

FLY,
BELOVED
AFRICA,
FLY! MIKE CLARKE

SECOND EDITION JUNE 2021

INCLUDING

“THE PANDEMIC DILEMMA FOR THE
FOLLOWERS OF JESUS.”

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AFRICA IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

BALANCE OF RESOURCES

Africa is the ONLY CONTINENT that is truly independent of all other continents. If we stopped importing and exporting and learned to collaborate with one-another we would all prosper!

DR KWAME NKRUMAH MOOTED THE IDEA OF 'THE UNITED STATES OF AFRICA' IN 1958.

It has consistently kept on resurfacing since then.

COULD IT BE THE ANSWER?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dawn Mary Clarke. My spouse for 53 years. What a faithful Godly woman!

Dee Nyamieh Walker PhD. Born in Liberia, Raised in Sierra Leone, Educated in America, A true Global Citizen with a heart after God and a passion for the continent of Africa! A faithful friend. A great source of encouragement. My Editor Version 1.

D Botha. My Friend. My Brother in Christ. My Sounding Board. My Editor Version 2.

SPECIAL FOREWORD TO EDITION TWO

THE PANDEMIC DILEMMA CONFRONTING THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS.

Whichever way we look at it the Covid Pandemic has either highlighted OR surfaced a number of challenging issues for those who consider themselves to be followers of Jesus Christ.

Many of us have, for the first time ever, been confronted with a very real-life threatening virus that simultaneously threatens our loved ones, us as individuals AND the broad community of which we are a part.

Everyone is now acutely aware of their own mortality AND the reality that we actually have no control whatsoever over the timing of our departure into eternity,

ANYMORE THAN WE HAD ANY CONTROL OVER THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR CONCEPTION!

One would think that this was the time for the followers of Jesus, as custodians of eternal truth, to be sounding the trumpet of eternal salvation, deliverance from evil spirits and physical mental and emotional healing on earth. Yet, the only Christian leader I have recently heard making a public statement merely suggested that churches be used as vaccination centres!

So, what is the problem?

I have a personal perspective on this. And I emphasise “PERSONAL” because I might be wrong. Or there may be more to it than I have seen. But if I am wrong or missing something, my expectation is that you will let me know. My hope is that by sharing this we might between us kickstart a process aimed at discerning God our Father’s perspective on what is going on in Africa (and the world) and receive His instructions in terms of what he requires of us as The Body of Christ to do.

As I read scripture, we and we alone have absolute authority to stop evil in its tracks whatever the way it might manifest! All we must do is come into agreement (communion?) and speak to the forces of darkness (affliction, illness, disease, poverty, lawlessness) and command them to stop their nonsense!

Imagine the impact for the Kingdom if we all started to speak in harmony with one another against Satan and his forces of evil AND Covid 19 died! So how do we get the Body of Christ mobilised?

Firstly, I suggest that we need to understand the difference between unity and harmony. It is significant to me that the word in The Bible translated ‘agree’ in the phrase ‘if any two or more agree and approach The Father in my name’ is probably best translated ‘if any two or more are in harmony and approach The Father in my name’) I once discussed this with a music teacher. She suggested that the simple answer was that an orchestra was considered to be in unity when all the players played off the same music sheet which should have an outcome of them playing in harmony provided only that they

were playing the instrument they were gifted to play! Are we demanding conformity or are we allowing Holy Spirit to play us according to The Father's gifting and design? This is an issue I am going to address in some detail later.

Secondly, we need to create a framework for this discussion.

Thirdly we need to develop a non-confrontational method of engaging with one another.

To start with I believe that we need to ask ourselves "Why are members of The Body of Christ so reluctant to publicly and aggressively stand against evil?"

There is one obvious answer..... They don't believe the Bible to be the incorruptible Word of God, or possibly we are Christians in form but not substance?

I respectfully suggest that our lack of enthusiasm for standing against evil is rooted in three basic lies that have been extremely subtly sold to us by Satan over a long period of time!

Lie 1: Jesus died on the cross of Calvary to save me from hell. (Don't panic! Believers are saved from hell. It's just not the reason Jesus needed to die on the cross. Please read on and then tell me if I am wrong!)

Lie 2: There is a way that I can through my own performance/conduct get God to give me whatever I want.

Lie 3: Church leaders, especially charismatic church leaders, have a hotline to God!

So, what is the Truth?

In this second edition I have tried to start a conversation that might lead us to the Truth, The Truth that will set us free!

My motivation for publishing the first edition of “Fly, Beloved Africa, Fly!” in 2014 was rooted in a personal conviction that, after some twenty-four years of political freedom, the Rainbow Nation was showing all the symptoms of becoming a sick parody of the dream that had supposedly driven the heroic conduct of the founders of the African National Congress. (ANC) and other members of the ‘liberation struggle.’ Nothing was working quite like it was supposed to have done. Most tragically the promise of prosperity for all rooted in a nation transformed into a non-racial, non-sexist, free and fair society was turning out to be pipe dream. Something had clearly gone wrong. But to me it seemed that there was still hope if our people came together to consider the possibility that “There might be another way of doing things that could be a better way!”

