile world and secular capital of the world.

Christianity

The Christian message is universal. It is for all men of all generations of every culture on earth. Christ Himself commanded the church to cross all boundaries, cultural and geographical, in order to take the message ***“to the ends of the earth.”*** (1:8). It is His will that His people ***“bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”*** (13:47).

The message is simple: ***“It is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved”*** (15:11), ***“Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved”*** (4:12), ***“Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*** (2:38)

However, the missionary has to be always careful to convey the message in the cultural context of the people to whom he is sent. We must not force our own culture on others. God’s message is not for our culture only, it is for every culture everywhere.

Christianity is for the Jews

Acts clearly shows that the Church, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, is a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. The apostles were all Jews and in their preaching they quoted the Law of Moses, the writings of the Prophets, and the Psalms, often.

Peter, when preaching to Jews, spoke of:

“The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers...” (3:13).

He quoted the prophets (3:19), Moses (3:22), David (2:25, 2:34), Joel (2:16); and the Psalms. He preached in the Temple and proclaimed ***“the Messiah.”***

When Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrin, he clearly showed that Christianity is completely in keeping with the Jewish religion handed down from Abraham, Moses and the Prophets (7:2-53). There is no questioning the fact that the Faith proclaimed by the apostles was a Jewish faith. Hence the disciples could address the crowds as ***“fellow Israelites”*** (13:16), and ***“descendants of Abraham”*** (13:26), proclaiming Jesus as their long-awaited Messiah (2: 36).

Christianity is for The Gentiles

When Jesus had told the disciples that they were to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth, He promised them the supernatural power they would need to accomplish their mission. Acts 2 records the fulfillment of that prophecy when God poured out the Holy Spirit upon them.

The Great Commission Manual

Now, in God's Sovereign Will, the circumstances surrounding that event seemed to underline the purpose of God's blessing. The day the church was born was Pentecost; the Harvest Festival held seven weeks after the "first fruits" (which was Christ's resurrection from the dead), when the wheat was harvested. On that day the great missionary *Psalm 67* was probably sung:

*"May God be gracious to us and bless us.
May your ways be known on **earth**,
Your salvation among **all nations**.
May the **peoples** praise You, O God;
May **all the peoples** praise You;
May the **nations** be glad and sing for joy...
Then the land will yield its harvest...
And **all the ends of the earth** will fear Him."*

And this is exactly what God did on the day of Pentecost. He blessed the waiting disciples. He made them a blessing to the peoples gathered in Jerusalem from the various nations (2:5). The land yielded its harvest, and 3,000 were converted to the Faith (2:4). From that harvest were people from Mesopotamia, Persia, Asia Minor, North Africa and Arabia.

Not only did the Holy Spirit empower the disciples, but they were enabled to miraculously speak in the many Gentile languages represented by that crowd of diaspora Jews and Gentile converts gathered in Jerusalem. Why? Surely, to give them the miraculous ability to speak Gentile languages was unnecessary?

Seen in the context of the Lord's Great Commission (Matt. 28:19), to take the Gospel "**to the ends of the earth**" (1:8), the giving of that miraculous ability to speak Gentile languages must have had a missionary purpose. It was to make it crystal clear that the power of the Holy Spirit is given for the specific purpose of world evangelisation. Whenever Jesus promised the power of the Holy Spirit, and whenever that power was given, it was always in connection with proclaiming the Gospel; making disciples, preaching the Good News, or witnessing for Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-20); (Lk. 24:47-49; John 20:21, 22; Acts 1:8; 4:31). It is sad to see that some Christians seek power and signs and miracles, yet have no thought of committing themselves to world evangelisation. Even among those much-blessed Jewish converts, most didn't seem to want a mission to reach the Gentiles.

There was much opposition to the spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles (11:2, 3; 13:45; 15:1) and God had to initiate every stage of its early development. An angel of the Lord led Phillip to the Ethiopian Treasurer (8:26). The Lord Himself appeared to Saul to commission him as the leader of the mission to the Gentiles (9:6; 26:17, 18). An angel instructed the Roman centurion, Cornelius, to call for Peter (10:3-5). The Lord gave Peter a vision (three times) to prepare him for a mission to the Gentiles (10:15-20). The Holy Spirit guided the church at Antioch to send Barnabas and Saul on a mission to the Gentiles (13:2,3). God gave Paul a vision to lead him to take the Gospel to Europe (16:9, 10). The Lord instructed Paul to testify in Rome (23:11). Unquestionably, God wanted the Gentiles to be evangelised!

God not only guided the mission to the Gentiles. He also poured His blessings upon every aspect of it. The Holy Spirit was poured out upon Samaritans (8:15-17). The Gentiles in Cornelius' house received the Holy Spirit in the same miraculous way. The

Culture and Christianity in Acts

Lord was with the Gentiles in Antioch; a great number were converted, and showed much evidence of the Grace of God (11:20-24). God put His seal of support on the first Gentile mission of Paul and Barnabas by performing many signs and wonders during the outreaches (15:12).

As the apostle Paul taught in Athens: God is the Creator of the whole world and everything in it (17:24); God created all the races of mankind (17:26); God now commands all men everywhere to repent (17:30); and God will judge the whole world (17:31).

Clearly, Christianity is also for the Gentiles, because they too must be saved (4:12).

Culture

The message of Christianity has to be communicated, and the missionary cannot communicate without concerning himself with culture because **communication** is inseparable from culture. In the same way as the eternal Word of God became flesh and lived among mankind, so, too, must the Gospel Truth have a cultural “*incarnation*” in order to be understood in every society.

Although Christianity is supracultural in its origin and truth, it is cultural in its application.

The *Willowbank Report of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism* defines culture in this way:

“Culture is an integrated system of BELIEFS (about God or reality or ultimate meaning), of VALUES (about what is true, good, beautiful and normative), of CUSTOMS (how to behave, relate to others, talk, pray, dress, work, play, trade, farm, eat, etc.), and of INSTITUTIONS which express these beliefs, values and customs (government, law courts, temples or churches, family, schools, hospitals, factories, shops, unions, clubs, etc.), which binds a society together and gives it a sense of identity, dignity, security and continuity.”

Culture in itself is not good or evil. In fact, God created mankind as cultural beings, so missionaries do not have to seek to change the cultural system of the people they are seeking to evangelise. The Gospel must be made understandable to each culture and the power of the Gospel will naturally redeem the culture as people come to be converted. We should never seek to destroy or reject a culture, but we can trust the Gospel to gradually transform every culture where the people turn to Christ.

The *Lausanne Covenant*, paragraph 10, summarises the situation well:

“Because man is God’s creature, some of his culture is rich in beauty and goodness. Because he is fallen, all of it is tainted with sin and some of it is demonic.”

There is no perfect culture and our own culture is not necessarily better than any other. God is above culture, but He communicates to us in our own environment and “*language*.”

“God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear Him and do what is right.” (10:34, 35)

Culture is an Obstacle to Communication

In order to communicate the Gospel to *“the ends of the earth”* the Christian has to overcome many obstacles. There are geographical obstacles and distances to travel. There are languages to learn, customs to understand and cultures to penetrate. Radical differences, political divisions and tribal customs to understand and cultures to penetrate. Radical differences, political divisions and tribal loyalties have to be understood. Cultural misunderstandings have to be cleared p, and confusing aspects of the message have to be explained.

In many ways, the greatest obstacle to the spread of the Gospel is the cultural barrier. Acts records the problems caused when people saw the Gospel as a threat to their culture:

“They brought them before the magistrates and said, ‘these men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.’ The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten.” (6:20-22)

Those people at Philippi saw Paul and Silas as of a different race, with another religion, advocating foreign customs and this they fought against. In fact, the charge against Stephen was that he was trying to change the customs of the Jewish people (6:14), and a riot was caused in Ephesus when the people felt that their idol worship was being threatened by the preaching of Paul (19:26-29).

The Apostle Paul described some of the cultural obstacles that he encountered in this way:

“Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.”

1 Corinthians 1:22, 23

Yet, the book of Acts records that the biggest cultural obstacle to the spread of the Gospel did not come from the Gentile nations outside of the Church, but from some Jewish believers **within** the Church!

The Apostle Paul was criticized for being a guest in the home of “uncircumcised gentiles” and for eating with them when on a mission to Ceasarea (11:2, 3). Some men from Judea caused division by telling the Gentile church at Antioch: ***“Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved”*** (15:1). Some of the believers who belonged to the Pharisees demanded: ***“The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the Law of Moses.”*** (15:5). These challenges led to the Conference at Jerusalem (15).

On the one hand these Judaizers (the *“circumcision party”*) had a strong case. By choosing circumcision as a test of willingness to observe the Law of God they had the clear backing of Genesis 17:9-14, where God Himself commanded Abraham, and every descendant of Abraham, including foreigners who become members of his household, to practice circumcision. These believers could well have been honest and sincere in their stand to circumcision as it was based on a clear record of God’s own words in authoritative Scripture.

Culture and Christianity in Acts

Paul, who outlines his response to this view in Galatians, saw that the essential basis of God's dealings with men was God's promise, Abraham's faith, and God's acceptance of his faith without regard to ceremonial ritual.

Peter responded to the Judaizers by reminding them of the time when God had guided him to preach to the Gentiles in Cornelius' house: ***“God, who knows the hearts, showed that He accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as He did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for He purified their hearts by Faith.”*** (15:8-9).

If **God** had accepted the Gentiles on the basis of their faith without requiring them to keep the law, then who were they to do otherwise?

“Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of the disciples a yoke that neither we nor our fathers have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.” (15:10, 11)

For their part, **Barnabas** and Paul answered the Judaizers by reporting on their work of planting churches amongst the Gentiles. The miraculous results showed that God approved of their direct evangelism of the Gentiles and of their acceptance without requiring them to keep the ceremonial law (15:12).

James concluded by showing that the coming of Gentiles into God's people was prophesied by Scripture and he quoted from Amos 9:11-12 to show that all the rest of mankind will come to God, all the Gentiles whom He has called to be His own.

This conference was of supreme importance as it completely rejected the notion that circumcision was necessary for salvation. It accepted that salvation was by grace alone and had nothing to do with observing the law. The *Jerusalem Conference* opened the way for the free access of Gentiles into the Church. A Gentile did not have to become a Jew in order to be a Christian.

However, although removing a major obstacle to cross-cultural evangelism, the Conference also set a principle for the unity of the Church by requesting the Gentile believers to show grace by abstaining from some practices that were very offensive to devout Jews. The request was not laying down Spiritual requirements for salvation, but cultural guidelines for fellowship between Jews and Gentiles.

If the Conference had accepted the Judaizers' case, then Christianity would have remained a small Jewish sect and lost its appeal in cross-cultural missions. As it is, Acts records how Christianity moved from being a Jewish religion with some Gentile converts to the place where it is unquestionably a Gentile religion with Jewish converts.

Culture as an Opening for Communication

Culture doesn't have to be the missionary's enemy; it can often be used as an ally. The Roman peace throughout the Empire gave the believers an unprecedented opportunity for cross-cultural evangelism throughout the Mediterranean world. Under the Roman culture, Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy and others could evangelise without the problem of tribal warfares or political borders. Acts also records several instances of Paul being protected by Roman government officials (18:12-16; 21:31-32; 23:29-30).

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The Roman civilisation had also provided the excellent **roads** that speeded up the spread of the Gospel message, and the postal service that was later used for the distribution of the apostolic Epistles to the churches.

So great was the influence of the Greek culture upon the Roman Empire that Believers were able to use the **Greek language** to spread the Gospel message, and the Scriptures, throughout the civilized world. Not only was Greek one of the most widespread languages in the world, but it was one of the best mediums for communicating theological thought.

Much use was made of the **Jewish synagogues** that *diaspora* Jews had established throughout the Mediterranean world. Paul used them as a base for many of his missions (e.g.: Pisidia, Iconium, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Ephesus and others); and the influence of the Jewish culture and religion prepared many people for the message of God's salvation through Christ.

Even the choice of **Paul** for the cross-cultural mission to the Gentiles was ideal. Few men could have been better suited to bridge the gap between the Judaic traditions and the Gentile world. Paul was a Jew, of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3:5). He was a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee (23:6), thoroughly trained in the Law by the famous Gamaliel (22:3), and zealous for the Jewish religion (Gal. 1:14). Yet he was brought up in the prominent Hellenistic University city of Tarsus (22:3) and would have been exposed to its cosmopolitan life and Greek philosophy and literature. Paul's Roman citizenship (22:28) was a tremendous help in his mission to evangelise the Gentiles. How Paul's Jewish father received Roman citizenship is not certain but perhaps he had been taken captive in a war with the Romans and then freed: freedom in that way carried with it citizenship.

Paul definitely became "*all things, to all men*" in order to win them to Christ. He was a Jew to the Jews, a Greek to the Greeks, a Roman to the Romans, and a Gentile to the Gentiles. Paul turned the **obstacle** of culture into an **opening** for communication. One example demonstrates this very clearly.

Three ancient writers, Diogenes Laertius, Philostratus and Pausanias record a plague that struck the city of **Athens**, decimating the population, around 600 B.C. Even though the people of Athens offered sacrifices to their thousands of gods, begging them to intervene and stop the plague, the people continued to die in their thousands. In desperation, the elders of the city sent for a Greek hero called Epimenedes, asking him to help them.

Assessing the situation, Epimenedes concluded that there must be some other god who did not consider himself represented by the thousands of idols in the city. He also reasoned that any god who is great enough and good enough to do something about the plague would probably forgive their ignorance if they openly acknowledged their ignorance of him.

He called the people to bring a flock of sheep to a sacred plot of ground in Athens, called Mars Hill, and there sacrificed the sheep to "*the unknown God.*" All three writers confirm that the plague lifted immediately.

"Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and observed your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this

inscription: 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.' *Now that you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.*" (17:22-23)

In effect, Paul was saying *'Foreign gods? No! The God I proclaim is the one who did what none of your thousands of futile idol could do – He saved Athens from that plague.'*

Conclusion

Acts boldly proclaims that Christianity is for all cultures, both Jews and Gentiles. It shows how culture can be an obstacle, and how it can also provide an opening to the communication of the Gospel across all the various cultural barriers of Samaria, Syria, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Pamphylia, Crete, Macedonia, in fact **"to the ends of the earth."**

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MAGNIFICENT MOTHERS WITH A MISSION

Women have an honoured place in the Bible - Rebekah, Miriam, Deborah, Queen Esther, Dorcus, Lydia.

Women were:

Last at the cross

First at the tomb

First to proclaim the Resurrection

First converts in Europe

1. **Jochebed**, the mother of Moses, refused to comply with Pharaoh's edict. She defied the baby killing culture of Egypt and devised a bold plan to save her baby's life, right under the household of Pharaoh himself. The Exodus of Israel from bondage in Egypt and the Law of Moses - the Ten Commandments, continue to be the foundation of Western Civilisation.
2. **Ruth** forsook the pagan culture of Moab and travelled to Israel to find a Kinsman Redeemer. She became the great grandmother of King David, whose descendants continue to rule. *"Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God."*
3. **Hannah**, though jeered at for being childless, and misjudged by Eli as being drunk when praying, determined to seek a child from the Lord, in order to consecrate him back to the Lord, and she gave birth to the prophet Samuel who at an early age learned to say: *"Speak, Lord, Your servant listens."* Samuel grew to be one of the greatest of Israel's prophets and the one who anointed David as the next king of Israel. Hannah kept her word and gave Samuel back to the Lord for His service, and the Lord blessed her with more children.
4. **Elizabeth**, childless, sought the Lord and had the privilege of giving birth to John the Baptist, whom Jesus described as *"the greatest man born to women."* It was John who prepared the way for the Lord, fulfilling the prophesy of Isaiah: *"The voice of the one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight'"* (Matt. 3:3). *"He must increase. I must decrease". "I baptize you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire!"*
5. **Mary**, the most blessed of all mothers who humbly submitted to God's will: *"Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to Your Word"* Luke 1:38. What an honour Mary had of being the earthly mother of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Mary instructed: *"Whatever He tells you to do, do it!"*
6. **Eunice** who brought up Timothy in the *"sincere faith"* (Acts 16:1 and 2 Timothy 1:5), raised a dedicated Christian who became the Apostle Paul's right hand man and indispensable co-labourer in the mission of winning Europe to Christ.
7. **Susanna Wesley** who gave birth to 19 children, including John and Charles Wesley. They credited her prayerful instruction and godly example as shaping the whole direction of their lives dedicated to holiness and Revival. The Great Evangelical Awakening that they were part of transformed England and ensured that the Revolution that wrecked France did not destroy Britain.

