



“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord” Acts 3:19

Reformation Celebration

How fitting for our Reformation Mission to begin in Zambia with a Reformation Conference, calling people back to proclaim the Word, confront sin, preach the Gospel, seek Holy Spirit boldness, work for doctrinal Reform and Biblical practices, encourage each other in the Word and spend extended time in prayer.

Discernment or Disorder

After each lecture at the Reformation conference there were many lively discussions especially around discernment issues. It seems that more and more pastors and teachers are interested in taking discernment seriously. They are especially passionate about people returning to the Word. Sadly, however, many do not know the Word and many do not know how to preach Biblical sermons. One conversation I had with a student and a professor of a nearby Bible college showed that they did not even know some of the basics concerning Biblical roles of gender and Church government. Many people were excited at the fact that we were willing to tackle some tough discernment issues such as that of false doctrines, dangerous practices and the Biblical doctrine of healing. It seems that there are many people who are misusing the Bible to attract people to their churches. The result is chaos, immorality and shame on the body of Christ. More people need to speak out about these issues. ***“For as it is written, ‘The Name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you’”***

Romans 2:24

Preaching in the Rain

After our Lusaka conference, I went to rural area. I had three different meetings with different groups of people. One group of people gathered together to hear me talk about leadership. We were all gathered together under a tent which we had donated to them some years back. Sadly, years of weather damage had caused the tent to be less-than waterproof. When the rain came down, the tent started to leak all over. Eventually, we were all huddled together in a small section of the tent where the water did not reach us. This turned out to be a good thing because the rain was so loud that I could not project my voice enough for all to hear. The tight huddle of people made it easier for me to speak to everyone.

The Shame of Witchcraft



We had a seminar in a small rural village church. Leaders and church members walked from far distances, some from hours away, to attend the meeting in a small mud-brick building. We dealt with the beatitudes, discovering how Christ changes the hearts of His people to live according to His Kingdom standards. We also discussed the importance of preaching the true Gospel. Many people are in a constant state of discouragement due to the ongoing sin around them. I encouraged them that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. A conversation I had with a group of pastors shed some more light on the discouragement people are facing. I asked these pastors what the most serious sins and problems are in their areas. They told me that sins range from adultery to drunkenness. But, perhaps a more pervasively subtle sin is that of witchcraft. It is pervasive because so many practice it. It is subtle because most people do it in secret. Adultery can only be hidden for so long before suspicions are raised, especially when a woman falls pregnant in the process. Drunkards will struggle to act sober when their drinking becomes a continuous habit. The sin of witchcraft however, is far easier to hide. One can visit a witchdoctor in the late hours of the night or early hours of the morning. An amulet can be placed in one's pocket, cupboard, or under the bed without anyone else knowing it. Herbal "medicine" can be consumed in private. You can sin without anyone finding out and so long as the community of believers does not know, especially in cultures where honor and shame are very high ethics, someone can feel as though he or she has gotten away with it. So in this particular area of Zambia, these pastors were telling me that this is a serious problem. They shared that, providentially, God revealed that some people were practicing witchcraft through one local witchdoctor. I asked the pastors whether or not they had visited this medicine-man in order to share the Gospel with him. They informed me that they had not. I told them that they should. They do not have to be ashamed of the Gospel. It is the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes. They have Jesus Christ, the Conqueror of the devil on their side. They were encouraged by this.

It Rains upon the Just and the Unjust

We ran another conference where we dealt with salvation and the supremacy of Christ over all other created things. We also tackled some practical Christian living issues such as forgiveness and contentment. Later, in the night, we showed the *Jesus* film. There were over 200 people who showed up for the film. While it was playing, the rain started to pour very heavily. Often

when I get up to preach after the film, people get up to leave. They come for the entertainment, but leave before the conviction. Because it was raining, the people had nowhere to go, so they had to stay for the preaching of the Word. I called them to repentance and there was a sense of sobriety and stillness among the people. I had an open time of prayer where the people could call out to the Lord right where they were. I could not understand what they were saying, but there seemed to be some emotional cries out to the Lord. Afterward the pastors in the area commented that the people were really convicted by the meeting we had. The rain made the journey back to our rural accommodation very difficult as streams became rivers and bridges were submerged under rushing water, but I could not complain as the rain was a blessing which caused the people to stay and listen to the Word just moments before.



Masquerading Musicians

At a conference with a new church, I shared the Gospel and the need for God to transform us into new creatures. All too often people are interested in filling churches, but the people inside the church buildings are not filled with God. After the meeting two young men came up to me asking me to “boost” their music careers. I declined their request. The whole time I spoke to them, they did not want to look at me in the face. I asked my pastor-contact if there was some kind of cultural nuance that I was missing and why it was that they refused to make eye-contact with me. Another pastor told me that those two individuals had been drinking that day and they probably felt ashamed. This reminded me that the music industry within the church is such a dangerous thing. Many people make careers out of church music because they have a guaranteed audience every Sunday. They always have an opportunity to perform. If these musicians are not held accountable and kept in check, we could easily have many people who are not even saved looking to create a music career on the back of the Church and corrupting our worship.

Pray for Zambia

While we are grateful that Christianity is widely accepted and many people are open to listening to Gospel messages, people generally do not understand the way of Salvation. Many churches are caught up in the prosperity movement. Corruption runs deep in political sphere despite Zambia calling itself a Christian nation. Pray that those who are calling themselves Christians will develop a Biblical worldview, practice Biblical discernment and seek to be Biblical leaders.

“Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the

remnant of His inheritance? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in steadfast love” Micah 7:18



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