Seven years later, in the middle of a devastating Pandemic, I am even more convinced that the only hope for our magnificently diverse, beautiful nation, and for sub-Saharan Africa as whole, is for us, the citizens of sub-Saharan Africa, to come together in one accord to revive the original dream of the Founders of the Liberation Struggle who had but one mission:

“To See Africa Healed from The Hurts of Her Past.”

“To See Africa Justly Governed by Her Own People.”

“To See Africa Maximising Her Economic Potential!”

If you have any doubt about this, I suggest that you research the writings and historical records of the first ever president of the ANC John Dube. (LINK)

As I read history, I note with interest that ALMOST ALL the early leaders of the Liberation Struggle were men and women of high moral persuasion who, driven by Biblical Judeo-Christian Values, strove to do what was right as opposed to doing that which was self-serving. Whilst starting well, many of these Leader’s careers did not end well, and I believe that we are mandated by history and the blood of those who gave their lives in the struggle, to learn lessons about what the drivers of their leadership failure were! Only in this manner will we root out the cause of the chaotic endemic breakdown of infrastructure, lawlessness and corruption that we are now seeing in our Beloved South Africa!

My hope is that this short book will become a catalyst that causes the birth of a new hope in the hearts of all and that with this new hope will come a desire to collaborate with other like-minded citizens see “The African Dream” come to reality.

According to the last Census, approximately seventy percent of South African Citizens consider themselves to be “Christians”. I

have consequently focussed on creating a context of a Judeo-Christian value system in the hope that this will give the conversation a common moral yardstick to talk to. However, in no way am I seeking to exclude anyone from the conversation.

There are many good people who share belief systems that differ from mine. My request is that they adopt an attitude of genuine enquiry. Is it possible that the way forward for our nation (and sub-Saharan Africa) could at least be partially defined by what I share!

For the record: I am a seventy-three-year-old white male. I was born in 1948 which was the year “Apartheid” came into existence. Kindly appreciate that I had absolutely no control over the circumstances of my conception and that the reason Apartheid came into existence in the year I was born was similarly outside of my control.

NOTE: I am quite obsessed with the concept of “Possibility Thinking” which is fundamentally about adopting an approach to interaction with my fellow human beings based on an assumption that it is always possible that I could be wrong and that there could be another way of thinking which could be a better way of thinking in the context of our search for truth in the world we live in.

If you subscribe to a ‘World View’ other than Christianity, may I respectfully suggest that this is an opportunity for you and me to engage on a basis where, having developed an understanding of one another’s perspective on life, we can actively look for common ground upon which to build our future in this wonderful land!

My experience over the past several years has led me to believe that EVERYONE living in sub-Saharan Africa would love to see:

“Africa Healed from The Hurts of Her Past.”

“Africa Justly Governed by Her Own People.”

“Africa Maximising Her Economic Potential!”

Given the absolute nature of the principle of “Cause & Effect” there must be a reason why this has not happened. My invitation to everyone is to collaborate in discerning what the real problems are! And to collaborate with like-minded citizens to craft a strategy to bring this African Dream to reality.

THE CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW.

NB: This narrative presupposes that you believe that there is a God of Creation. Should you currently doubt this then we invite you to go to this link ([LINK.](#))

NB2 This is a condensed version of my perspective on The Christian World View based on my understanding of The Bible. Being in my seventy-third year and consequently in the latter season of my life, I am quite obsessed with arriving in heaven to universal applause, which is not going to happen if I have in some way been deceived into believing a lie! If you consider my perspective to be theologically flawed AND can demonstrate this through reference to

a recognised authentic translation of The Bible, PLEASE let me know!

THIS IS MY PERSPECTIVE:

God is love!

Love unexpressed remains dormant.

Love expressed but not reciprocated remains unfulfilled.

Love expressed through fear or intimidation is unsustainable.

Reciprocal love expressed voluntarily and unconditionally is the foundation for intimacy and has within it the potential for extasy.

For God to fully express Himself, He decided that he wanted to bring into existence a being with an uninhibited capacity to choose whether to receive and reciprocate His love.

God consequently decided to create man in His image and likeness. The process involved creation of the universe and the creation of the earth and everything within it. (It is very interesting to consider how recent scientific discoveries have validated the sequence of creation as contained in The Bible. But that is another story)

Once the Earth was ready, God created humankind in His own image and likeness and gave humankind the authority to rule over every living thing on earth.

In the process God took soil from the Earth, shaped it into the form of a man into whom He breathed life. (One of only two occasions when God himself directly breathed life into being). This man is called Adam.

God placed Adam in a perfectly protected/hedged about enclave called Eden to cultivate and exercise stewardship over all that existed in Eden.

God made a point of making sure that Adam understood that his right to enjoy the abundant life in Eden, where his every natural need could and would be met, was conditional on Adam allowing God to be the sole moral authority in creation with the right for all eternity to be the only person who could decide what was good or evil.

God then decided that it was not good for man to be alone.

Instead of taking more soil from the Earth he decided to take something already close to Adam's heart, his rib, which he then formed into Woman. A being so perfectly designed that when Adam & Eve came together according to God the Father's intention and according to God's design, they discovered that in this God ordained relationship they had the potential to experience physical, mental and emotional extasy. And when they consciously came together to procreate (collaborate with God the Father to create more children

for Him to love) they moved into a dimension of potential spiritual extasy as well. By doing this God the Father mirrored the intimacy with which he wanted to relate to us as His children!