Magnificent Mothers With a Mission

8. **George Whitefield's mother**, an inn keeper, said to her son: *"I expect more from you than from all the others"*. George Whitefield grew up to become one of the most effective evangelists in history. Revival blessings accompanied his open air proclamation of the Gospel throughout the British Isles and North America.
9. **Ann Judson**, the mother of modern missions, gave her life winning the people of Burma to Christ.
10. **Robert Moffat's devout mother** beseeched him, as he headed off to the world to become a sailor, to promise her that he would begin each day with God and that he would end each day with God. She then kissed his forehead. Robert Moffat testified that *"It was that promise, and that kiss, that made me a missionary."* Robert Moffat went on to be the first to translate the whole Bible into an African language. Robert also had the privilege of inspiring David Livingstone to come as a missionary to Africa with his stirring speech of *"the smoke of a thousand villages where the Gospel of Christ has not yet been heard."* Moffat and Livingstone opened up Africa for the Gospel of Christ. What an impact Mrs. Moffat had on the history of Africa through her faithful discipleship of her son. Robert Moffat later testified that it was his mother who had filled his mind and heart with the exciting exploits of missionaries and Gospel pioneers across the seas.
11. **Amelia Taylor** prayed above the chemist shop her husband ran: *"Dear God, if you should give us a son, grant that he may work for You as a missionary to China."* Their home schooled son, Hudson Taylor, who was reading by age 4, grew up to do just that, launching the China Inland Mission, which mobilised over a thousand missionaries to China in his lifetime. CIM became the largest mission organisation of the Greatest Century of Missions, the first truly interdenominational Faith Mission.
12. **Mary Slessor's mother**, dedicated her two sons to missions to Nigeria, but they both died before they were old enough. So Mary Slessor went as a missionary to Calabar, in Nigeria, in their place. She was called *"Eko Kpukpro Owa"* (Mother of all the people) for her tireless work in adopting abandoned children, fighting the slave trade and ending the killing of twins. Mary Slessor of Calabar transformed Nigeria through the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Courageous and fearless, she confronted witchdoctors and saved countless lives.

There can be no greater privilege than raising the next generation. There can be no more strategic priority than giving life and raising precious Covenant children to love, honour, obey, worship and serve our Great God and Saviour.

Do you have a vision of what God can do in, with and through you and your children? Do not settle for less than God's best. Make the fulfilment of the Great Commission your supreme ambition. Make disciples, teach obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded. Pray that the Lord of the Harvest would use your children to advance His Kingdom. The safest place in the world is in the centre of God's Will. Intercede for your children, even before they are born, like Amelia Taylor did. Bring up your children in the sincere Faith, like Eunice raised Timothy. Consecrate your children to the Lord's service. Like Hannah gave Samuel back to the Lord who had so graciously provided him.

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"Only take heed to yourself, and diligently keep yourself, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. And teach them to your children and your grandchildren." Deuteronomy 4:9

This is God's instruction to you as a parent:

"To train up a child in the way he should go" Proverbs 22:6. To diligently teach our children in our house, and as we travel, from the first thing in the morning to the last thing at night (Deut. 6:7). To care for, provide for, nurture and love children in the Lord is a most rewarding and vital calling. Mothers have a great privilege and great responsibilities. Families are the basic building bricks of society. As goes the home, so goes the church and the nation.

Hence the *"women and children first"* principle of the Birkenhead and Titanic, by chivalrous males who respected mothers.

From their earliest years children need to be taught to fear God, to love His Law, to read His Word, to honour and worship our Lord Jesus Christ and to desire the triumph of His Kingdom on earth.

Parenthood is so fundamentally important that God's Word comes to all of us to honour our mothers:

"Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you." Exodus 20:12

"Everyone of you shall revere his mother... I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:3

"Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt."

Deuteronomy 27:16

Egalitarianism is a curse. Failure to respect our parents is a terrible sin. (Many often have greater respect for secular Humanist Hollywood stars and actors than for their own parents).

"The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out and the young eagles will eat it." Proverbs 30:17

"'Honour your father and mother' which is the first commandment with a promise."

Ephesians 6:2

"Rise in the presence of the aged, show respect for the elderly..." Leviticus 19:32

We need a revival of respect for the elderly and we need to value and prize mothers, and grandmothers for the precious jewels that they are. We need to rise up and become a blessing to our mothers who sacrificed and served us so diligently. What does God want you to do to show honour, respect and appreciation for your mother and grandmothers? Let us be careful to be doers of the Word and not hearers only (James 1:22).

PRIDE AND FOOLISHNESS

"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." James 4:6

One of the greatest hindrances to Revival is pride amongst the Lord's people.

Pure and Perfect?

I have heard a mission leader declare: "I only want what God wants!" The Scripture declares that our righteousness is as filthy rags, that we should, after we have done all, admit that we are but unprofitable servants. Yet this individual would have us believe that his motives and intentions are completely pure and sanctified, that he "only wants what God wants!"

The Word of God categorically states: **"As it is written: there is none righteous, no not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; they have together become unprofitable; there is none that does good, no not one."** Romans 3:10-12

Are You a Good Person?

Yet, when one asks people in the streets: "Are you a good person?" Most people respond very confidently; "Yes! I am a very good person!"

When various scandalous affairs of a famous politician had been exposed, he met with a group of pastors and declared to them: "My heart is good!"

Yet, the Lord Jesus Christ taught; **"...no one is good, but One, that is, God"** Mark 10:18 and **"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."** Matthew 15:19

Too Proud to Preach to Youth

Shortly after my conversion I was shocked to find a theological graduate who was too proud to speak to a youth group, or join in evangelistic outreaches. I was quite excited when I heard that this graduate was returning from theological college. He had been studying the Word of God for five years. I immediately invited him to speak to our youth group, but he looked at me with disdain and declared that he hadn't studied at theological college for five years just to speak to a youth group!

I invited him to speak to my Bible class, or to join us for an evangelistic outreach we were planning. He made it very clear that such activities were quite beneath him. He sat for over a year waiting for "a call" but was unwilling to engage in evangelism during that time.

"But if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself." Galatians 6:3

Too Few

It was a similar shock during my military service when the chaplain arrived for a mid-week chaplain's service only to turn around and, disgusted, declared: "I'm not going to waste my time with just a handful of people!" There were 80 of our company gathered in the hall for the mid-week chaplain service, but this dominee did not seem to think that

we were worth his time. Most of the unit were still out on field practicals seeking to find their way back to base with compass and map work. Our 80 odd men were the only ones who had arrived back in time for the chaplains period.

As it so happened, the men weren't keen to give up this break in our hectic training schedule and go back to drilling, so they started to shout for me (their resident religious fanatic) to come and present a sermon. I was a rifleman in training, just as they were, with the same shaven head and brown uniform. However, I rose to the challenge and gladly seized the opportunity that the chaplain had just scorned.

Willing and Available?

Often, after speaking on missions at various churches, I would have some individual approach me and declare: "When I was young I made myself available to God. I said I would go anywhere He sent me, do anything He told me, but nothing! God never guided me. I was available, I was keen to go, but God never gave me the green light."

I would always find these testimonies unbelievable. By their account, their motives were pure, their hearts were fully surrendered, they were eager and willing, but the only problem was that God neglected to guide them! This kind of self-justification borders very dangerously on taking the Lord's Name in vain. It insinuates that if there was any fault it was on God's side. It is simply incredible that anyone could suggest that their heart, mind and soul was perfect, surrendered, willing and available, but somehow, God dropped the ball.

"Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in Him but the just shall live by his Faith." Habakkuk 2:4

Spiritual Inactivity?

Another phrase that I frequently heard which indicates dangerous spiritual pride is: "I won't do anything unless God guides me!"

Humble and Teachable

The Scriptures teach: ***"The humble He guides in justice, the humble He teaches His way. All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth, to such as keep His Covenant and His testimonies."*** Psalm 25:9-10

There is no doubt that God gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him. The Will of God will never lead us where the Grace of God cannot keep us. The question is: Am I humble and teachable?

Guided by God's Word

"Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Psalm 119:105

God guides us first and foremost through His Word. The best way to know the Will of God is to study the Word of God. We need to know the Word of God and the God of the Word. ***"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."***

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Renewing our Mind

It is our priority to ensure that we are not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds, then we will be able to prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Romans 12:2).

First Things First

When we get our priorities straight: "**Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you**" Matthew 6:33, everything tends to follow from that.

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholds him with His right hand." Psalm 27:23-24

Trust and Obey

The Will of God is no mystery for us to discover. He has made His Will abundantly clear in the Bible. "**If anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching...**" John 14:23 It is God's Will that we do restitution, return things that we have borrowed, restore property to its rightful owner. Repair or replace items that we have damaged, make right with individuals whom we have wronged.

Super Spiritual Excuses for Inactivity

However, the super-spiritual want specific guidance for every aspect of life. When you invite them on an evangelistic outreach they respond: "I will pray about it." When you invite them to a prayer vigil, they also want to pray about it. Generally such people don't "feel led" to actually do what the Bible clearly commands us to do, which is to pray to God and proclaim the Gospel to the unsaved.

"Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight!"

Isaiah 5:21

Inconsistent

Not that anyone can be consistent with this position of refusing to do anything unless receiving direct guidance from God. Do we receive guidance to shop, cook and eat food? Do we need guidance before we brush our teeth and wash our bodies in the morning? Do we need guidance as to whether we will go into work and fulfill our obligations each day? No, hardly. It is not necessary to receive specific guidance to daily duties, Biblical commands and personal responsibilities. We are expected to use common sense and be diligent and dependable in our duties.

"He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife. But he who trusts in the Lord will be prospered." Proverbs 28:25

"I Only Read the Bible"

Spiritual pride is also seen in those who declare: "I only read the Bible!"

Of course, we must be Bible based Christians. We need to be soaked and saturated in the Word. We need to be like the Bereans who were more noble than the rest **"... in that they received the Word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."** Acts 17:11

Nothing to Learn From Others?

However, to refuse to read good Christian books, discipleship materials and Bible study aids, is to stifle our Spiritual growth. **"Have you heard the counsel of God? Do not limit wisdom to yourself."** Job 15:8

It is extreme pride to assume that we can understand more of the Bible than the Church fathers, Reformers and faithful students of the Word who have gone before us. There are others who have more diligently studied the languages of Hebrew and Greek, the cultures, histories and geography of Bible lands. It is extremely unlikely that any of us will understand the Word of God better on our own than we will as part of the worldwide Church of all ages. For the expenditure of a few hours we can benefit from lifetimes of study from some of the greatest Bible teachers in Church history. Why would one want to deprive oneself of the Biblical insights of faithful servants of God such as Augustine, Martin Luther, William Tyndale, Heinrich Bullinger, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Spurgeon and so many others?

"A haughty look, a proud heart and the ploughing of the wicked are sin."

Proverbs 21:4

The Lord Jesus warns us of: **"thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness..."** Mark 7:22. Here pride is in the middle of a list of heinous offences.

The Pride of Pharaoh

There are many examples in Scripture of God resisting the proud. The pharaoh of Egypt was proud; **"Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice... I do not know the Lord, nor will I let Israel go."** Exodus 5:2

The arrogance of Pharaoh spelt disaster for the Egyptian empire. The pride of Pharaoh led to complete economic, social and military catastrophe. After God had judged Egypt with the ten plagues, the superpower of the world was crippled and never fully recovered.

"Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." Proverbs 16:5

Nebuchadnezzar's Boasting

When King Nebuchadnezzar boasted **"Is not this great Babylon that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honour of my majesty."** Daniel 4:30 God rebuked his pride and he was driven out from men and lived amongst the animals in the field until he acknowledged and honoured the greatness of Almighty God.

"A man's pride shall bring him low." Proverbs 29:33

Belshazzar's Blasphemy

King Belshazzar offended God by his blasphemous abuse of the consecrated items from the Temple in Jerusalem for a drunken feast. The hand of God wrote words of Judgement on the wall and Daniel explained to him: **" You have lifted yourself up against the Lord of Heaven ... the God who holds your breath in His hands and owns all your ways, you have not glorified."** Daniel 5:23

"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." Number, number, weight, division. God has numbered your Kingdom and has finished it. You have been weighed in the balances and found

Pride and Foolishness

wanting. Your Kingdom has been divided and been given to the Medes and the Persians. That very night, King Belshazzar of the Chaldeans, was slain and his Kingdom was conquered by the Medes and the Persians.

"Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Herod's Arrogance

When King Herod arrayed himself in royal apparel and sat on his throne, "... *the people kept shouting, 'the voice of the God and not of a man!' Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give Glory to God and he was eaten by worms and died.*" Acts 19:22-23

"Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!" James 3:5

"The pride of your heart has deceived you," Obadiah 1:3

Hanged on his own Gallows

The book of Esther records the catastrophic destruction wrought on the wicked Haman and his family because of his pride. *"When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath"* Esther 3:5. It was because of Haman's extreme pride that his plot unraveled and he ended up hanged on the gallows he had built for Mordecai.

"Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth."
Proverbs 27:1

Taking Offense

We also read in the Scriptures of Naaman, from Syria, having his pride offended when the prophet did not come out and speak to him personally, to heal him of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:11).

Personal Pride can Lead to National Catastrophe

When King Uzziah *"was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction, for he transgressed the Lord his God by entering the Temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense."* 2 Chronicles 26:16

Of King Hezekiah the Scripture says: *"his heart was lifted up, therefore wrath was looming over him and over Judah and Jerusalem"* 2 Chronicles 32:25. Clearly personal pride in national leaders can lead to national catastrophe.

Our Lord Jesus Christ warned of the danger of pride as he taught on the pharisee who dared to come into His house and pray to himself: *"God, I thank you that I am not like other men..."* Luke 18:11

The Lord Jesus condemned the church Laodicea: *"Because you say I am rich, have become wealthy and have need of nothing - and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked."* Revelation 3:17

"Now some are puffed up..." 1 Corinthians 4:18

Ignoring Wise Counsel

In 2 Chronicles 10, we read of the catastrophic consequences of the pride of King Rehoboam. *"The people of Israel petitioned the king: your father made our yolk heavy, therefore lighten the burdensome service of your father, and this heavy yolk he put on us and we will serve you."* 2 Chronicles 10:4

The elders who had stood before his Father Solomon counseled: *"If you are kind to these people and release them, and please them, and speak good words to them, they will be your servants forever. But he rejected the advice, which the elders had given him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him... then the king answered him roughly... King Rehoboam rejected the advise of the elders, and he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying: 'My father made your yolk heavy, but I will add to it; my father chastened you with whips, but I will chasten you with scourges!'"* 2 Chronicles 10:7-14

As a result of this arrogant reply, distaining the wise council of the elders, the ten northern tribes of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam and divided the people of Israel forever. Rehoboam had to flee in haste.

"The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge." Proverbs 15:14

"A fool despises his fathers instruction, but he who receives correction is prudent." Proverbs 15:5

"He who trusts in his own heart is a fool..." Proverbs 28:26

"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise." Ephesians 5:15

A Loathsome Vice

C.S. Lewis writes about pride in *Mere Christianity*: "There is one vice of which no man in the world is free, which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagined that they are guilty themselves ... there is no fault which makes a man more unpopular and no fault which we are more unconscious of it ourselves."

"Do you see a man wise in his own eyes, there is more hope for a fool than for him." Proverbs 26:12

Pride is the only disease known to man that makes everyone sick except the one who has it. Pride is the ground in which all other sins grow. None are so empty as those who are full of themselves. An egotist is always someone who is me-deep in conversation. Pride is the very image of the devil.

"For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world." 1 John 2:16

The National Religion of Hell

Pride is the idolatrist worship of ourselves. Pride is the national religion of hell. The first step towards hell is pride. The first step towards Heaven is humility.

Pride thrust Lucifer out of Heaven, Adam out of paradise, Nebuchadnezzar out of men's society, Saul out of his Kingdom, and Haman out of the royal court.

Pride and Foolishness

"You boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil." James 4:16

St. Augustine wrote: "Men ought to be ashamed of being proud, seeing that God was humbled for his sake."