HauCool is that! 😊 (Note: Suddenly the attacks on marriage, the prevalence of pornography and other forms of deviant sexual behaviour that undermine healthy malefemale relationships become more understandable! The last thing that the forces of darkness want is to see is God the Father fulfilling His role as our moral authority! The moment God is restored as our moral authority we are restored to right relationship with The Father and His Kingdom can now come and His will can be done in our lives!)

Adam and Eve blew it! They allowed themselves to be seduced by Satan into believing that God our Father was not as perfect as he claimed and that they could be the moral authority over their own lives and decide for themselves what was good or evil.

They effectively told God to mind his own business whilst they went about exercising their right to rule the earth their own way which God had given them the authority to do when he told them to ‘go forth and multiply, subdue the earth and take dominion over all living creatures’. God never cancelled this instruction. He just left them to get on with the job without his involvement. Since the exit from Eden mankind has never stopped reproducing, trying to subdue and/or control their fellow human beings, the animals and the elements according to their own reason and logic and in their own strength!

As much as we try and deny it, history so clearly shows that humankind has not done a particularly good job of it! Mainly, in my view, because humankind has yet to develop the ability in their own strength to deal with evil. No matter what laws we pass people motivated by anger, hatred, bitterness, envy, jealousy and greed continue to engage in sex trafficking, child slavery, murder, robbery and generally behaving in a manner calculated to manipulate, intimidate and dominate their fellow human beings!

BUT..... Despite humankind's rejection of His love and humankind's denial of Him and Him alone having the power to deal with evil, God the Father NEVER STOPPED LOVING THE PEOPLE HE CREATED!

Approximately two thousand years ago Father God decided that humankind had done enough to demonstrate to the whole of creation their inability in their own strength to rule the earth in a fair, just and morally righteous manner. The challenge He had was that humankind were in rebellion against him and, despite being 100% Love, 100% Mercy and 100% Grace, He is also 100% Justice! And Justice demands retribution, especially in the case of rebellion where universal law requires death of the rebel!

No man deserved a relationship with God the Father. In fact, they deserved to be eternally separated from Him (dead) because of their rebellion!

Being the all-knowing God of creation, He had always known that one of His Angels would rebel against Him and that this same Angel

(originally known as Lucifer and then as Satan after his rebellion against God) would deceive his children into rebelling as well and had made provision for this eventuality. For only the second time ever, he breathed life directly into being when He breathed Jesus into the womb of a young Israeli virgin by the name of Mary.

Jesus effectively became a second Adam. A pure undefiled child of God who despite his humanity chose to only do and say on this earth whatever His Father wanted him to do and say! In other words, he lived a perfectly holy life, never sinning (rebellious against God's ways) and going about and doing good wherever he went.

In a nutshell: He did everything Adam was supposed to have done and, in the process, he demonstrated that humankind **COULD** have victory over evil provided that humankind did everything according to God's ways.

After undeniably proving that he was God through signs, wonders and miracles and having confounded the religious authorities of his day with his knowledge of scripture and wisdom and being fully aware of his own innocence and holiness and knowing that he deserved nothing but the highest acclaim from God, he presented himself on a totally voluntary basis to accept the death sentence that humankind deserved for their rebellion by becoming a substitutional sacrifice.

NB Jesus was a very well-schooled in scripture. This is very important because he consequently knew that his torture and death **AND HIS RESURRECTION** were prophesied in Scripture. So,

when he presented himself a living sacrifice, he placed his complete trust in the prophetic word of God that he would rise from the dead. This is called Faith.

By dying in our place Jesus effectively opened the door for us to be reconciled to God our father for all eternity. We are reconciled to God by acknowledging our own sinfulness and acknowledging that Jesus, who deserved only the best from God the father, took upon himself the punishment that we deserved so that we, having turned our back on sin, could get what we did not deserve. We could be cleansed from our guilt and restored to the same relationship with Father God that Adam and Eve were intended to have. This turning away from sin is effectively an act of surrender to God the father so that His Kingdom may Come, and His will be done on our lives on earth as it is done in heaven.

Here we see why I started by saying that, whilst one of the consequences of Jesus dying was that we were saved from being condemned to hell for all eternity, the reason he died was so that we could be reconciled to The Father without the universal law of Justice (Fairness for all) being compromised!

By now you are either intrigued, mystified or you have concluding that I, as the author of “Fly, Beloved Africa, Fly”, must be delusional!

Of course, you may also have just had a revelation of the truth that God loves you so much that he gave Jesus to die in your place so

that you might be reconciled to Him for all eternity and all you want to do is take advantage of this and become a follower of Jesus.

Or you may be someone who considers themselves to be a Christian, but you have never heard the gospel preached this way and you want to embrace this new relationship with Father God.

Either way please email me immediately on givelife@communitylifegivers.com and share with me what you experienced as you read my perspective on Jesus' death and resurrection.

You are welcome to email with any comments and/or queries.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCING MIKE CLARKE

Mike is a fourth generation South African.

He was born in Johannesburg in 1948, brought up on Dundee in Northern Kwa Zulu Natal and educated in Grahamstown. He is married to Dawn, and they have two sons and five grandchildren.

Mike is a passionate advocate of Africa's potential and after 40 years as an Africa based international entrepreneur his perspective on

what will cause Africa to fulfil her social and economic potential is provocative but anchored in the wisdom of experience and a deep understanding of the cultural diversity of Africa.

His career was mainly in the Financial Services and Banking Industry, during which time he fulfilled a variety of roles including being AGM in a Bank and CEO of a company listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange. He decided in 1999 to focus on driving Organizational Development & Transformation initiatives in Africa.

In November 2010 he was ordained as a Minister of The Gospel under the banner of Faith Christian Fellowship International. (www.fcf.org).

He has worked extensively amongst the Indigenous Christian African Churches who minister to that sector of the African population who are the most socially and economically disadvantaged by the current world system.

He considers himself to be mandated to demonstrate the Father Heart of God to the people of Africa and to motivate, inspire and equip the Body of Christ to become the dominant influence for good in African Society.

Mike has devoted much of his career to the study of Human Behavior and is an acknowledged expert in the arena of assisting

organizations to develop strategies designed to draw out the real potential of their people and in so doing to get maximum productivity in all sectors. He has a gift in being able to see things in organizations that other people do not see, particularly in regard to appropriate or inappropriate application of biblical principle and the impact this will have on the sustainable profitability of an organization.

He works on a day-to-day basis as a Professional Mentor and is World Class Strategist and Organizational Alignment Facilitator. He assists Church Leaders to develop pro-active church growth strategies through The Community Life Givers Discipling Initiative of which he is founder. (<https://communitylifegivers.com/>)

PROPHETIC INTRODUCTION

“The LION was massive! His Mane was dense and full. His sculptured muscular body was covered with a skin that shone as if coated with a sheen of oil. His tawny eyes were blazing with golden anger. His whole demeanor was one of absolute authority as he stood facing North on Table Mountain at the tip of Africa. Under the spread of the pad of his broad right paw was a large rolled up scroll. The lion opened his mouth, took a deep breath and roared. First to the west, then to the east then to the south and then from the depths of his being he roared to the North. As he roars the scroll starts to unfold down the face of Table Mountain. Gradually the gigantic roar chokes down into a deep cough of satisfaction. All living beings in sub-Saharan Africa were frozen to attention. As the last fold of the scroll opened it covered the Rhodes Memorial and the wording on the scroll came into stark and bold visibility to all in Africa. The words read:

“The Battle for the True Liberation of Africa has now begun!”

In the heavens, as if suspended on a cloud, a golden two wheeled chariot waited. The chariot was drawn by a white war horse fretting and champing at his bit, ready and eager to go. The occupant of the chariot, a magnificently proportioned majestic warrior dressed in a white linen robe with a purple waist band. On his head is a burnished bronze helmet and in his right hand held aloft is a flaming sword. As the last of the scroll covered the Rhodes Memorial, he released the

reins. The white horse leapt forward and the chariot and occupant hurtled towards the earth directly to the southern-most tip of Africa where it instantly reversed direction and then leaped forward as if struck by lightning. The chariot then crisscrossed sub Saharan Africa at breakneck speed with the occupant leaning out of the chariot frequently touching the earth with the tip of his flaming sword. Each place that he touched a small fire broke out. Small but bright, until the whole of Southern Africa looked like it was on fire. Not with a consuming fire but a life-giving fire of true freedom.

Suddenly the chariot stopped dead. The warrior held his sword vertical and shouted the words “All Power and Glory and Majesty belong to The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, KING JESUS!” With that he turned his charger towards the heavens and with a mighty crash of thunder he disappeared.

Gradually the fires on the ground started to die down as if being absorbed into the earth and an unnatural light and a silence of awe fell like a blanket over all of Africa. For a season all was frozen in time. Rivers stopped flowing. Trees stopped growing. Birds and animals alike froze motionless. Suddenly natural light returned. A bird in its nest chirped as if testing to see if in fact a new dawn had come, a waterfall started to rush and natural life started to reappear everywhere.

Suddenly there were lions all over Africa. Some large, some small, some thin and battle scarred. All appeared as if waking from a deep sleep, woken by the roar of the Lion on Table Mountain. Some were coming out of caves, some out of crevices in the mountains, some out of the bushes and some from under river overhangs. Many were wary of the others and some were totally hostile towards their fellow lions. But all were walking proud. And a voice said, “It is time to deliver, heal, restore and rebuild my Body in Africa. Go and motivate, inspire and equip My lions of Africa to take dominion over their God given territory!”

It does not require that one be a rocket scientist, a PhD in theology or a Bible College graduate to interpret the above prophetic word and I find it tempting to tie what has recently happened to the Rhodes Memorial into this prophecy.

Since the time of Nimrod the people of Africa have been trying to work out a way of releasing the potential of the African Continent and of exploiting the resources of Africa to their own benefit.