"Those who think too much of themselves, don't think enough." Amy Carmichael

"God sends no one away who are empty, except those who are full of themselves." D.L. Moody

Three Tests

Oswald Sanders recommended three tests to evaluate how much pride we have to repent of:

1. **The test of Precedence.** How do you react when another is selected for the assignment you expected? Or for the office you coveted? How do you react when another is promoted and you are overlooked? When someone else outshines you in gifts and accomplishments?
2. **The test of sincerity.** In your moments of honest self-criticism you will admit many things about your own failings and weaknesses. But how do you feel when others say exactly the same things about you that you, in the sincerity of your heart, have recognised as true?
3. **The test of criticism.** Does criticism arouse hostility and resentment in your heart? Does criticism cause you to fly into immediate self-justification? There is nothing that human pride resents so much as to be rebuked. **"Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil."** Proverbs 3:7

"The folly of fools is deceit" Proverbs 14:8

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He catches the wise in their own craftiness." 1 Corinthians 3:19

Pride and Prejudice

Published in 1813, Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, is recognised as one of the finest novels in all of history. Is it Elizabeth Bennet who is prejudiced and Fitzwilliam Darcy who is proud? A writer of the depth and subtlety of Jane Austen does not create one-dimensional characters. Her characters are complex, compelling and ambiguous.

The *Pride and Prejudice* of the title apply to both Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy. Darcy is proud of his rank and fortune, and prejudiced against Elizabeth's family and her foolish mother. Elizabeth takes pride in her own independence and is prejudiced against what she sees as Darcy's self-importance and snobbery.

"The fear of the Lord teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honour."
Proverbs 15:33

Humble Service

As a young Christian I remember being most surprised and impressed, at seeing the elderly evangelist Roger Volke straightening out hundreds of chairs after the evenings evangelistic rally. It was 1980 and I had organised the Grahamstown Evangelistic Mission with Rev. Roger Volke as the main speaker. The transport hangar at the

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Grahamstown military base was filled with over 2000 soldiers of all ranks hearing a dynamic presentation of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

99 men had come forward that night to commit their lives to Christ. There were only 34 trained counsellors, each of us had to council at least three men. It had been a long and busy day. Each day had an average of five evangelistic meetings at local schools, churches and at the military base. Yet, here we were at the end of a very busy day, and a man three times our age was humbly straightening the hundreds of chairs in the transport hangar! Those of us who weren't at the coffee bar, felt suitably chastised and immediately threw ourselves into straightening the chairs, so that our guest evangelist could get some well-deserved rest.

Hospitality

As a young 26 year old missionary I was invited to speak at a conference at KwaSizabantu Mission in Zululand. I was mortified when my hosts, Uncle Erlo and Auntie Kay Stegan gave me their bedroom to stay in. I protested that I was used to rolling out my sleeping bag and would be happy for a mattress on the floor. I had certainly slept outdoors often enough and any corner in the mission would be just fine. Uncle Erlo wouldn't hear of it. He insisted and I was astounded that such senior missionary veterans more than double my age, would give such a junior missionary their best room.

I wish they hadn't, but it certainly taught me a whole lot about humility. Throughout KwaSizabantu Mission I saw in practice the principle of Scripture: "*In honour preferring one another.*"

Take your Pride to the Cross

God resists the proud but he gives grace to the humble.

In the words of Isaac Watts' hymn:
"When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride."



SPIRITUAL WARFARE

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Is it possible for a Christian to be under spiritual bondage?

Many Christians say that they do not think that it is possible for one in whom the Holy Spirit lives to be bound by an evil spirit. And yet, if we were to ask: Is it possible for a true Christian to sin? The answer would unfortunately have to be: Yes. Christians do sin. Of course, this grieves the Holy Spirit, it quenches the Holy Spirit, it resists the Holy Spirit, but the fact is that sin can be present in Holy Spirit indwelt Christians. Sin is worse than satan. It was sin that turned Lucifer, the archangel, into satan – the fallen angel, the enemy of God and all His people.

Some of the well known Christian leaders who testified that Christians may suffer from demonic bondage include: Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones, Dr. Kurt Koch, Watchman Nee and A.W. Tozer.

The Forces of Darkness

The book of Ephesians is addressed to *“The Saints... Faithful in Christ Jesus...”* Ephesians 1:1. And these Christians are taught not to *“give place to the devil.”* Ephesians 4:27. In fact the believers are commanded to ***“Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*** Ephesians 6:11-12

Be Vigilant

Plainly the ‘we’ spoken of here, are the Believers in Christ. Every Christian should be involved in a personal wrestle against evil forces. Christians are also warned: ***“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary, the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the Faith ...”***

1 Peter 5:8-9

Setting the Captives Free

In the Gospel of Luke we read of a woman who had “a spirit of infirmity eighteen years ...” and Jesus called her to Him and said: *“Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.”* He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.”

Luke 13:12-13

Because the Lord healed this woman on the Sabbath, He came under severe criticism. In response the Lord declared: *“...Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it away to water? So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom satan has bound – think of it – for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”* Luke 13:15-16

By describing her as a daughter of Abraham, whom satan had bound, our Lord reveals to us that a Believer can be bound by an evil spirit, even while continuing to attend worship services.

Be Not Deceived

The Bible is full of warnings against being deceived. "...feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside..." Isaiah 44:20; "...he deceives himself." Galatians 6:3; **"But be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."** James 1:22; **"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."** 1 John 1:8; **"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"** Jeremiah 17:9

As our Lord warned His own disciples to take heed that they be not deceived; this means that it is possible for Christians to be deceived. Deception brings bondage. Since it is possible for a Christian to be deceived, it implies that it is possible for a Christian to be in bondage.

A World at War

In "The Christian in Complete Armour" the Puritan William Gurnall (1616-1679) writes that we are all involved in a war between the Saint and satan. "And it is such a bloody one that the cruellest war ever fought by man will be seen as but sport and child's play, compared to this. Alas, what is the killing of bodies to the destroying of souls? It is a spiritual war that you shall read of; not a history of what was fought in many ages past and is now over, but of a war now going on – the tragedy is present with us. ...the stage on which this war is fought is every man's own soul. There are no neutrals in this war. The whole world is engaged in the quarrel, either for God against satan, or for satan against God."

A Life and Death Struggle

The author of Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan, wrote that this is why "The most delicate Christian must become a stern warrior." Whether we believe it or not, and whether we like it or not, this war is raging in our souls and in the heavenlies every moment of every day and night. It is a life and death struggle to the finish against the devil and all his demons. Satan and his cohorts come '**...to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...**' John 10:10"

Two Extremes

C.S. Lewis wrote: *"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight."*

Know your Enemy

In any war a soldier needs to know his enemy, their weapons and tactics, and the terrain in which he fights.

The nature and activities of satan are revealed through his different names. In the Scriptures he is called satan (the adversary or enemy), the devil (slanderer or accuser), Beelzebub (lord of the flies), the serpent, Lucifer (the light bearer), a murderer from the beginning, like a roaring lion, a liar, the tempter, the dragon, the accuser of the brethren, the prince of the power of the air, the evil one, the deceiver of the world, Abaddon (or

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Apollyon – the destroyer), the god of this world, the beast, belie (the worthless one) and an angel of light.

Demons are created spirit beings. They are fallen angels who have rebelled against Almighty God. Demons are evil spirits - they can think and act without a body; they have a character, a mind of their own and a will. They are not human spirits, nor impersonal forces, but actual spiritual persons. The demons are crooked, cruel, contaminating, clever, cunning, cowardly, craving, ceaseless, crouching, crippling, counterfeiting, clandestine, continuous criminals, but at the same time created beings confined in time and space, curtailed in their activities and power, conquered by Christ on the cross, cursed and condemned.

Like scavengers they attack the tired, the weak, the wounded and the sick. They track down, attack and mutilate their prey. Like flies they gather around any form of filth. Like serpents they can hide and slide secretly, striking suddenly and injecting their venom.

As Ephesians 6 reveals there are principalities, powers, rulers, hosts – an entire hierarchy of darkness and deception. The Scripture speaks of lying and seducing spirits (1 Timothy 4:1); idolatrous spirits (1 Corinthians 10:20, Psalm 106:36-38 and Deuteronomy 32:16-17); unclean spirits (Mark 7:25 and Zechariah 13:2); seducing spirits, such as the spirit of Jezebel, spirits of infirmity (Luke 5:15, 8:2, 13:11); and spirits of divination (Acts 16:16).

Demonic Possession

Possession is a legal term that does not necessarily mean the person has an evil spirit within them, but that rather the evil spirit possesses something in, or of, that person. e.g. I may possess a car, but not be in it. I may even point out and say that that is my car while someone else is in it and driving it. Demonic possession can be when an evil spirit has a hold over something in the life of a person.

Do Not Give the Devil Any Ground

The Scripture urges us to not give the devil a foothold (Ephesians 4:27). Whether it is a toehold, a foothold, a stronghold, or a stranglehold, we must personally and practically proclaim the Gospel of Christ's glorious victory on the Cross, not only over sin and self, but also over satan and all his hosts of evil spirits. Our eyes need to be opened and our hearts cleansed. We need to be set free.

“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John 3:8

Immunity

God has given each person a natural physical immunity, a natural mental immunity and a spiritual immunity. Bacteria cannot enter our bodies unchallenged. In the same way we can take control over the thoughts that enter our mind. Similarly, God has placed a hedge of protection around His children. Physically our skin is part of our body's immune system. When a wound breaks the integrity of the skin, bacteria can enter and cause infection, disease and in the case of tetanus, even death.

In the same way demons will try to cause a break in our mental and spiritual wall of immunity against them. Once they succeed in making a gap, an opening or a wound, they will enter in, and establish a foothold, and attempt to gain ground, to establish a

stronghold, and ultimately a stranglehold. If a **wound** is not swiftly and effectively treated, it can become a **way** for evil spirits to enter and bring bondage in a persons' life.

By Storm or By Stealth

What the demons cannot obtain by force, they attempt to gain by fraud. These are the two ways the enemy seeks entrance: by storm or by stealth.

It is the same with our physical bodies. While some bacteria enter through the trauma of a vehicle accident or an assault with a knife, others can enter by stealth, such as when we unknowingly drink contaminated water.

Principles

Watchman Nee taught: For each and everything God has created, there is a law. All actions are governed by laws. Hence evil spirits also operate according to definite laws. Certain causes produce certain effects. Violating the law of gravity will cause one to fall. Putting one's hand into a fire will result in one being burnt. The principles by which demons can successfully break through the hedge of protection God has placed around us, and weaken our spiritual immunity, gaining ground for the devil and bringing us into bondage include: **permission** by the victim; **passivity**; **parental bondage**, and **para-usual** spiritual activity (such as witchcraft).

"Nobody can make me do something that I don't want to do. If something is not in my heart, the devil will not be able to make me do it!" Rev. Greg Denysschen

Permission

By involvement in occultism, idolatry, stubbornness, rebellion and pride, we can give permission to demonic forces to gain a foothold in our life. We can also give permission unconsciously, through deception. By accepting emotions or deception suggested by evil spirits, we can come under spiritual bondage. That is why the Scriptures commanded us to "*capture every thought and make it obedient to Christ.*" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Passivity

Passivity also gives permission for evil spirits to work in our lives. The chief condition for the working of evil spirits in a human being, apart from sin, is passivity. "Passivity is the law: suggestion is the tool the devil uses!" Rev. Greg Denysschen

We are commanded to watch, resist, fight, obey, work, trust, test. The Scriptures teach us that a person is cursed when he is slack, lazy, or passive in doing the Lord's work (Jeremiah 48:10). Passivity gives place to the devil. Passivity is sin. Passivity is the sin of omission. Passivity is the chief basis of possession.

Parental Bondage

In The Ten Commandments God declares: "*I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol...*" The Lord reveals that He is a jealous God, who will punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Him (Exodus 20: 2-6). Children are not held responsible, or reckoned guilty, for those sins (Ezekiel 18:20), but they do suffer the consequences of parental sin. This principle is seen in the physical realm. E.g. through children being born with diseases transmitted from the parents. It is also seen in the psychological realm and in

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the spiritual realm. Darkness and deception in the ancestral line has the potential for bringing about a familial bondage.

George McDonald wrote: "I will assert that it is an honour to us to have the sins of our fathers laid upon us. For thus it is given into our power to put a stop to them, so that they shall descend no further."

Occultism

The fourth principle by which evil spirits work is through witchcraft or occultism. God's Law forbids us to give attention to: "*mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God.*" Leviticus 19:31

"When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practices witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are abominations to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you." Deuteronomy 18:9-14

Demonic Devices

The main methods which demons use to bring people into bondage are **darkness** (sin) and **deception** (lies). They also use doubt, discouragement, difficulty, desire, disobedience, disunity, disease and death. These demonic d's can be easily identified in the downfall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 3, satan came with doubt to Eve's mind (3:1), then desire in her heart (3:6), deception (3:4&13), disobedience (3:6), darkness (3:8), followed by difficulty (3:17), disease (3:16), depression (4:6), discouragement (4:6), disunity (4:6), departure from God and man (3:24; 4:12) and death (4:8) – both spiritually and physically. Adam and Eve were **deceived** into darkness by **doubting** in the mind, **desiring** with the heart and **disobeying** with the will.

All sin is darkness. Sin gives ground to demons and brings bondage (Proverbs 5:22-23). Sin is the greatest enemy which we have in the world and does us more harm than the devil himself. For it betrays us to the devil and, under the pretence of favouring and pleasing our nature, betrays us.

Sin's Kisses Kill

Sin lusts (Galatians 5:17), fights, wars (Romans 7:23; James 4:1; 1 Peter 2:11) and captivates the soul (Romans 7:23; Proverbs 5:22-23). Sin is madness (Ecclesiastes 9:3). Sin is selfishness, lawlessness, missing God's mark and self-centeredness. In Galatians 5:19 – 21 the works of the flesh are listed: "*Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries and the like; of which I told you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God.*"

Idolatry Enslaves

Doubt is darkness (Romans 14:23), disobedience is darkness (1 Samuel 22:23), demon worship (Idolatry), is darkness (1 Corinthians 10:20). Any form of idolatry is darkness.

Divination is darkness (Deuteronomy 18:10-13) and discouragement is darkness (Ezekiel 13:22).

Lies Bind

Self-centeredness is idolatry, which is an abomination to God and gives a foothold to demons. Deception (lies) is darkness and deception leads to darkness. Nothing is more infectious than a cleverly cloaked lie. Lies bind. It is not harmless to believe a lie. It is not innocent to believe a lie. Believing a lie can have painfully devastating consequences. Ignorance, pride and deception lead to bondage. Lies bind, but the truth sets us free.

Types of Bondage

One can distinguish between two basic types of bondage: **voluntary bondage**, which involves the permission of the person (consciously or unconsciously, actively or passively), and **involuntary bondage**, which would include familial bondage. The degree of bondage and affliction suffered would be determined by the degree of involvement by the person concerned, the kind and number of evil spirits involved, the ground given, the amount and frequency of exposure to the demonic influence, and the nature and immunity of the person.

Wounds

Demonic spirits may seek to cause a wound in a person's life, either through that person's own darkness or through another's darkness/sin towards them. Even if no ground was given, sometimes serious trauma can cause such a terrible wound in a person's soul and spirit that they seek to heal the wound through sinful **pleasure**, or **performing**, or **pleasing** people, or inflicting **pain** on others, or **pretending**, or exerting **power** over others, or **pitying** themselves, or through **paralysis (passivity)**. These make matters worse and give ground to satan. A wound not taken to Christ becomes a way for evil spirits to bring bondage.

The process of deliverance includes us **recognising, repenting, refusing**, and being **ready to resist**.

Signs and Symptoms

Christian missionaries involved in deliverance ministries have identified the following as possible signs and symptoms of demonic bondage:

Physical symptoms: severe headaches and migraines, muscle spasms, nausea, infertility, mouth ulcers, darkened skin, muscle twitching, obesity and anorexia.

Psychological symptoms: antagonism to truth, an inability to reason or listen to others; a suspicious spirit, fear, panic attacks, sudden unexplainable awakenings at night with a sense of oppression and dread; blasphemous thoughts; abnormal depression; temper tantrums; uncontrollable episodes of anger; homosexuality; vacillation; obstinacy; suicidal tendencies; death wishes; multiple personality disorders; schizophrenia, psychotic disorders, drug dependency and alcoholism.

Spiritual symptoms: hostility to the truth; falling asleep while reading the Bible or praying or during church services; difficulty reading the Word of God; aversion to the Gospel of the Cross of Christ; deadness and hardness of heart towards God; no spiritual growth; mediumistic tendencies; an obsession with esoteric, mystical and occultic experiences, such as 'being slain in the spirit' and 'holy laughter'.