In the process our ancestors have sold their heritage to the Arabs, the Europeans (both east & west) and in recent times to the Americans, the Chinese and the Indians! We have failed miserably in mobilizing prosperity for the majority of Africa’ people and yet Africa is the **ONLY CONTINENT** that is truly independent of all other continents. If we stopped importing and exporting and learned to collaborate with one-another we would all prosper!

“The enormous resources in Africa make it one of the wealthiest regions in the world... In most parts of the continent, it is possible to engage in farming all year round. Africa could easily be a paradise on earth” Dela Adadevoh

“Instead of being exploited for the benefit of the people, Africa’s mineral resources have been so mismanaged and plundered that they are now the source of our misery.” United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan at OAU Summit in 2005.

Clearly political liberation has not promoted economic prosperity with 60% of our people still categorized as poverty stricken, 34% considered ‘middle class’ and only 6% considered wealthy (Professor Mthuli Ncube Forbes Africa October 2012) SO WHAT BONDAGE REMAINS?

WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE LIBERATED FROM?

There is only one dominating force we need to be liberated from and that force is the dominion of WRONG THINKING!

Having made this categorical statement herewith a summary of why I believe that the time to shake off the yoke of bondage to WRONG THINKING is now.....

STATEMENT OF PERSONAL CONVICTION

“I BELIEVE THAT WHEN GOD CREATED THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA HE PLACED INTO THE SOIL OF AFRICA A MAGNIFICENT ABUNDANCE OF RESOURCES, MANY OF WHICH HAVE YET TO BE DISCOVERED.

I BELIEVE THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR THESE RESOURCES TO BE RELEASED TO THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA SO THAT AFRICA MAY BECOME A SHINING BEACON OF HOPE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD.

I BELIEVE THAT IN EVERY COUNTRY IN AFRICA GOD IS RAISING UP PRINCIPLE DRIVEN MORAL INDIVIDUALS WHOM HE IS ASKING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR BECOMING THE PRIMARY DRIVERS OF THE PROCESS OF AFRICA BEING HEALED FROM THE HURTS OF HER PAST, BECOMING JUSTLY GOVERNED BY HER OWN PEOPLE AND MAXIMISING HER ECONOMIC POTENTIAL.

I BELIEVE THAT GOD IS NOW CONNECTING THESE INDIVIDUALS AND THAT THE OUTCOME WILL BE A GOD ORDAINED CONTINENTAL STRATEGY DESIGNED TO OVERCOME EVIL AND RELEASE GOD GIVEN POTENTIAL IN EVERY ARENA OF AFRICAN SOCIETY.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, I BELIEVE THAT THOSE WHO HAVE BECOME POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY ACTIVE SINCE 1990 ARE THE CATALYTIC GENERATION IN THIS REGARD.”

I BELIEVE THAT IT IS ULTIMATELY THE HEARTS DESIRE OF FATHER GOD TO SEE THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA DEMONSTRATING THEIR CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO COLLABORATE WITH ONE ANOTHER TO BUILD A GOD FEARING, DYNAMIC, GROWTH FOCUSSED, WELL GOVERNED, MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE FEDERATION OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

I BELIEVE THAT NOTWITHSTANDING THE MAGNITUDE OF THE TASK, THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO START THE PROCESS OF BRINGING THIS GRAND VISION TO FRUITION.

I BELIEVE THAT THE SEASON IS UPON US TO START THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMING AFRICA INTO A COLLABORATIVE FEDERATION OF GOD FEARING, FEAR FREE, WELL GOVERNED, OPPORTUNITY FOCUSSED INDEPENDENT STATES.

I BELIEVE THAT WE NEED TO RECOGNISE THE WISDOM OF THE AFRICAN PROVERB WHICH SAYS “THE ONLY WAY

TO EAT AN ELEPHANT IS ONE BITE AT A TIME” ALWAYS BEING CONSCIOUS OF THE ‘BIG PICTURE’ AND APPRECIATING THAT EVEN WHEN WE GET THE JIGSAW PUZZLE OF OUR OWN PERSONAL EXISTENCE TOGETHER, WE REMAIN BUT ONE PIECE IN THE JIGSAW PUZZLE OF THE FAMILY WE COME FROM, THE COMMUNITY WE ARE PART OF AND THE NATION THAT GIVES US OUR IDENTITY.

(NOTE: For confirmation of the prophetic validity of this personal belief statement please refer to this ([LINK](#) to ANC website page on John Dube etc.)

In response to the Apostolic Prophetic word declared on the 10th April 2013 ([LINK](#)) and to become part of the process of bringing the above to reality I have written this book.

This book is aimed at motivating and inspiring Christians in Africa to find constructive ways of collaborating with one another to become more involved in influencing the communities they live in.

To exercise influence at a truly transformational level we need to be doing more than praying for our nation or sitting in judgement on our fellow citizens by trying to be a moral compass for people who have embraced an alternative code of conduct to Christianity! Whilst holding fast to our own moral compass and praying continuously as directed by Jesus, we need to bring to the table solutions to our

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL challenges that are crafted in the Father heart of God as opposed to in the reasoning mind of man. This is the way to bring real transformation to African Society. I say REAL TRANSFORMATION in the context of my observation that the word ‘transformation’ is bandied about by all and sundry but very few appear to have a clear idea of what we are supposed to be transforming into! This book is aimed at bringing Christians together to discern from The Bible what Father God says we should be transforming into and then developing focused strategies to bring this into existence in every sector of African Society. (I am a product of this type of radical transformation as I share in my personal testimony later in this book). I do not even remotely suggest that I have all the answers BUT I am absolutely convinced that between us, as The Body of Christ, we can under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, find the answers.

In the book ‘Shantaram’ the author Gregory David Roberts (whose personal beliefs I am not remotely aware of) quotes a Muslim Imam (imaginary or otherwise) who says “Most people see the world as a playground for the rich and privileged and see their lives defined by the quest to make enough money to enter through the gates of this playground. In reality the world is the battle ground between the forces of good and evil”

This almost echoes the words of Jesus where in John Chapter 10, the Apostle John records how Jesus, clearly referring to the devil, makes

the statement: “The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy. I have come to give you life and to give it more abundantly”. In Matthew Chapter 28 Jesus tells his disciples “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” And then just before He returns to The Father in Acts Chapter 1 Jesus tells His disciples that they are to be “witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” As I read these scriptures and many others, I cannot get away from a very basic understanding that the gospel is Good News because my understanding is that Jesus is saying. “If you do things my way, and like me, become transformational love filled life givers to your families, your communities and the society you live in, the gates of hell will not prevail against you and the blessings of God our Father will be released onto your land!”

And yet.....

At the time of writing the first edition of this book a friend asked me to assist her with some research she was doing for her PhD. The topic for her dissertation was “The response of the Christian Church to the HIV/Aids pandemic in Africa.” After several hours of research and discussion with church leaders it became apparent to me that whilst most (if not all) of the different Christian denominations and

church groupings in Africa had some form of reactive allocation of resources to helping those who had contracted the disease, there was no coordinated collaborative initiative designed to prevent the contracting of the disease!

In fact, this exercise caused me to wonder why the church had become almost exclusively focused on responding to the needs of the VICTIMS of the world system, not only as it impacted the Aids/HIV pandemic but as it impacted all forms of social shortcomings including poverty, lawlessness and generally rebellious conduct, as opposed to being proactively and dynamically involved in CHANGING the system. What immediately came to mind was an experience I had when I attended a gathering of senior church leaders by invitation from Campus Crusade for Christ at their offices in Pretoria. The stated purpose of the meeting was to try and establish a COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY to enhance the capacity of The Body of Christ to influence the thinking of national legislative bodies in South Africa in the context of Moral Regeneration. This was again in the context of the government acknowledging that lawlessness and corruption were a function of the absence of a broadly acceptable citizens code of conduct rooted in a shared value system. The general theme was summed up in the comment by one of the delegates who said “Is there anyone in this room who does not believe that our country would be heaven on earth if everyone lived according to the Ten Commandments?””

Ironically the government was at the same time openly allowing lobbyists on behalf of the abortionist and LGBT movements to advocate legalization of what are clearly biblically outlawed activities!

It was a great morning of discussion and interaction followed by a hearty luncheon. It went nowhere!

As I subsequently started individually meeting the people who attended the meeting, almost all of them reaffirmed their personal desire to do something and their frustration at not being allowed to.

“Not being allowed to”. This really got to me.

On reflection, I concluded that the key problem was quite simply that NONE of the parties present had the authority to commit their Church Group to the initiative without first caucusing with their respective governing bodies. A subset of this was the observation that some of the parties present had an agenda to pursue that outweighed seeking to serve the mission of moral regeneration.

I also found myself wondering if this was not also symptomatic of the deeply rooted cultural commitment to consultative decision making that is so much part of our 21st Century African environment?

Is this element of African culture good or bad? I pose the question because we Africans need to debate this and many other aspects of

culture if we are going to accommodate a meaningful association with the remainder of The Global Village where warp speed pace in development, particularly in commerce and industry, require quick decision making. Prof Bennie Van der Walt in his book 'Understanding & Rebuilding Africa' makes the comment "African communalism suppresses individual initiative. It does not allow the development of personal responsibility, a necessary prerequisite for any work ethic. This is aggravated by a paternalistic and hierarchical view of authority..... consensus driven decision making is time consuming, delaying urgent matters" At a later stage in this book I will elaborate on the importance of this debate and how this debate could lead to the development of an intrinsically 'African' approach to leadership and community development. An approach that will incorporate everything in African culture that is good but eliminates that which is limiting and inhibiting us from enjoying the fruits of God's African Continent!

It also seems to me that another dynamic is present. Every church organization represented had over time developed an internal decision-making process designed to support the organizations ongoing existence (and in some cases survival) as opposed to driving the organization's original mission! The subliminal message was "We are happy to co-operate with our fellow Christians AS LONG AS OUR OWN AGENDA IS SUPPORTED OR AT LEAST NOT COMPROMISED"

The question that came to mind was “To what degree is this attitude reflecting a FATALISTIC ACCEPTANCE of the status quo in our African society?” Almost as if we are saying to ourselves “Now that the white colonialists are gone and black Africans are in power, we no longer need to militantly oppose evil in society”. This is the antithesis of what Jesus said in Matt 16:18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” I am amazed at how many Christians seem to interpret this passively. In other words, as if the gates of hell are going to attack us and will not overcome us. That is clearly not the case. Gates are static.