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Social symptoms: asocial and antisocial behaviour; socializing with people involved in the occult; following the fashions of this world and the spirit of this age; interest and involvement in false religions; and criminal activities.

Symptoms and signs observed **before prayer for deliverance** have included:

Physical swelling of the veins in the temple areas and on the sides of the head, profuse sweating and reddening of the face, wandering and flitting eyes, a seductive look in the eyes, rebelliousness and angry expression of face, glazed-over look in the eyes, dizziness and visual problems with spasms, pain and pins-and-needles movement in parts of the body.

Emotionally: fear, anxiety, anger, suspicion, negativity, etc.

During prayer the person may go into a complete trance where the eyes go blank as if not seeing anything, not even blinking when a hand is moved in front of their eyes. The body may tense up or tremor or sway. They sometimes start speaking in another language or voice (not their own). They may take on the posture characteristic of the particular evil spirit that is troubling them, such as dancing like the monkey god, Hanuman, hissing and writhing like a snake, they may become very aggressive or destructive towards themselves, or those present. They may also vomit or sweat out needles or metal objects from their skin.

Freedom in Christ

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.” Luke 4:18-19

The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast (Proverbs 5:22).

Jesus taught that those who sin are slaves to sin (John 8:34). *“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”* Romans 6:16-18

The Apostle Peter writes of people being *“slaves of corruption.”* 2 Peter 2:19

The Apostle Paul writes *“that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.”* 2 Timothy 2:26

The Apostle Peter rebuked Simon the sorcerer: *“For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.”* Acts 8:23

“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John 3:8

On the Cross our Lord Jesus Christ dealt with our sins (1 Peter 2:24; Colossians 2:14), crucified our self (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20; 6:14), defeated the world (Galatians 6:14), and triumphed over satan and all his evil spirits and hosts of hell (Colossians 2:15; 1 John 3:8).

“And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the Cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them, in it.” Colossians 2:13-15

God Alone

Deliverance is a dynamic work of almighty God, working on the basis of Christ's victory on the Cross, applied by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Deliverance is God's work. Our prayers cannot deliver any person, nor can any method, technique or ritual. God alone delivers by the power of His Holy Spirit. It is not magic or mediums which we need, but Almighty God Himself.

God Resists the Proud

The person needing deliverance must recognise his need and willingly seek help. You cannot help a person who is not really willing to be helped. A person who is bound needs to want to be free. They need to be desperate to be set free by the Lord. The one seeking deliverance should humble himself completely. God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. Where there is pride in the heart the person cannot be delivered.

Foundations for Freedom

Foundations need to be carefully laid. It is important that the person understands how evil spirits work, by what laws they operate, and what ground for bondage is. Otherwise it will be easy for them to be re-deceived by evil spirits, to again give ground to the enemy. It is the truth that sets us free and unless the person is filled with the Holy Spirit, he will be open for further bondage by evil spirits.

Reclaiming Surrendered Ground

It is only Christ's victory on the Cross that makes deliverance possible. The ground that was given to evil spirits must be reclaimed before true deliverance can take place. The process of bondage needs to be reversed. Step by step the ground given to the enemy needs to be reclaimed.

The Counsellor

The counsellor needs to be **called, cleansed, crucified, consecrated** and **committed**.

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The battle lines have been drawn. This is a battle between light and darkness, holiness and sin, the real vs. the counterfeit, truth vs. deception, forgiveness vs. bitterness, submission vs. rebellion, humility vs. pride, freedom vs. bondage, truth vs. lies, activity vs. passivity and God vs. satan.

The Phases of Deliverance

Like a surgical operation there is the pre-operative phase, the actual operation and the post-operative phase. In the same way the three phases of deliverance are: **Preparation** for the deliverance; **Process of prayer** for deliverance and **Post deliverance** (how to stay free).

Phase 1: Preparation for deliverance requires removing all ground for bondage and preparing ground for deliverance. All darkness must be dealt with ruthlessly. All deception must be discovered and destroyed. All doors that were opened for the demons must be closed, one by one. All ground given to the enemy must be removed, one by one. This requires separating from sin, self-centeredness and satanic activities and influences, and uniting with God, His holiness, light, truth and integrity.

Leaving Egypt and Entering the Promised Land

Negatively the person needs to be dead to sin, self, society and the evil spirits. Positively the person needs to be alive to Christ, holiness and the Spirit of God. As with the people of Israel in the book of Exodus, he needs to get out of Egypt and cross the river to the Promised Land to conquer the enemy. He needs to die to self and come alive in Christ. This involves a **realisation** of where he has given ground to evil spirits, to where he may be in demonic bondage; recognition as to the truth of his condition. This involves **recognising** all ground given to the evil spirits, **relying** on God, **remembering**, **re-searching** into family background and life and **revelation** from God.

He needs to remember, recall back to memory, those steps, stumblings, and sins that led to his state. ***“Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent...”***

Revelation 2:5

The best way is to write down these sins, one by one, and repent of them, one by one. This list should include all sins of commission and omission.

Repentance

One needs to repent radically and completely. True repentance involves a complete change of mind, and heart, and life and a radical change in attitude, affections and acts. Without repentance there is no salvation. Without repentance there is no deliverance. Without repentance there is no relationship with God. Repentance is the lifeblood of the Christian's walk with God. It is at the heart of true Godliness. The crisis and continued life of repentance includes: **conviction** of sins (John 16:8), **contrition** (Psalm 32), **confession** (James 5:16), **cleansing** (1 John 1:7-9), **conversion** (John 3), **consecration** (2 Corinthians 5:15), and **commitment** to Christ (Acts 2:38).

Confession

If we confess our sins He is faithful and just, and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other that you may be healed (James 5:16). God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible (Ephesians 5:13-14). But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin (1 John 1:7). Confession of sin should be **free, full, frank, factual**, from the heart, in **front** of another Christian, and include **forsaking** sin, **Faith** in Christ's Sacrifice on the cross, and it must be **frequent**.

Divorce from Sin

Joseph Alleinen in *An Alarm to the Unconverted* writes: "You cannot be married to Christ unless you are divorced from sin. Give up the traitor, or you can have no peace with Heaven. Keep not Delilah in your lap. You must part with your sins or your soul: spare but one sin and God will not spare you. Your sins must die or you must die for them."

A Broken and Contrite Heart

Openness without brokenness is not acceptable to God. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart God will not despise (Psalm 51:17). There is not true confession without conviction of sin and contrition for sin. **The root of all sin is pride.** Confession breaks arrogance as nothing else can.

We need to renounce and refuse all ground given to demons - specifically, steadily and deliberately, one by one. God commands: ***"Repent! And renounce all your detestable practices."*** Ezekiel 14:6

I must renounce my sins, reject them and refuse to have anything to do with them anymore, to resist any temptation towards them or from them – once and for always.

Restitution

There is no forgiveness without restitution. *"He must make restitution in full..."*

Leviticus 6:5

Return what you have borrowed, **restore** what you have stolen, **repair** what you have damaged and **reconcile** with those that you are not right with. Do everything you can to **resolve** conflict and repair your relationships.

Idols for Destruction

Remove and destroy all objects related to demonic activity and sin. Read of the believers in Ephesus who had practiced sorcery how they brought their scrolls together and burned them publically. In this way the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power (Acts 19:20).

Full Freedom in Christ

In the war to claim the land of freedom, Joshua left no survivors. In the same way the person in need of deliverance should not rest until every bondage is broken and he is set free from every evil spirit in his life. As William Booth wrote: "For strength to ever do the right, for grace to conquer in the fight, for power to walk the world in white - send the fire!"

"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

2 Corinthians 3:17

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:2

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed." John 8:36

"For you brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." Galatians 5:13

Spiritual Warfare

“For this is the Will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men – as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.” 1 Peter 2:15-16

“Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Colossians 1:12-14

“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 15:57-58

*This study has been inspired by Rev. Greg Denysschen’s deliverance ministry at Jivannadi Mission, and based in large part upon Dr. Frikkie Kellerman’s work: *Demonic Bondage, Disease and Divine Deliverance*. P.O. Box 33, Canelands, Kwazulu-Natal, 4341, Tel: 032-533 3003, Fax: 032-533-3802, Email: mail@jivannadi.org.za, www.jivannadi.org.za*



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RECLAIMING SURRENDERED GROUND

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-4

As Christians we are engaged in an intense spiritual warfare. ***“Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”*** 1 Peter 5:8

The devil is a shrewd enemy who has been tempting God’s people for centuries, placing snares and traps in our path to distract, deviate, discourage and defeat us. The devil knows our weaknesses, whether pride, greed or lust, dishonesty, immorality or bitterness. If we do not deal with sin and fortify our areas of weakness, we will continue to experience spiritual defeat.

If we harbour and nurture our sin, we will give the devil a foothold in our lives. Once we have surrendered ground to satan, it is vitally important that we learn how to reclaim it, how to put on the whole spiritual Armour of God and successfully resist the tempter. The weapons that God gives us are able to tear down satan’s strongholds and replace them with fortresses of faith.

“Be angry, and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.” Ephesians 4:26-27

If we cultivate any known sin, we are giving satan an opportunity to gain a foothold, a beachhead in our life. Satan will then use this opportunity to invade and take over other areas. It is crucial that we, in the power of God’s Holy Spirit, reclaim and retake the ground that we have yielded to the enemy.

The Apostle Paul said that he didn’t want us to be ignorant of satan’s devices (2 Corinthians 2:11). But most Christians today are wilfully ignorant of the tactics and strategies of the enemy.

As John Bunyan’s *Pilgrims Progress* so eloquently portrays, Christians are involved in a daily battle against ***“all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.”*** 1 John 2:16

Satan’s plan is to steal, to kill and to destroy (John 10:10) ***“The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”*** 1 John 5:19

Total War

Not only has the enemy enslaved many to false religions, sinful habits and addictions, but he is also waging an all out war against the forces of Jesus Christ. Satan aims to undermine the Church and frustrate the Divinely appointed rescue mission entrusted to it.

Just as our Lord Jesus Christ is dedicated to the saving of lost men and women (Luke 19:10), so too satan is dedicated to damning and destroying everyone in this strife torn world.

Just as it is God’s plan for the Church to take the precious life giving Bible, the Word of God, to all peoples everywhere, so too satan seeks to prevent this.

Reclaiming Surrendered Ground

Just as Jesus has commanded Christians to be a light to this world, radiating God's love to those trapped in the darkness of sin, so also the enemy continually seeks to dim, divert or destroy that influence.

The only hope for this lost world is the Good News of Jesus Christ, and God has entrusted this message to the Church. God's plan is for Christians to be His freedom fighters in this sin enslaved world. As God's guerrillas, Christians need to be undermining satan's forces, the false religious cults and sects, Communism and the occult. The whole Church needs to be involved in this war of liberation to free the whole world from the devil's deceptions and the snares of satan.

The only reason why the devil is so often winning, is that the church is so seldom fighting!

"Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." James 4:7. If the devil is not fleeing from us, then either we are not submitting to God, or we are not resisting the devil, or both.

"He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world." 1 John 4:4

"We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." Romans 8:37

Yet, most in the church prefer to retreat into our barracks to sing battle songs, rather than follow our Commanding Officer into the fields of battle. We teach about our wonderful weapons, but they are seldom used. We praise our Commanding Officer, but we don't obey Him. We know He commands us to attack, but we choose to consolidate. He says move forward, but we decide to dig in. He leads us into battle, but we stay at home and watch T.V., read romance novels, mixit or play video games.

The enemy has tricked many into the ambush of pride, and thousands have triggered the landmines of lust. Others have been discouraged by the bombardment of criticism, and many have retreated before the poison gas of gossip. The booby traps of bitterness have crippled the critical and those who have straggled behind their units have found themselves captured by the diversions of the world. Propaganda has led some to surrender to the army of unbelief.

We are in a spiritual world war and the fight is to preach the Gospel to the millions living under communist oppression, to smuggle Bibles to those living under severe persecution, to save the lives of the millions trapped in satanic deceptions, and false religious cults and sects, to free the drug addicts and liberate the alcoholics. The church must reach everyone in this needy world with the powerful love and liberty of Jesus Christ. And our primary targets must include the seemingly impenetrable Communist and Muslim areas. These strongholds must be reached for Christ – no matter what the cost.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

To do so, we need to be free. Ephesians 4:27 warns us: *"never give place to the devil."* The NIV calls this a *"foothold"*, the NASB an *"opportunity"* and the TEV: a *"chance"* to the devil.

The Downward Spiral of Sin

If satan gains a firm enough foothold in a person's life, he can turn an act of sin into a regular practice of sin, and from there it can degenerate into a habit, which leads the person downward into bondage. ***"His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin."*** Proverbs 5:22

No alcoholic starts by announcing: *"I plan to ruin my life and my family by drinking as much alcohol as I can everyday from this day forward!"* No, it begins with a single drink, then a second, then a third...the downward slide can be traced from the initial act, to a regular practice, to a habit and to bondage.

The counselling psychologists tend to use the word *"addiction."* This suggests that we are powerless victims of our problem. God calls it sin. ***"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free...most assuredly I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin...therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."*** John 8:32-36

Steps to Freedom

1. The first step towards genuine freedom in Christ must be wholehearted repentance from sin.

"For Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation..." 2 Corinthians 7:10

"This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1:5-9

The truth is that we are not just victims of satan needing deliverance, we are guilty sinners needing forgiveness.

2. The next step to freedom in Christ is taking back the ground that we have yielded to the enemy. If we have given satan a key, or a foothold, in our lives through bitterness, unforgiveness, pride, immorality, idolatry or rebelliousness, we need to command the enemy in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ to leave.

Satan is a liar and a deceiver (John 8:44), he is the *"accuser of the brethren."* Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). It is the truth that sets us free. We need to renew our minds (Romans 12:2) meditating on *"whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy."* Philippians 4:8

We need to tear down the strongholds of satan in our life (2 Corinthians 10:4). In its place, we need to build towers of truth, reprogramming our mind with the life giving and liberating Word of God. We need to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, bringing our thoughts and lives in line with God's Word and God's Will.

The Occult

God's Law forbids us to give attention to ***"mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God."*** Leviticus 19:31 ***"When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not learn***

to follow the abominations of those nations. These shall not be found among you: anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practises witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are abominations to the Lord, and because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God. For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you. Deuteronomy 18:9–14

1. Ask God to reveal any and all occultic activity that has taken place in your life.
2. Renounce the seeking of power as sin and commit yourself to the empowering of God's Holy Spirit.
3. Renounce the seeking of guidance from evil spirits and commit yourself to the guidance of the Scriptures.
4. Renounce all occult healing involvement and commit yourself to the God who heals.
5. Renounce the use of all mantras, charms, fetishes or any object that you may have trusted in for protection and commit yourself to God's protection.
6. Remove all occult material from your home. Burn what can be burned and break and bury what cannot be burned (Act 19:19).
7. Ask God to take back all ground given to satan through your involvement in darkness and worldly or occultic music.
8. Determine to only listen to music which is thoroughly Christian, God honouring and edifying. Remove and destroy all music that does not glorify God. Music is one of the tools that the enemy uses to entice people into occult and the effects often stay with these people long after their conversion to Christ.

God instructed Israel: ***“You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire; you shall not covet the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it for yourselves, lest you be snared by it; for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. Nor shall you bring an abomination into your house, lest you be doomed to destruction like it. You shall utterly detest it and utterly abhor it, for it is an accursed thing.”***

Deuteronomy 7:25-26

David said that he would even take the names of false gods upon his lips (Psalm 16:4).

Getting in to the occult is relatively easy. Getting out is very traumatic, but it is absolutely essential for spiritual health. We need to destroy all occult materials. *“If you bought it, you burn it.”* (See Acts 19:19-20)

“And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb and by the Word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” Revelation 12:11

Bitterness

Bitterness can be another stronghold of satan. If you have not forgiven someone, then it is likely that you harbour an unforgiving spirit and a resentment that will deepen into bitterness. Ask God to reveal to you the people against whom you are holding feelings of bitterness and resentment. Be aware that you could also be harbouring feelings of

bitterness against God. Make a list of the names that God reveals to you. Start at the bottom of the list, with those people who are easier to forgive, and work your way up to the more difficult cases. Repent of the sin of unforgiveness. Forgive each person from the heart. Ask God to take back the ground that you have given satan through unforgiveness. We are to forgive wholeheartedly **“lest satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.”** 2 Corinthians 2:11

The Apostle Paul said that: **“I myself always strive to have a clear conscience without offence toward God and men.”** Acts 24:16

If someone you knew was making a list of people who had hurt them, and had never asked for their forgiveness, would you be on that list?

Make a list of all the people who God brings to your mind whom you have offended and whom you have not sought forgiveness from. Contact those individuals by letter or telephone if possible, and be brief. Tell that particular person that you have been looking back over your life and you realised that you had failed him/her in the specific way that God revealed to you, then ask for his/her forgiveness. Make restitution where needed.

If certain people have benefitted you, but you have never shown appreciation, express gratitude to them for what you have gained. Send thank you notes, or cards, to people who have blessed you, showing how God used them to build up, strengthen or challenge you.

Ask God to guide you as to everything that you can do to make things right, do restitution, apologise and restore relationships.

Rebellion

Another key area where satan gains a foothold, and strongholds, in the lives of Christians is in the area of rebelliousness. **“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.”** 1 Samuel 15:23

Ask God to forgive you for not respecting and submitting to the authorities He has placed in your life. Determine before God to be in submission to the authorities that God has placed over you, whether your parents, your husband, your educational institution, your mission, your church, or your employer. Ask forgiveness from those authorities that you have rebelled against and tell them of your renewed commitment to be in submission under the Lord.

Pride

Pride is repugnant to God. In some ways pride is one of the worst sins anyone could commit. Pride is a fist of rebellion in the face of the Creator and Ruler of the universe. In Proverbs 6:16–17, pride is at the top of the list of the seven sins that God hates most. Pride was satan’s original sin that caused him to be cast down from Heaven as Lucifer. **“Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord.”** Proverbs 16:5
“Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” Proverbs 16:18

Every day make a conscious decision to die to self and to be committed to God’s Will and His purpose for your life. Ask God’ forgiveness for areas of your life that you have built around self and surrender them to God. Ask Him to take back any ground that you have surrendered to satan.

Immorality

Sexual bondage is one of satan’s chief ploys in undermining Christians. Ask God to reveal to you the first time you violated His moral Law and began to give satan ground

Reclaiming Surrendered Ground

in your life. Confess every sin that the Lord brings to your memory and ask God to restore your fellowship with Him in that area. Ask God to take back all ground given to the enemy through moral failure. Dedicate your body to the purpose of glorifying God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Be on your guard for the traps and temptations of satan and be prepared to resist him.

The Armour of God

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the Heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace; above all, taking the Shield of Faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this and with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.” Ephesians 6:10-18

Set Free to Serve Christ

Humble yourself before God (James 4:6). Acknowledge your need of God’s grace, His Divine power and guidance.

Submit yourself to God (James 4:7). Dedicate your body to glorifying God (1 Cor. 6:19-20), your mind to thinking His thoughts (Phil 4:8), your emotions to loving Him (Matthew 22:37) and your energy to serving as unto God and not unto men (Ephesians 6:6-7).

Actively resist the devil (James 4:7), in the Name of Jesus (Phil 2:9-11). Overcome satan by the Blood of the Lamb and by the Word of your testimony (Rev. 12:11). Counterattack with the Word of God and prayer (Ephesians 6:18-20). Draw near to God (James 4:8). **“Cleanse your hands,”** asking forgiveness for every violation of God’s standards. **“Purify your hearts,”** get back in the race and keep your eyes fixed on Jesus on whom your faith depends from beginning to end (Hebrews 12:1-2). Reclaim all surrendered ground and enjoy full freedom in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Here is a suggested prayer that you may find helpful as you wholeheartedly turn from sin and place all your trust in Christ alone:

Heavenly Father, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I come before You desiring to be free from all bondage and sin. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sin, for Your mercy and grace and for cleansing me from my sin. I am sorry for my sin and I pray Lord God that You would wash me and cleanse me and free me from all consequences of my iniquities and rebellion.

I now confess and repent of all my sins, both known and unknown. I confess and renounce the sins of my forefathers. In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of His Blood shed upon the cross of Calvary I break and renounce the power of every demonic curse that has been passed down upon me by the sins and actions of others, or by myself.

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ I renounce, break and loose myself and my family from all demonic subjection and bondage. I claim release through the Blood of Jesus

Christ, my Lord and Saviour. By Your Grace may You bless me and use me and enable me to serve You faithfully, to Your honour and glory and for the extension of Your Kingdom.

Amen.

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EVANGELISING ANIMISTS

Animism is "*Spirit Worship*". It is the primary religion of over 100 million tribal people scattered throughout Africa, New Guinea, the Pacific Islands, North and South America, Australia, New Zealand, India and Japan. Elements of basic Animism are also adhered to by some Muslims, Buddhists and nominal "*Christians*."

Animism includes:

Necrolatry (the worship of the souls of the dead): Tribal people tend to regard departed ancestors as part of the clan and fear the harm that the departed can do to the living. (Especially they fear that those who die unnaturally will come back to "*haunt*" them).

Spirit Worship: Tribal religions believe in the existence of personal spirits or demons as well as impersonal spiritual forces in nature which inhabit the earth, air, fire, water, trees, mountains and animal life. Life for them is dominated by a host of taboos and rituals to placate the spirits.

Witchdoctors: These *shamans*, priests or witchdoctors are "*expert mediators*" who know the proper incantations and sacrifices at times of sickness and disaster to placate "the spirits".

Magic: *Imitative magic* seeks to bring harm to an enemy by attacking a representation of him (e.g. a voodoo doll!) *Contagious Magic* is the connection between a person and his hair clippings, nail parings, sweat, spit or faeces. The blood of an animal (or person) may be drunk in order to gain the strength of that animal or (in the case of cannibalism) person.

Fetishism: Superstitious beliefs that there is some spiritual energy or force in charms, amulets or fetishes.

Naturism: Is the personification and worship of the forces of nature - sun, moon, stars, fire, volcanoes, storms, animals (e.g. the sun in Ancient Egypt, the sacred cow of the Hindus in India, the sacred mountain of Shintoism in Japan). Naturism normally leads to **idolatry** and **polytheism** (the worship of many gods). Naturism often relates to fertility - both in agriculture and human reproduction. Nature worship, rituals and sacrifices are intended to guarantee fertility. Human sacrifices are an extreme example of this.

Totemism ("*brother - sister - kin*") emphasises the unity of the clan with some sacred plant or animal.

4 Characteristics of Animism

1. The whole of life is pervaded with and governed by fear.
2. The absence of **love** and **hope**.
3. There are **no moral absolutes** (sin is seen as the violation of culture, custom and spirit forces).
4. **Fatalism** and a sense of helplessness in the face of external forces.

The Great Commission Manual

Heathenism does not deny God as much as ignore Him by worshiping natural forces and mysterious demon powers through magical ceremonies and sacrifices.

“Do not practise divination or sorcery... Do not cut your bodies for the dead or put tattoo marks on yourselves. I am the Lord... Do not turn to mediums or seek out spiritists, for you will be defiled by them. I am the Lord your God.” *Leviticus 19:26-31*

“When you enter the land the Lord your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. Let no one be found among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, who practises divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable practices the Lord your God will drive out those nations before you. You must be blameless before the Lord your God.”

Deuteronomy 18:9-13

Demons are unclean spirits (Matthew 10:1), evil spirits (Acts 19:12), fallen angels who rebelled and are now in darkness bound for Judgement (Jude 6). Their power is limited (2 Peter 2:4). They serve the devil, the prince of darkness, the prince of this world (Matthew 12:24; John 12:31).

Occult practices honour satan rather than God. Occultism makes the enemies of God the guiding force and source of knowledge. Those who *“follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons”* – *“abandon the Faith”* 1 Timothy 4:1. *“Do not learn the ways of the heathen.”* Jeremiah 10:2

The Bible teaches us not to fear satan or his demons, but to stand against them in the strength of the Lord.

“For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1:7

“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

James 4:7



THE CHALLENGE OF HINDUISM

Hinduism is the world's third largest religion and the dominant religion of India and Nepal. In the year 2000, there were 820 million Hindus (13.5% of the world's population).

Understanding Hinduism

Hinduism is actually a collection of religions, incorporating Animism and philosophy, one god and many gods, vegetarianism and sacrificing. Hinduism is a pluralistic network of religious beliefs and systems, ranging from the philosophical (self-realisation), to *Medic* (rituals and good works), to village Hinduism (idolatry, occultism, animism).

Hinduism absorbs elements of any religion it encounters and is widely perceived as a religion of tolerance. Its global influence is significant through the New Age Movement and the Hare-Krishna Movement. Many concepts of Hinduism have become part of 21st century post-modern culture - yoga, guru's, Karma, reincarnation and transcendental meditation.

The Hindu concept of god is pantheistic. Their theology is syncretistic. Hinduism, as a conglomeration of ideas, beliefs, convictions and practices, varies from people to people and from region to region. However, Hinduism can be understood under six broad categories:

Philosophic Hinduism

Philosophic Hinduism is dominated by the authority of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* (*Sruti*). (This word means *secret*). The *Upanishads* are contained in the *Vedas*, which are the oldest writings considered sacred by the Hindus.

Concerning their understanding of ultimate reality, there are three popular schools of thought: *Advaita*- non-dualism; *Dvaiti*- dualism and *Visishtadvaita* - modified dualism. Philosophic Hinduism teaches from the ancient *Vedas* that there is a spark of divinity in man, hence to call man a sinner is blasphemous. There is, therefore, no need for a Saviour.

Religious Hinduism

Religious Hinduism places strong belief in *avatars* (incarnations of gods). Hindus are at liberty to choose their own god from amongst a pantheon of over 330 million gods. They teach that salvation may be obtained in one of three ways: the way of knowledge (*gnanamarga*); the way of devotion (*bhaktimarga*) and the way of good deeds (*karmamarga*).

Popular Hinduism

Popular Hinduism is influenced by ancestral tradition, worship of animals, temple cults, magic and exorcism. They are generally indifferent to the authority of the *Vedas* and are only concerned about a god who protects them, blesses them and makes them prosperous. The majority of Hindus adhere to this form.

Mystic Hinduism

Those who claim to have supernatural gifts of healing, ability to perform miracles, to read the inner thoughts of people and to prophesy the future are seen as *Avatars* (incarnations of gods). Many followers are drawn to these mysterious and apparently spiritual gurus.

Tribal Hinduism

Tribal Hinduism is much influenced by animism, spiritism, the occult, necromancy and animal worship. The fear of the unknown exercises instinctive dread over these followers' minds.

Secular Hinduism

An increasing number of Hindus are secular, nominal in their beliefs and indifferent to religious practices. Even the few religious customs that they follow are motivated by materialistic tendencies.

Hindu History

The word Hindu was originally used by the Persians, to refer to the inhabitants of the Indus River Valley. Hinduism, as it is known today, can be traced back to about 1500 BC, when the Aryans invaded India.

The original religion of the Indus River Valley peoples ranged from nature worship to monotheism. Those who were nature worshippers, worshiped the wind, rain, sky, rivers, the sun and fire. The monotheistic groups worshiped *Siva* in the form of the *Lingum* (a phallic symbol).

In some areas the female goddess or female creative power was worshipped. This is called *Sakti* and she is venerated in the form of a snake.

The Aryans introduced *Brahmanism* - the oppressive class system, which preserves a privileged position for the Aryan masters.

The Aryan speech was later transformed into what is known as *Sanskrit*.

The Hindu writings consist of two basic sources: *Sruti*- which are the written authority from "holy men" called *Rishis*, and *Smriti* - the compilation of traditions and folk tales, including epics and myths.

The oldest writings are known as the *Vedas* (which means *to know*). The *Upanishads* (this word means *secret*) are contained in the *Vedas* and are regarded as commentaries.

The *Ramayana* is one of the large epics of Hinduism. It deals with the adventures of *Rama*, and covers the marriage of *Rama* and *Sita*, the kidnapping of *Sita* by *Ravana*, the demon king of *lanka*. *Hanuman*, the monkey god, came to their assistance and *Ravana* was killed.

Another large epic is the *Mahabharata* (which means *great story of the Bharatas*). It describes the war between two families. Central to the *Mahabharata* is the *Bhagavad Gita* (meaning *gods'song*). This contains the dialogue between *Arjuna* and *Krishna* on salvation. This can be regarded as the "gospel" of Hinduism.

The Challenge of Hinduism

The Hindu Pantheon of gods

Indra is understood as the king of all the gods, the sky or heaven.

Agni - the god of fire.

Varuna - the sky god - regarded as the supreme being.

Brahma - the creator god. Brahma is usually depicted as sitting on the open lotus flower.

Vishnu - is connected by some sort of external umbilical cord from its navel to **Brahma**. *Vishnu* is seen as the second part of a triad. He is the preserver and is pictured together with **Lakshmi** (his consort, a female goddess), reclining on a bed consisting of a coil of a seven-headed snake. His incarnations are identified with the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

Siva - the destroyer. Siva is also known as the god of yoga. Hindus believe he sits high on the Himalayan Mountains at the fountain head of the Ganges River. Hindus think of **Siva** as the source of the Ganges. That is why a sprout of water is seen shooting up from the top of his hair, and this is identified as the goddess **Gangamai**, visible in the form of a snake. **Siva** is also known as Nataraga, the lord of the dance. **Siva** is a hermaphrodite. His consort is **Parvathi** and he rides on the bull, **Nandi**.

Ganesha - the elephant-headed god, is a son of **Siva**.

Kali - is the most well-known and also the most feared. **Kali** demands blood sacrifice. She is depicted with many arms, with swords in her hands, dripping with blood. She has a necklace of men's heads and hands around her. She is dressed immodestly, and stands on the body of a dead man. She also holds a man's head by the hair in one hand.

Lakshmi - the goddess of good luck or prosperity. **Lakshmi** is worshipped in Hindu homes by the lighting of a small brass lamp in the form of a throne.

Some authorities estimate that there are over 330 million gods or idols in Hinduism.

Key Teachings of Hinduism

Basic to Hinduism is their belief in:

Karma

Underlying all Hindu behaviour, religious activity and thought is their doctrine of **Karma**. According to Hindu thought, all of life is controlled by this law, the law of works. Your behaviour in a past life determines your fate in the present life, and your deeds in the present life determine your future reincarnation.

Samsara

The endless cycle of birth and rebirth is called **Samsara** (the wheel of **Samsara**) - reincarnation. When you have built up bad **Karma**, you move down the ladder, but if you have developed good **Karma**, you move up the ladder. It takes many lives to go through the whole process for **Karma** to be worked out, through reincarnation or transmigration of the soul.

Moksha

A Hindu works for the day when he will finally be able to break out of this cycle of reincarnation, having completed his *Karma*, to escape into freedom called *Moksha*. This is a release from the everlasting cycle of rebirth.

Dharma

Dharma means *righteousness*. By living a good life and doing his duty, Hindus believe that they can work out their own salvation.

Yoga

Yoga means to be *yoked* or *union*. It is seen as the pathway to freedom or *Moksha*.

Polytheism, Pantheism and Syncretism

Hindus are very religious people. However, their religion is one of polytheism, pantheism and syncretism. Hindus believe that all religions lead to God. They, therefore, reject the need to change from one religion to another. Hindus also reject the concept of sin. Vivekananda said: "*It is a sin to call anyone a sinner.*"

Although the concept of salvation exists within Hinduism, it is understood as liberation from the cycle of rebirth, not forgiveness for one's own personal guilt. The Hindu doctrine of salvation is radically different from the Christian viewpoint. Similarly, when a Christian speaks of being born again, a Hindu is thinking of reincarnation.

Bizarre Ethics

When Nepal's crown prince killed nine other members of the royal family, including his parents, in 2001, Hindus justified it by *Karma*.

For example, Professor Mukunda Raj Aryal (a *Brahman*) was quoted in the Washington Post as explaining: "*The members of the royal family brought only short lives into their most recent incarnations based on actions in a previous existence.*" The crown prince should be honoured for having "*acted well*" the villainous part he was assigned by his *Karma*.

Literally millions of Hindus live as beggars, seeing this as their *Karma*. One healthy 32-year old beggar was quoted as saying: "*I blame my own Karma. If god didn't give me poverty, then we wouldn't have to beg in the first place.*" Begging is seen as punishment for being mean to other beggars in a previous life.

Many of the beggars in India beg for about six months of the year and then spend the rest of the year drinking a potent local brew and maintaining themselves in a drunken stupor for the next half of the year.