It is the attacker who breaks down the gates!

I also suggest that this attitude is a betrayal of those who sacrificed so much in the so-called ‘liberation struggle’. The more I research the history of Africa the more aware I become of the degree to which so many individuals sacrificed so much in the process of trying to stop evil from prevailing in Africa under the jackboot of colonial imperialism. Many if not most, particularly in the last few centuries, were motivated by a desire to bring Christ and Christian values to the continent not just commerce!

In the latest wave we see that Nkrumah was a preacher during his time in America. Banda was an elder in The Church of Scotland during his time in Great Britain. Both Kaunda and Nyerere demonstrated a commitment to

Christianity at some stage in their careers.

Albert Luthuli was deeply religious, and during his time at Adams College he became a lay preacher. His Christian beliefs acted as a foundation to his approach to political life in South Africa when many of his contemporaries were calling for a more militant response to apartheid.

“Christianity is embedded in our movement. The first four presidents of the ANC were devout Christians and one of the best known of all was the late Oliver Tambo (1917 - 1993) who remained a devout Anglican all his life” (Rev Mautji Pataki, general Secretary of the South Africa Council of Churches.)

It is my hope that this book will provoke Christians from every Church group and denominational affiliation to consider whether a recalibration of our attitude towards one another in response to Jesus’ command “To love one another as I have loved you!” might result in a level of unity of purpose that will bring about Real Transformation even though we may not have conformity of doctrine.

Were we to do this it might just cause the Body of Christ to become the life-giving entity to Africa that God the father intended it to be! According to John 13:35 this is the evidence that the world is looking for: “By this will people know that you are my disciples. If you have love for one another”

Author and Theologian Ron Steele made the following observation when reviewing this manuscript “Of course, the core solution, which we all know is the gospel. The churches acknowledge this but have different approaches.

Evangelicals emphasize the born-again experience; the Pentecostals/charismatic group, emphasize that as well, in addition to the Holy Spirit empowerment. Then the historical churches emphasize social engagement and activism for the injustices in society.

Of course, put together they become a potent solution. In reality it happens only on a miniscule scale where you find genuine unity among such a grouping to solve a problem.”

The essential message of your manuscript is the changing of our worldview. Once upon a time, the worldview of most of the English, French and Spanish/Portuguese world was fashioned by Christianity.

That has changed dramatically in the past 50 years.

Europe is now referred to as post-Christian and there has been a general decline in accepted moral and ethical behavior in Western society. Much of this has been the result of liberal politicians and lawmakers who do not fear God. Democracy is a myth. The people do not rule in any country in the world. Nations are run by elitist

power groups (oil, financial institutions etc.) who have little time for Christian values.”

Ron’s comments are core. Proof of the accuracy of his observations is obvious to all who care to take their heads out of the sand, especially if you closely examine the global response to the global financial meltdown that started in October 2008 and the more recent response the Covid 19 Pandemic.

Why should the people of Africa be subjected to another form of colonialism? A form of colonialism rooted in a failed world view and a failed world system? There has to be an alternative and this alternative is the african dream.

In 1985 in South Africa we had a state president, PW **I** Botha, and a high expectation that he was going to cross the Rubicon, free Nelson Mandela and that the country would turn its back on apartheid forever!

He didn’t do it.

I was one of those people who had and shared that high expectation. Sometime after that, feeling disappointed and disillusioned, I was sitting in my study when something happened, and I can only describe it this way. It was as if somebody had turned on a movie in my mind. In this movie what I saw was a massive wave coming

down Africa. And in this wave was one word, 'UHURU', the Swahili word for 'FREEDOM'. As I watched this wave, it struck me that Africa had not in reality been truly set free. In fact, Africa had just replaced colonial domination with another form of domination that was largely tribal in origin, something we already had in South Africa. As I had this thought the wave rushed past me, broke on Table Mountain and a new wave formed and started to come back up Africa. But this wave was very different. Firstly it was crystal clear water, as clear as a Lesotho mountain stream, and in this wave I saw all the ingredients for Africa to be healed from the hurts of her past, for Africa to become justly governed by her own people and for Africa to maximize her economic potential. And I just knew that I knew that my life from that moment was going to be defined by the degree to which I contributed to the fulfilment of this dream.

This is not the only dream or vision I have had and recognizing the likelihood that some who read this book will be somewhat skeptical about the degree to which dreams or visions should in any way impact on what we human beings should decide about our life calling and purpose, I have dealt with this in more detail later on.

Before we consider the import of other dreams and visions, I think it is important that I share my perspective on what it means to be a Christian.

Some years ago I had the privilege of giving the graduation speech at The University of South Africa School of Business Leadership.

After the ceremony and whilst enjoying the sumptuous VIP spread, I was approached by one of my academic hosts who asked me the question “Are you a Christian?” Obviously, the content of my speech (which included The African Dream) had triggered this question. Some strange quirk caused me to answer by saying “I am actually not sure!”

This immediately triggered a discussion from all within hearing distance around how I could become sure whether I was a Christian or not!