Worshipping a Monkey to Death

Some time ago there were reports of 4000 Hindu devotees attending the funeral of a monkey in Southern India. The monkey had strayed into a temple dedicated to the monkey god, *Hanuman*, in Timmaganipalli Village. The villagers surrounded the monkey and refused to allow it to leave the temple. Hundreds visited the monkey each day, seeking its blessings and garlanding it with flowers. The monkey finally died of starvation and exhaustion. The distraught villagers explained that when they saw the monkey sitting on *Hanumans* idol, they thought it

The Challenge of Hinduism

was a reincarnation of the ancient god. India is dotted with tens of thousands of *Hanuman* temples, and every Tuesday is reserved for the worship of *Hanuman*.

Violent Militancy

Although India gained its independence partly through the work of Mahatma Gandhi, India's current leaders do not hold to its pacifism, either internationally or domestically. India is involved in a nuclear arms race and regularly threatens war against its Muslim neighbour, Pakistan.

Domestically, there has been a rise of Hindu extremists engaging in hate campaigns against Christians. Anti-conversion legislation and legal restrictions on Christian activities have been strongly demanded. Some states in India have enacted such anti-Christian legislation and condone a rising wave of violence and even murder of Christian workers. Human Rights Watch have reported on *"the killings of priests, the raping of nuns and the physical destruction of Christian institutions, schools, churches, colleges and cemeteries. Thousands of Christians have also been forced to convert back to Hinduism."*

In 1999 there was also the highly publicised burning to death of Australian missionary, Graham Staines and his two sons, in Eastern India. Many Hindu leaders justified these murders by saying that missionaries who preach *"that the only way to salvation is through Christ"* deserve to be punished.

Hindu Christians and foreign missionaries have come under increasing attack from Hindu mobs wielding clubs and swords.

Hinduism alternates between pacifism and violent militancy. The Hindu principle of *Ahimsa* means that Hindus are not to harm any creatures, even insects. Some Hindus may even wear a cloth over their mouths to prevent their swallowing and therefore killing small flying insects. But on the other hand, Hindus can justify the murder of Christians and missionaries.

Superstition and Witchcraft

Rev. Greg Denysschen, the head of Jivannadi Mission, has noted: *"Many Hindu people are very jealous and revengeful people. Their deep-seated superstition also makes them open targets for demonic activity. Because of jealousy, people have killed other people by means of black magic. When they see somebody prospering and progressing in life, they cannot stand to see that and so they go out of their way to cast a spell on the one they are jealous of.."*

"Some Hindus will also attempt to use magic to enhance their business, cast a spell to win over a girl or women by means of love magic, discover treasures hidden away somewhere, using some form of magical divination, win court cases by casting spells on the magistrates or public prosecutors and defend themselves against their enemies by protection magic."

Rev. Greg Denysschen also observes that: *"the Hindu guru movement is the missionary enterprise of Hinduism ... Hindu gurus are active propagators of Hindu philosophy. They gather a number of disciples around them, impressing these seekers with their occult and psychic abilities. A guru must have disciples, so they actively canvass as many as they can reach. Offering shorter paths to self-realisation, they are regarded as masters, absolutely necessary to lead the disciple to enlightenment."*

The Caste System

Every Hindu is born into a group called a caste. A person cannot do anything to change their caste. At the top of the caste system is the priestly caste (the *Brahmans*); then the warrior / ruler caste (*Kshatriyas*); and the farmers, craftsmen and trades people (*Vaishyas*). These are the forward castes. The lower castes, including the physical workers and labourers (*Sudras*) and untouchables (*Harjans*). These five groupings break down into over 2000 specific castes in practice.

Caste is the Hindus strongest social security. Conversion to Christianity destroys this. When a Hindu converts to Christ, it will lead to his being excommunicated from the community, probably even from his own family, elimination of marriage prospects and often also physical assault and persecution as well.

Although in India the constitution "*guarantees*" equality and bans discrimination, the caste system is vital for over 80% of the population.

Over 70% of all Christians in India (25 million) are of the lower classes and tribal communities. Therefore, the average Hindu associates the Christian Gospel with the underclasses of their society.

Evangelising Hindus

It is not necessary to defend the existence of God to Hindus, although with their pantheistic concept of god, it is essential that we clarify and redefine whom we mean by God.

The Hindus have a great respect for sacred writings, including the Bible. Hindus will listen attentively to an exposition of Scripture.

Hindus also have a great respect for the person of Christ, the quality of Christ's relationship with people, His teachings, (particularly the Sermon on the Mount) and His unique and vicarious sacrifice of Himself and suffering, all have a strong appeal to the Hindu.

As Christian communicators, we need to build on this basic respect for Christ with an understanding of what Christ taught and who He is - The Word made flesh.

The Hindu doctrine of *Karma* is a barrier in terms of defining salvation. However, it can also be used as a bridge to communicate the Gospel to Hindus. The Bible does teach that what we sow is what we reap. What we do now affects our eternity. However: **"It is appointed unto man once to die and after that the Judgement."** Hebrew 9:27

The Hindu must be told of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who by His vicarious suffering and death upon the cross, triumphed over sin and has taken upon Himself, the penalty for all our sins. Hindus need to understand the atonement.

It is important that we be loving and compassionate in our communications with Hindus. That we present our Gospel message in such a way that it answers the problems, questions and needs understood by the Hindu. We need to demonstrate love and respect for the listener and his questions. There must be no condescending attitude in our evangelism.

The Challenge of Hinduism

We need to speak to the whole person, mind and heart, grappling openly with the problems, questions and needs of our listeners.

The Hindu quest for peace (*Shanti*) is so overwhelming that he is willing to exert extreme effort in a relentless search to find this.

We need to recognise that Hindus consider a willingness to wait, to mortify his body and desires, a willingness to suffer pain and to fast as essential qualities in any spiritual leader. Christian leaders with these kinds of spiritual qualifications will find Hindus receptive to their message.

The Gospel in India

There are over 300 000 churches in India. There are well over 25 million Christians in India (comprising over 2,4% of India's total population). There are over 100 000 full-time Christian workers in India, half of these pastoring local churches. There is on average, only one pastor for every six congregations. There are over 1000 Protestant, Independent and Anglican missionaries in 184 agencies, in India.

In addition, there are over 44 000 Indian missionaries and evangelists in 440 agencies, of which 60% are working cross-culturally in India. There has been a dynamic growth of Indian mission agencies and church-based mission initiatives in India. Hindus are coming to Christ in unprecedented numbers.

Some Practical Guidelines

Do remember, in interacting with Hindus, that the eating of meat is offensive to them. So too is the social mingling of unrelated boys and girls.

Christianity is frequently presented to Hindus as a foreign (i.e. Western) religion. There is also the prevalent impression that only "*untouchables*" embrace Christianity. Many Hindus live under the constant fear of evoking the wrath of *Kula Devata* (the family god) if they accept the gods of other religions.

There is also the fear of the loss of property, loss of privileges and of position in their society, if they convert to Christianity.

In India, there is also the loss of economic privileges from the government. Those students who convert to Christianity can lose state financial aid for their studies.

No people group can be reached for Christ by merely academic means. We cannot, and must not, place our confidence merely in correct words and statements, or strategies, but only upon the living Lord Jesus Christ. Only the Holy Spirit can regenerate lost souls. The people we win on the street must first be won on our knees in prayer.

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'whom shall I send?' and who will go for us? And I said 'here am I, send me!'" Isaiah 6:8

Recommended Reading:

Hinduism by Rev. Greg Denyssen, Jivannadi, 1994

Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, William Carey Library, 1982

Operation World, Patrick Johnstone, WEC, 2001

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CHALLENGING MUSLIMS

1. The Lord Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets — **what can you say to convince me that Mohammad is a true prophet of God?**
2. The Bible warns us not to add to or take away from His revealed Word. **What can you tell me to convince me that the Quran is true?**
3. It is good to clean your body before prayer, but **how do you clean your heart and mind?**
4. Our Lord Jesus warned us not to use vain repetition when we pray. **How do you maintain your sincerity and devotion repeating the same words 50 times a day, every day of the year?**
5. **Why are Muslims required to dress, eat and speak like 7th Century Arabians? Isn't it cultural imperialism to require everyone to speak Arabic?**
6. **Why do all Muslims pray in the same direction? Why do Muslims all bow down to the Ka'ba in Mecca? In which direction do Muslims pray when they are in Mecca? What is in the Ka'ba? Why are Muslims bowing down to a rock in a box in Mecca? Isn't that idolatry to bow down to a graven image?**
7. **What does the Quran teach about marriage? Is polygamy allowed? What about divorce? Can a woman divorce her husband? Who has custody of the children in the event of divorce?**
8. There are many consistent reports, which are disturbing and shocking, of human rights abuses and persecution of Christians in Muslim countries like Pakistan and Sudan. **What does the Quran teach about how Muslims should behave towards Christians?**
9. According to the UN Commission on Human Rights, and numerous anti-slavery societies, slavery still exists in some Muslim countries like Mauritania and Sudan. **What does the Quran teach about slavery?**
10. The National Islamic Front government in Sudan declared Holy War against the Black Christians in the Nuba Mountains and in the South killing many hundreds of thousands of Christians. **What does the Quran teach about Jihad?**
11. **In Islam how is atonement made for one's sins? How can one be forgiven?**
12. **How can you as a Muslim know for sure if you will go to Heaven or not? If God was to ask you: Why should I let you into My Heaven? What would you answer?**
13. **Does Islam recognise the rights of other religions to exist and freely operate in Muslim countries?**
14. **If Muslims became the majority in our country would Sharia law replace our present laws and constitution?**

Challenging Muslims

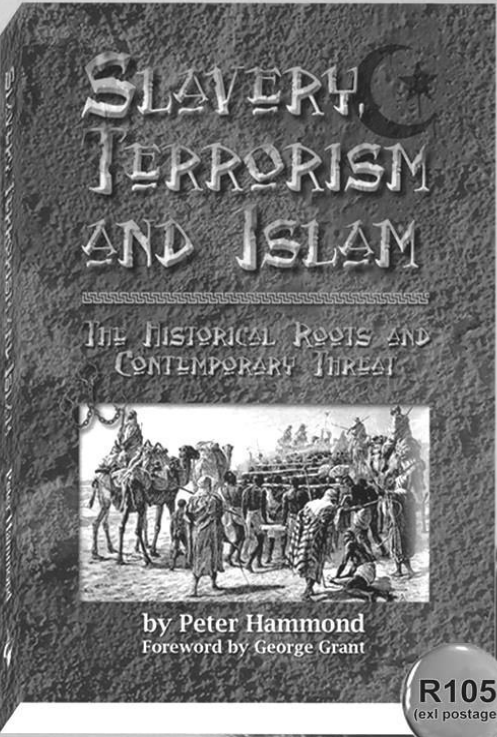
15. If Islam is a religion of tolerance why do no Muslim countries allow freedom of religion? In Saudi Arabia no churches or synagogues are allowed and no citizens can be a Christian - why is that?
16. How can Muhammad be called a prophet of peace when he engaged in 47 battles and raids on caravans in his lifetime? No Old Testament Biblical prophet – from Isaiah and Jeremiah to Malachi engaged in military campaigns - why did Muhammad?
17. The Saudi Arabian government has funded the building of thousands of mosques in Christian lands, yet no church or synagogue is tolerated in Saudi Arabia. Why is that?
18. Surely if the Saudi Arabians have the right to distribute millions of Qurans and finance thousands of mosques and Muslim missionaries in Western countries, Christians should be allowed to do the same in Saudi Arabia?

UNDERSTAND ISLAM - EVANGELISE MUSLIMS

The new, expanded edition of *Slavery, Terrorism and Islam – the Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat* has received much interest and positive responses from all over the world.

One review from an American authority states: *"Slavery, Terrorism and Islam is an invaluable desk reference and primer for analysts addressing Islam as an ideological force... unlike the academics who debate that a clash of civilisations is even in progress, Hammond writes from the perspective of one decisively engaged in that civilisational fight..."*


Dr. Peter Hammond's new book: **SLAVERY, TERRORISM & ISLAM - The Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat** is a fascinating, well illustrated and thoroughly documented response to the relentless anti-Christian propaganda that has been generated by Muslim and Marxist groups and by Hollywood film makers. As Karl Marx declared: *"The first battlefield is the re-writing of History!"*



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290 Pages, 220 Pictures, Maps and Charts

Slavery, Terrorism and Islam was first published in 2005 and quickly sold out. It earned Dr. Peter Hammond a death threat "Fatwa" from some Islamic radicals. Now completely revised and greatly expanded, this best selling book is much in demand.

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COMPARING THE BIBLE WITH THE QURAN

The **Bible** is **66 books** written by 40 different prophets and apostles, in **3 languages** (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek), on **3 continents** (Africa, Asia and Europe), **over 1 500 years**.

The **Quran** is one book, written by one author, in one language, in one geographic area, over 23 years.

Even the Quran acknowledges that Jesus Christ was miraculously born of a virgin, **was holy and** faultless, performed miracles, healed the sick **and** raised the dead.

Muhammad, however, was a trader who transported and sold slaves. He was also a slave owner. This we learn from the Muslim's own holy writings — the *Hadith*. One of Muhammad's 14 wives, Aisha, was only 6 years old when he married her and 9 when he consummated the marriage. (According to the laws of most countries in the world that constitutes child abuse.) Muhammad attacked caravans for loot and had over 600 Jewish men in Medina dig their own mass grave before having them all slaughtered for refusing to accept him as the prophet. Their wives and children were then sold as slaves. All these facts are recorded in the *Hadith*.

The authenticity of the Bible as God's revealed Word is attested to by **many witnesses**, by **miracles** such as the parting of the Red Sea, the fire that came down on Mount Carmel, our Lord feeding thousands with a handful of food, walking on the water, calming the storm, raising Lazarus from the grave and countless other events. The Bible contains hundreds of detailed **prophecies**. Our Lord Jesus fulfilled 300 Old Testament prophecies in his life on earth. The Messiah was to be: born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14), in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), a descendant of David (Isaiah 9:7), 483 years after the decree to build Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24-26). He would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12-13), by a friend (Psalm 41:9), His hands and feet pierced - crucified - (Psalm 22:16), His robe gambled for (Psalm 22:18). He would be buried with the rich (Isaiah 53:9). Yet He would rise from the dead (Psalm 16:10) and ascend to Heaven (Psalm 68:18). Unlike the Quran, the Bible is convincingly attested to by countless miracles and detailed prophecies.

There is no provision for **forgiveness** in the Quran, **no atonement** for sins (Leviticus 17:11).

Jesus Christ is the **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world. In **the blood of Christ** we have full atonement for sin.

Jesus healed the sick. Muhammad healed no-one. Jesus could make the blind see. Muhammad could only make the seeing blind. Jesus made the crippled walk. Muhammad could make the walking crippled. Jesus could take a dead man and make him alive. Muhammad could take a live man and make him dead. Jesus multiplied food to feed thousands. Muhammad could divide the loot amongst his followers. Jesus could walk on the water. Muhammad could ride a camel. If you visit Medina you can see the tomb where Muhammad is buried. But if you visit Jerusalem you will find an **empty**

Comparing the Quran with the Bible

tomb. The Lord Jesus Christ has risen. He is the way, the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except by Him.

Islam is a religion of **hatred** and slavery based upon a lie. Christianity is a relationship of **love** with God based upon the truth.

Quran

vs

Bible

1 book

1 author
1 language
1 country
Over 23 years
No prophecies
No miracles
A grave in Medina
No atonement
Hatred for enemies
Slavery

66 books

40 writers
3 languages
3 continents
Over 1,500 years
Prophecies
Miracles
An empty tomb in Jerusalem
Full atonement
Love for enemies
Liberty

"Therefore by their fruit you will know them." Matthew 7:20

MUSLIM EVANGELISM WORKSHOP MP3:

1. Comparing the Quran with the Bible
2. Understanding the Challenge of Islam
3. Uprooting Terrorism
4. Slavery and Jihad in Sudan
5. Slavery - The Rest of the Story
6. Guidelines for Evangelising Muslims
7. Challenging Muslims
8. The Gospel and Abraham
9. The Challenge of Islam According to The Reformers
10. Women in Islam
11. The End of Islam
12. Reformation or Islamisation
13. Revival Amidst Persecution in Sudan
14. Understanding the Crusades
15. The Crusades & Jihad
16. The Great Siege of Malta
17. Dealing with Guilt Manipulation
18. Faith Under Fire in Sudan
19. What is Going on in the Middle East?
20. Muslim Evangelism

The Muslim Evangelism Workshop MP3

"The desert tribes will bow before Him and His enemies will lick the dust."
Psalm 72 : 9

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AFRICA TODAY

Look at the Fields

"Behold I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" John 4:35

Size

At 30,244,000 square kilometres, 20% of the world's land surface, Africa is the second largest continent.

Population

The total population of Africa now exceeds one billion people (15% of the world's population), growing at 2.3% per annum. 41% of Africa are under the age of 15. Average life expectancy in Africa: 54 years.

Urbanisation

There are 52 cities in Africa with more than one million people. Two cities exceed 10 million. 40% of Africa are urbanised.

Languages

There are 2,500 ethno-linguistic people groups in Africa, 67% of which are in sub-Saharan Africa and 19% in the Arab world. Whites make up only 0.8% of the total population of Africa.

There are 2,110 languages in Africa.

Literacy

Literacy is officially: 61%.

Bible Translations

Full Bibles are available in 373 African languages, New Testaments in 335 other languages and a further 223 languages have Gospels, or other portions of the Scriptures translated. There are 693 African languages with Bible translation work in progress.

Diaspora

Approximately 150 million Africans are living in the Diaspora, outside the continent. Africa's population growth rate is the highest in the world; 2.3% a year, compared to the global rate of 1.2% a year.

Brain Drain

Each year more than 20,000 university educated professionals emigrate from Africa.

Food Crisis

50 Years ago Africa was a net food exporter. Today it is dependent on imports and foreign aid. 80% of Africa's farmland is severely degraded.

Foreign Debt

Despite many billions of Dollars of debt having been forgiven by the World Bank, Africa remains shackled in debt.

The Chinese Connection

China is now Africa's largest economic partner, extracting vast amounts of Africa's natural resources for its economy.

Infrastructure

Much of Africa's transportation, communications and power infrastructure has deteriorated.

Corruption

More than 25% of Africa's combined national income is lost through corruption, amounting to over US\$150 billion per year.

Malaria

Each year Malaria kills twice as many people as AIDS and TB combined.

Wars

15 Countries in Africa are afflicted by wars at this time.

Human Development Index

Of the 33 lowest ranking countries on the UN Human Development Index, 32 are in Africa.

Church Growth

From 1900 to 2010, Christians grew from 9.1% of the population to 48.8%. From 7.5 million to 504 million church members.

Religious Afflictions in Africa

The official statistics in Operation World for 2010, are:

Christians -	48.77% of the population, numbering 503,742,508 (2.6% growth rate per annum).
Protestants -	14% of the population, numbering 150,105,310 (3.2% growth rate).
Independents -	9.63% of the population, numbering 99,447,070 (2.6% growth rate).
Anglicans -	4.77% of the population, numbering 49,273,112 (3.1% growth rate).
Catholics -	15.95% of the population, numbering 164,794,368 (2.5% growth rate).
Orthodox -	4.5% of the population, numbering 46,462,739 (1.9% growth rate).
Evangelicals -	17.7% of the population, numbering 182,442,247 (3.6% growth rate).
Charismatics -	13.7% of the population, numbering 141,357,535 (4.2% growth rate).
Pentecostals -	5.8% of the population, numbering 59,803,540 (3.6% growth rate).
Muslims -	41.47% of the population, numbering 428,349,774 (2.4% growth rate).
Animists -	8.32% of the population, numbering 85,963,109 (0.2% growth rate).

Evangelical Growth

In 1900, Evangelicals numbered only 1.6 million (1.5% of the total population of Africa). However by 2010, Evangelicals numbered over 182 million (17.7%). This amounts to the largest Evangelical population of any continent. African Evangelicals are also increasing at a faster rate than any other continent. Countries in Africa experiencing the fastest Church growth include: Ethiopia, Sudan, Benin, Nigeria, Algeria, Mozambique and Angola.

Urbanisation

Africa's urban population has rapidly risen from 130 million in 1990, to over 390 million in 2010.

Least Reached

13 of the worlds 20 least Evangelised countries are in Africa. The vast majority of these are Muslim groups. These include the 210 million Arabs in North Africa, the 18 million Berbers in North Africa, the 2.5 million Tuareg in North Africa, the 17 million Wolof, Malinke, Julia and Susu tribal groupings in West Africa. The Fulani number 31 million, in 50 ethnic groups spread across Senegal and Niger to Sudan. The Hausa number 32 million, most in Niger and Northern Nigeria.

The Challenge of Islam

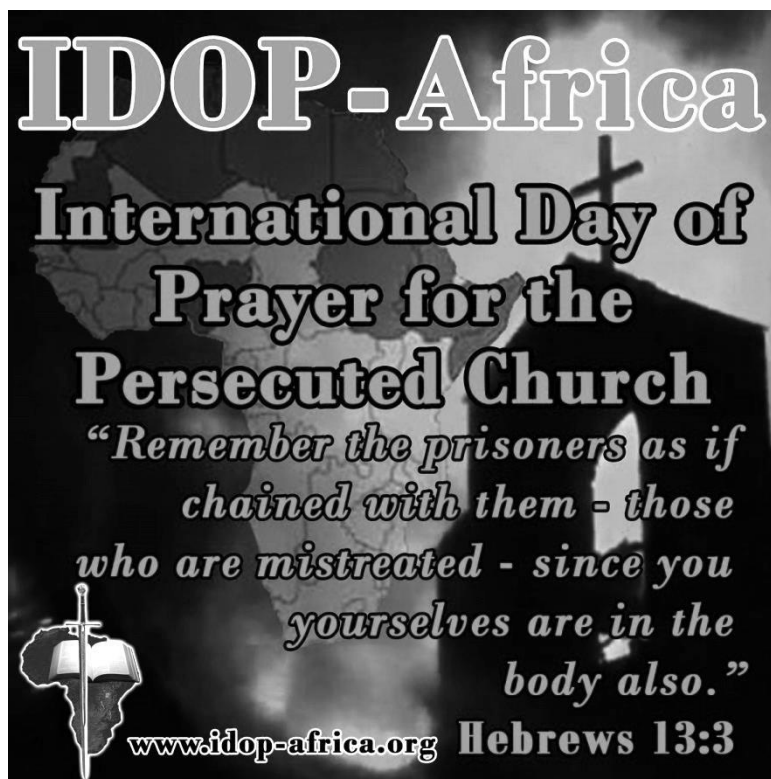
Islam is the greatest challenge for Christianity in Africa today. 182 million Muslims live North of the Sahara and 246 million live in sub-Saharan Africa. 11 Countries have less than 1% Evangelicals: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Mali, Guinea, Niger, Djibouti, Somalia, Mayotte and the Comoros Islands.

Malaria

Malaria kills a person on average every 30 seconds in Africa. More than twice as many as HIV AIDS claim.

AIDS

HIV afflicts 23 million people in sub-Saharan Africa, officially. In some parts of Southern Africa, life expectancy has fallen by half. An estimated 14 million children have lost one, or both, parents to AIDS.



IDOP-Africa
**International Day of
Prayer for the
Persecuted Church**
*“Remember the prisoners as if
chained with them - those
who are mistreated - since you
yourselves are in the
body also.”*
www.idop-africa.org **Hebrews 13:3**

LEADERS FOR AFRICA

Leaders for Africa

Every year Africa loses 23,000 university graduates. This includes the very teachers, doctors, engineers and other qualified professionals that Africa most desperately needs. This does not include the many hundreds of thousands of others who left for training overseas and never returned.

Most of the pastors of rural areas where we work have no tertiary education at all. Numerous provincial hospitals are paralyzed for the lack of a single doctor. Not that the community has not produced doctors, but most of them have moved to the city, or emigrated overseas.

Sudanese Christians in America

During a recent ministry trip to the USA, I spoke to a Sudanese Christian Fellowship in Omaha, Nebraska. Many of this congregation had come from Sudan many years ago to study. There were numerous doctors, teachers, technicians and engineers amongst them. They informed me that there were over 30,000 Sudanese just in the city of Omaha. I presented an inspiring slide presentation on what God is doing in Sudan and challenged the Sudanese Christians to seriously consider returning home to help rebuild Sudan on Biblical principles. I reminded them why they had come to America and undertaken their studies in the first place and how much they were needed back in Sudan.

The Land of Cush

We discussed the prophecies in Isaiah 18 and Zephaniah 3. There was a vigorous discussion, many tears and numerous Sudanese men and women stood up to reinforce what I had said and to acknowledge that God had spoken to them concerning their responsibility to take their skills and training back to the land of their birth. There was a very strong sense of the Lord's presence in this extraordinary meeting.

Potential Missionaries to Mobilise

There are literally hundreds of thousands, actually millions, of African Christians in Europe and America. Many of them left for leadership training, intending to return to their countries of origin. However, one of the ongoing problems is that most of those who leave rural areas for urban training Institutions, tend to stay in the urban areas and be lost to the rural communities who sent them for further training. Similarly, most of those who go to First World nations for further training tend not to return to their Third World countries of origin. In this way the Church is haemorrhaging in Africa. Some of our most promising leadership candidates are failing to return to their communities. The rapid urbanization and mass movement to First World countries is devastating to local congregations.

Strategic Resources to Fulfil the Great Commission in Africa

We believe that the time has come for churches throughout Europe and North America to mobilize these qualified Christians to go back as missionaries to their own countries. They already know the language(s) and culture, they have skills and training that are desperately needed back in their own country, and now with their new contacts, friends and congregations behind them in North America and Europe, they would be able to return with greater support, prayer backing and practical help. Such congregations with

The Great Commission Manual

African Christians will be uniquely equipped to invest in the fulfilment of the Great Commission in Africa. The potential impact of mobilizing these African Christians as missionaries back to their own areas would be tremendous.

William Carey Bible Institute

On another level, our William Carey Bible Institute is attempting to provide Leadership Training programmes for ministry candidates within Africa. WCBI offers a thoroughly Reformed, Evangelistic, Biblical and practical distance learning programme, which provides pastors, teachers and evangelists with excellent textbooks, lecture manuals, lectures on audio CDs and a programme of requiring book reports, assignments and exams. Supplementing the Correspondence Programme are short-term Leadership Training programmes in remote rural areas and our *Libraries for Pastors* Programme.

We are providing data CD-ROMs with notes and PowerPoints, MP3s and textbooks for Discipleship, Biblical Worldview, Great Commission, Missions History, Church History, Reformation and Revival, Muslim Evangelism, Ministering to the Persecuted, God and Government, Christian Action, Biblical Law, Apologetics, Children's Ministry, Conflict Resolution, Eschatology, Leadership and Evangelism courses of WCBI.

Pray for and if possible attend our **Biblical Worldview Seminars** and **Great Commission Courses**.

“Declare His glory among the nations. His wonders among all peoples. For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised. He is to be feared above all...”

1 Chronicles 16:24-25



GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Taking God's Blessings for Granted

Dr. Martin Luther observed that we exhibit a degree of thankfulness in life in reverse proportion to the amount of blessing we have received. In *Tabletalk*, Dr. Martin Luther wrote: *"The greater God's gifts and works, the less they are regarded."* The blessings of life, health, freedom and food are not really appreciated unless they are lost, or threatened. Because sunrises and sunsets occur daily, they are taken for granted.

Consider the Stars

Ralph Waldo Emerson observed that *"If the constellations appeared only once in a thousand years, imagine what an exciting event it would be. But because they are there every night, we barely give them a look."*

The Blessings of Being Hungry and Lonely

Similarly, the blessings of rain are barely appreciated unless one has been through a drought. A hungry man is more thankful for his morsel than a rich man for his heavily laden table. A lonely woman in a nursing home will appreciate a visit more than a popular person who has a party thrown in their honour. A Christian who has suffered under persecution for decades and receives his first copy of the Holy Scriptures will be more thankful for this one book than we are for all the Christian books, Bible translations and magazines that overflow our shelves.

You Should Experience Blindness for a Few Days

Helen Keller said: *"I have often thought that it would be a blessing if each human being were stricken blind and deaf for a few days for some time during his early adult life. It would make him more appreciative of sight and of the joys of sound."*

A Biblical Command

There are at least 138 passages of Scripture that deal with the subject of thanksgiving. We are commanded: ***"Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His Name."*** Psalm 100:4

"Oh, that men would give thanks to the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" Psalm 107:8

"Give thanks to the Father who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the Kingdom of light." Colossians 1:12

*"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And **be thankful.**"* Colossians 3:15

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but **in everything**, by prayer and petition, **with thanksgiving** present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Philippians 4:6-7

Joyful, Prayerful and Thankful

*"Be joyful always; pray continually; **give thanks in all circumstances**, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Plainly it is God's will for us to be joyful, prayerful and thankful.*

A Sacrifice of Praise

"Therefore, by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name." Hebrews 13:15

Our Duty

"No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks." Ambrose

A Good Habit

"It ought to be as habitual for us to thank as to ask." C. H. Spurgeon

The Parent of All Virtues

It has been said that a thankful heart is the parent of all virtues.

The Root Sin

It is also true that a lack of gratitude is a root sin:

"The wrath of God is being revealed from Heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness... for although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened."

Romans 1:18-21

Here, failure to give thanks to God is the root sin that leads to futile thinking and foolish, darkened hearts.

The Sin of Ingratitude

In Luke 17:7-19, we read of the ten lepers that were healed by the Lord Jesus. When one of them, a Samaritan, threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him, the Lord Jesus asked: *"Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?"*

In our missions experience we have also found that barely 10% of those we help, or sponsor will bother to express their gratitude either verbally, or in a letter, or card. Evidently gratitude is something of a rarity.

In 1 Timothy 3:1-5 the apostle Paul gives a list of some of the most terrible sins including: *"People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, **ungrateful**, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, traitorous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - having a form of godliness but denying its power."*

Here **ungratefulness** is listed in the middle of a litany of horrible sins.

A Fruit of Character

One of the first lessons good parents seek to teach their children is to say *"thank you"*. It takes character and courage to admit being in debt to others. It is humbling. However,

Give Thanks in All Circumstances

those who cannot admit their indebtedness to others, cannot learn, nor can they seek forgiveness.

Maturity

Failure to express gratitude is more than immaturity and rudeness, it is ungodly. We are commanded to honour our parents, our elders and our leaders. It is a sign of maturity to acknowledge indebtedness. Anyone who has learned anything is in debt to somebody else. We are all in debt, firstly, and mostly to God Himself, for our life, health, food, talents, family, friends, opportunities and for our salvation itself. We are also in debt to past generations who have sacrificed for the freedoms we now enjoy: Reformers, martyrs, pioneers, missionaries, soldiers, parents, teachers, pastors and so many others have sacrificed for our benefit.

Pride, Ingratitude and Unteachability

Those who do not take advice do not think they have anything to learn. They are often the same people who have a problem expressing a genuine heartfelt gratitude to others. It is a sign of pride to be ungrateful - it reveals an unwillingness to acknowledge a debt to others.

An Attitude of Entitlement

Instead of the Christian character of gratitude, our present culture prefers to promote an attitude of entitlement. This is the very opposite of gratitude. It builds on pride and covetousness, it is fuelled by bitterness, greed and envy. All too many in the present humanistic society take things for granted, demand to get, rather than seeking to give.

"One man gives freely, yet gains even more, another withholds unduly but comes to poverty." Proverbs 11:24

An Attitude of Gratitude

A grateful mind is a great mind. *"Be thankful, therefore, for the least benefit and thou shalt be worthy to receive greater."* Thomas à Kempis.

"It is good to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High; To declare Your loving kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness every night." Psalm 92:1-2

"Give thanks to the Lord, call on His Name; make known among the nations what He has done... Give thanks to the Lord for He is good; His love endures forever."

1 Chronicles 16:8,34

"Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name." Hebrews 13:15



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CAPE TOWN 2010 CONGRESS ON WORLD EVANGELISATION

The father of modern missions, William Carey, was a man ahead of his time. In 1810 he proposed a world missions conference, and he suggested Cape Town as the ideal venue! It was 100 years later, in 1910, that the first world missions conference was held in Edinburgh. 200 years after William Carey had proposed it, Cape Town hosted the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelisation.

With over 4,200 invited participants from 198 countries, and extending through Global link sites to another 700 venues across 95 countries, this was the largest and most representative missions conference in history.

The theme of the Cape Town 2010 Congress on World Evangelisation was: ***God in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself*** (2 Corinthians 5:19).

The organisers undertook extraordinary efforts to make sure that every region in the world was represented in proportion to the number of Evangelicals in that country. There were 1,200 missionaries, 1,200 pastors and ministry leaders, 1,200 academics and students and 600 in secular professions as participants in the congress.

Cyber War

This largest missions congress in history was targeted by the most massive, malicious cyber attack ever seen. The sophisticated computer network developed for live broadcasting to the world was targeted by millions of malicious external hits coming from multiple locations, most from Asia. There was no doubt that the co-ordinated cyber war against Cape Town 2010 originated from China.

The communist government of China prevented hundreds of Christian leaders in their country from attending the missions congress in Cape Town. Many Chinese Christian leaders had their passports confiscated, some were detained and many were subjected to intensive interrogation.

Threatened by Freedom

Some of these pastors were told that the Lausanne Covenant undermined the Chinese state in its section on 'Freedom and Persecution': *"It is the God appointed duty of every government to secure peace, justice and liberty in which the church may obey God, serve the Lord Jesus Christ, and preach the Gospel without interference. We also express our deep concern for all who have been unjustly imprisoned, and especially for those who are suffering for their testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ. We promise to pray and work for their freedom."* According to some Chinese state officials this is "subversive".

North Korean Testimony

One of the most moving presentations at the congress was presented by an 18 year old North Korean girl, Gyeong Ju Son. Her father was a high-ranking communist

Cape Town 2010 Congress on World Evangelism

government leader, but, when he fell out of favour with the political leadership, the family fled to China - where they were converted to Christ.

Gyeong related how her pregnant mother died of leukemia and her father returned to North Korea as a missionary. He was imprisoned for 3 years. Later when he determined to return to North Korea to share Christ's message of life and hope among the hopeless people of his homeland, he was arrested and executed.

Gyeong Ju Son testified of how she surrendered her heart, soul, mind and strength to the Lord Jesus Christ to do His will. She is determined to follow the example of her father, to study to be able to speak up for the suffering people of North Korea and to take the Gospel to her people there.

Operation World Launched

Operation World is the most important missions book available today. Yet, when Patrick Johnstone first approached Christian publishers his manuscript was rejected as "unmarketable!" However, millions of copies have been printed of the 7 editions of Operation World and they have been translated into 15 languages.

The first Operation World was compiled by Patrick Johnstone while he was an itinerant tent evangelist in Rhodesia. The first comprehensive missionary survey of every nation was published by the Dorothea Mission in Pretoria. George Verwer of Operation World was so impressed by it that Send the Light (now Biblica), undertook to publish the future editions. The 7th edition of Operation World was launched at the Cape Town 2010 Congress. Not only does OW offer the 1,000 page handbook, the definitive guide to every nation on earth, but a CD-Rom edition and enhanced e-book in DVD-Rom format and an Operation World Prayer Map.

Vision and Mission

As with the previous Lausanne Congresses, the focus was on **the whole church, taking the whole Gospel, to the whole world**. The congress focused on the truth of Christ in a pluralistic, globalised world, building the peace of Christ in a divided and broken world, bearing witness to the love of Christ with people of other faiths, and discerning the will of Christ for 21st Century world evangelisation, calling the Church of Christ back to humility, integrity and simplicity and partnering in the body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission.

Confronting the Issues

Each morning the plenary Devotional sessions worked through the book of Ephesians. Each afternoon included study groups, regional gatherings and multiplexes focusing on different issues and challenges for world evangelisation. One speaker declared: *"Most prominent Christian leaders have clearly articulated the problems, but are very unclear on their Christian answers to these problems. In fact, the world has never before seen such compromise, cowardice, heresy and apostasy as is being evidenced in, for example, the Episcopal Church in the USA."*

Powerful Potential

Christians form part of the largest, most diverse and most international movement ever seen in history. When we consider the vast resources available to the church worldwide then it is clear that the potential to change the world is enormous. Yet, plainly most of this potential is not being realised. With all the buildings, vehicles, printing presses, radio stations, websites, publications, computers, manpower and money available, the Church of Jesus Christ should be having a far greater impact on culture and world events than it is.

Over the last 50 years there has been tremendous church growth, globally, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, these Kingdom successes have been largely achieved despite the fact that Christians are, on average, giving less than 2% of their total income to the church, and the average church is giving much less than 10% of its income to missions and evangelism. If we could increase and focus Christian giving for the fulfillment of the Great Commission, we would literally see the world transformed. It is a fact that most church members are not giving much of their time, or talents, or treasure, towards the fulfillment of Christ's Great Commission to make disciples of all nations and to teach obedience to all things that He has commanded.

To Every Nation

God promised that all the families of the nations would be blessed through the seed of Abraham (Genesis 18:18). The Church must bless the nations. We need to recognise that the Biblical term for nations is ethne (from which we get our word ethnic). Biblically, what we often call a nation is a country, composed of many nations. There are 220 countries in the world, but over 9,000 ethno-linguistic people groups. The Great Commission is not fulfilled by sending a missionary to a geographic country. The Great Commission requires making disciples of every ethno-linguistic people group on the earth.

Idolatry or Integrity

The plight of today's church was compared to the pre-Reformation church of the 16th Century. The main stumbling blocks that hinder others coming to Christ are not found outside the Church. It is neither persecution nor false religions, but the integrity of Christian leaders which is hurting the Christian cause the most. Idols which need to be confronted, toppled and destroyed within our churches and lives include: The idol of power and pride, the idol of popularity and success, and the idol of wealth and greed.

A New Reformation is Needed

As one speaker declared: "*Reformation is once again a desperate need.*" He called for "humility, integrity and simplicity" and "a radical return to the Lord". We need to teach the hard truths of the Gospel. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as clearly proclaimed in the Bible, must be proclaimed and practiced. Not compromised and edited. We must be Bible people and work for a new Back to the Bible Reformation, or we will enter into a new dark age.

OPERATION WORLD LAUNCHED AT CAPE TOWN 2010

Operation World is the most important missions book available today. It is an absolutely indispensable part of any missionary's library.

Yet when Patrick Johnstone first approached a major Christian publisher, his manuscript was rejected as "unmarketable!"

Now, mission leaders from around the world are united in affirming *Operation World* as the most important, useful and influential missionary book available. Millions of copies have been printed of the 7 editions of *Operation World* and they have been translated into 15 different languages. Multiple editions have been published in German, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Korean. At this time translation work is also underway in Arabic.

William Carey

The very first missionary prayer guide to the world was written by William Carey in 1792: *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen*. This was the first global survey ever printed and the inspiration for the present phenomenon of *Operation World*.

Andrew Murray

In 1900 Dr. Andrew Murray in South Africa wrote *The Key to the Missionary Problem* and challenged the Church to hold weeks of prayer for world missions.

Dorothea Mission

In 1943 Hans von Staden was called of God to launch the Dorothea Mission to minister in the urban slums of Southern Africa. His passion for evangelism and strong emphasis on prayer, faith and a vision for world evangelisation inspired Patrick Johnstone when he joined the work in 1962.

Weeks of Prayer

In 1964 Patrick Johnstone compiled a 40 page booklet covering 30 countries with basic information and items for prayer for use in their weeks of prayer. This booklet was entitled *Operation World*.

Rhodesian Genesis

In 1974 the first comprehensive missionary survey of every nation was published by the Dorothea Mission. The book was written over a period of 4 years while Patrick was an itinerant evangelist in Rhodesia. Using cardboard boxes in the back of his van as filing cabinets and using any moment between outreaches and travel to correspond with missionaries worldwide was a challenge. Not only was Rhodesia geographically isolated but under relentless terrorist attack. Many countries would not accept post from, or to, Rhodesia and much of his correspondence had to be carried out through third parties.

First Edition

This 1974 first edition of *Operation World* was printed on a Heidelberg press in Pretoria with the lead letters being moulded on site and fitted page by page into printing trays. The first print run was 3,000 copies. Only once the print job was completed was Patrick Johnstone informed that none of these books could be legally sold as printing union members had not been used for the job! A copy was mailed to George Verwer of Operation Mobilisation and he encouraged a new edition which was completed in 1978 and published by Send the Light (now Biblica). George Verwer has ever remained *Operation World's* greatest supporter and promoter.

WEC and OM

In 1979 Patrick Johnstone was released by Dorothea Mission to become International Director for Research at Worldwide Evangelisation Crusade (WEC) based in England. The third edition was published by STL in 1980. The fourth edition in 1986. The fifth edition, by OM Publishing, in 1993. The sixth edition in 2001 and now this seventh edition published by Biblica in 2010.

Invaluable

Leading Evangelical mission leaders, scholars, writers, pastors and lay people all over the world rely on *Operation World*, refer to it and quote from it regularly. It is loaded with clear, concise, accurate information and insights on peoples, languages, religions, denominations, spiritual trends and prayer needs – for every country in the world, from the largest to the smallest. When you hear a country mentioned in the news, or in conversation, and want to know more about it, and what God is doing there, *Operation World* is invaluable. Not only does OW offer the 1,000 page handbook, but a CD Rom edition and enhanced e-book in professional DVD Rom format and an *Operation World* prayer map.

Mobilising Missions

I was introduced to praying through *Operation World* by Francis Grim when I joined Hospital Christian Fellowship in their Days of Prayer. It was while praying through the 1978 edition of *Operation World* at all night prayer meetings in the Army that the Lord guided me into my first cross border mission work to Mozambique. When I read that Mozambique was the least evangelised country in the Southern hemisphere and that there was less than one Bible for every thousand people in this longsuffering, war torn, Marxist state, the Lord galvanised me into launching Frontline Fellowship into Mozambique.

For Prayer and Action

During those early missions to Mozambique I began corresponding with Patrick Johnstone and was delighted to be able to report to him that the “unreached people group” of the Lomwe now had 650 Baptist churches amongst them! This was just the first of many answers to prayer and items for praise which could be worked into future editions of this indispensable missions manual and handbook. For more information on *Operation World*, and its invaluable resources, visit www.operationworld.info

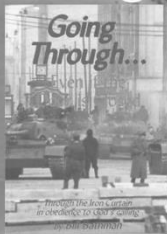
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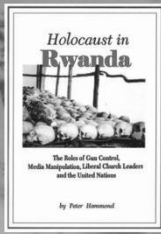
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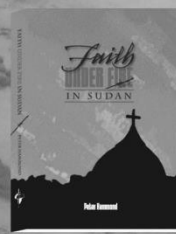
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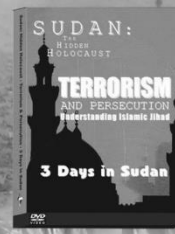
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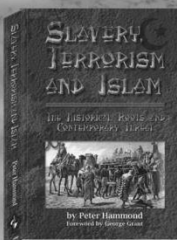
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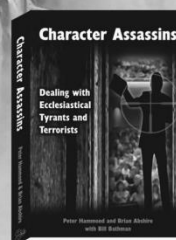
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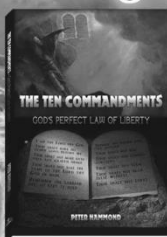


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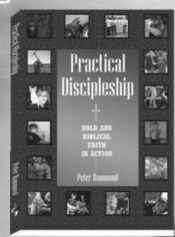


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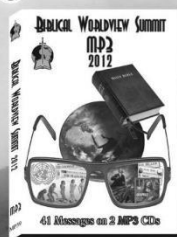
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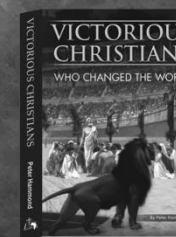
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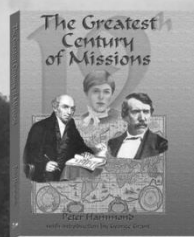


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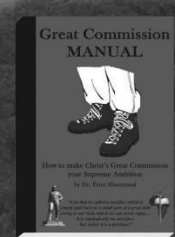


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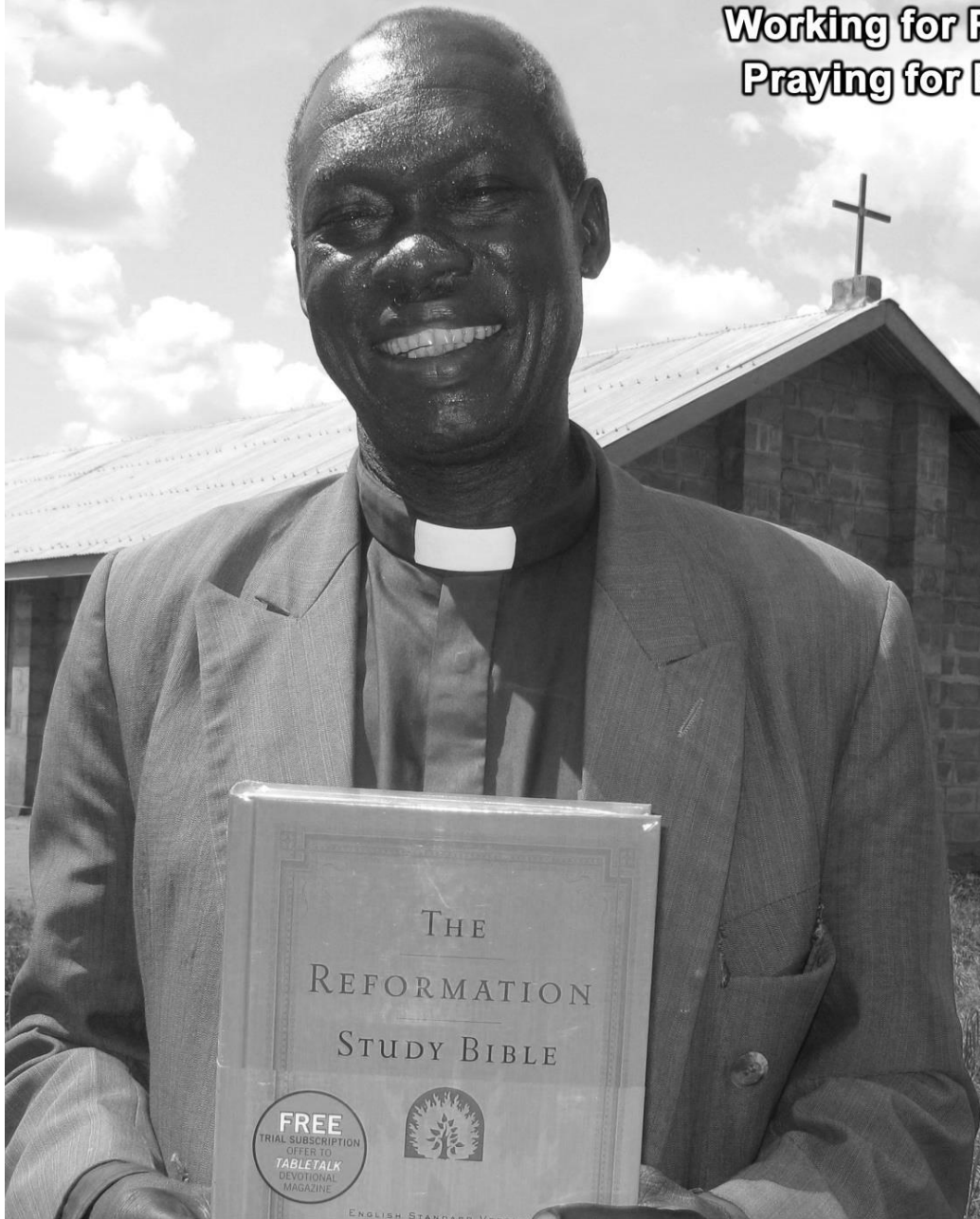
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Is the Great Commission your supreme ambition?

The last command of Jesus
ought to be our first concern.



*“And Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**”*

Matthew 28:18-20

“And people who do not know the Lord ask why in the world we waste our lives as missionaries. They forget that they too are expending their lives... and when the bubble has burst they will have nothing of eternal significance to show for the years they have wasted.” - Nate Saint

“I have one passion - it is He, it is He alone. The world is the field, and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ.”

Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf

“The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few.” Mark 9:37

“If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.”

CT Studd

“I hope you will be a missionary wherever your lot is cast... for it makes little difference after all where we spend these few fleeting years, if they are only spent for the glory of God. Be assured there is nothing else worth living for.”

- Elizabeth Freeman

*“Only one life - it will soon be past.
Only what’s done for Christ will last.”*

CT Studd

*“God’s work - done God’s Way
- will never lack God’s supply.”*

Hudson Taylor

“Where God guides - He Provides.”

*“GOD GIVES THE BEST - TO THOSE
WHO LEAVE THE CHOICE TO HIM.”*



**GIVE UP YOUR SMALL AMBITIONS
- AND FOLLOW JESUS!**

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