The discussion was highly intellectual, occasionally humorous and starkly highlighted how divided the participants were about doctrinal issues. Eventually the discussion wound down with us all non-confrontationally agreeing to agree that the starting point was to agree to be called ‘A Christian’ even if that merely meant that you wanted people to know that you were not a Muslim, a Jew or heaven forbid a Pagan!

Clearly for me to merely say “I am a Christian” would potentially leave many readers wondering whether I am a ‘Christian’ as they understand Christianity or a ‘Christian’ by some other definition, so I give you my definition of Christianity in the context of a quote from a book written by someone whose views on Christianity are completely unknown to me. At the beginning of this book I made reference to the book ‘Shantaram’ where the author quotes a Muslim Imam (imaginary or otherwise) who says “Most people see the

world as a playground for the rich and privileged and see their lives defined by the quest to make enough money to enter through the gates of this playground. In reality the world is the battle ground between the forces of good and evil”

My definition of Christianity totally supports this viewpoint with an important caveat in that I would complete the sentence as follows “.....battle ground between the spiritual forces of good and evil and that the battle is joined in the minds of people!” The more I reflect on this the more I see that when people have a mind after walking according to God’s way, the more they embrace Christianity as a total lifestyle summed up in the statement “We live for Him because he died for us!”

Getting back to the significance of dreams and visions. The conclusion I have come to is that whilst a vision is a clear definition of a destination and whilst a goal is a way of measuring progress towards that vision, a God given destiny focused dream is what we return to for on-going motivation especially when the going gets tough!

I also suggest that a dream given by God will often have a magnitude that transcends generations and lifetimes and that fulfilment of the dream in our lifetime is less significant than focusing on our contribution to its fulfilment. It is what we do during our lifetime that will determine how loudly the words “WELL DONE GOOD

AND FAITHFUL SERVANT” will echo around the courts of heaven when we arrive there!

My personal walk through life has been one of progressive revelation of the degree to which The Bible accurately defines God’s design and intention for humankind and the degree to which The Bible articulates how God has established irrevocable principles that govern the relationship between man and matter, man and man and man and the spirit realm. I am more than willing to consider the possibility that in every situation there may be more to learn and understand and that this new learning will expose the reality that there is another way and that this way could be a better way. Given that the primary purpose behind the writing of this book is to try and provoke a meaningful conversation amongst truth seekers around how Christians can exercise a more positive influence over the affairs of the society we live in, let any person who is a seeker after truth feel free to engage with us! Hopefully this conversation will lead to action!

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

The only dream that has had more significance for me than The African Dream recorded above occurred in 1980. I had been through an extremely adverse set of circumstances which included me losing my job as a director of a major financial services company and my car had been repossessed.

A friend came to visit with a bible under his arm and started quoting scriptures to me about how good God is, how much He loves us and how He had through the giving of His son Jesus to die on the cross redeemed us from all evil and that if I would just accept this truth and surrender my life to Jesus all my problems would be over.

I absolutely lost it! I got so angry!

In my anger I shook my fist at heaven and said “God, if you are real and prove that to me, you can have this rotten life of mine!”

(The words were actually a lot stronger and more colorful than this but suffice to say that I would never risk doing that again for fear of a bolt of lightning from Heaven!)

A week or so later another friend invited me to attend a Full Gospel Businessmen’s Breakfast at a central Johannesburg Hotel. One of the speakers was a black man by the name of David Tebahali, who was at that time Mayor of Soweto. (This was in the time of the Apartheid era and black people could only fraternize with white

people in specially designated venues like so called ‘International’ hotels!). As Mayor of Soweto David probably held one of the most significant political offices outside of the Bantustans (the independent black states the Apartheid government tried to establish as part of the process of separate development).

Time has dulled the precise details and I would hate to prejudice his testimony by getting the facts wrong but what I heard was a man sharing how, despite all the justification under the jackboot of Apartheid for adopting a militant attitude to the overthrow of Apartheid he had gone through a Saul of Tarsus type conversion experience, had become convicted that God’s love could overcome all evil and that his role in the society of the day was to be a mediator between the powers of Apartheid and the disenfranchised, disempowered black people of Soweto. He then shared some of the realities he was contending with and how through the application of God’s Word he had overcome evil on many fronts. His humility and simple courage impacted me enormously!

The testimony that followed came from a young white man from an extremely wealthy northern suburbs family who shared how he, whilst in prison for drug dealing and wife abuse, had been rescued from a life of drugs, violence and criminal degradation by the same God that David was talking about. What really got to me, however, was the stark contrast between these two people. They were at the opposite ends of the social and economic spectrum in a society

dominated by evil and yet they could both give glory to the same God. That was when I realized that God had honored my anger and I now had a choice to make. A choice that would not only define my life on this earth but my life for all eternity! I surrendered my life to Jesus.

Since that event I have come to appreciate that not everyone has an experience similar to the three testimonies recorded here and that only God knows exactly what is necessary for an individual to come to a point of conviction. However I am totally convinced that if you are a sincere seeker after truth and that, whether you shake your fist at heaven or not, if you ask him to, God will meet you exactly where you are at!

It was apparently clear to those who were with me at the International Hotel that something profound had happened. But for me it was as if I had been transported into another world. I felt like I was walking on air, and it was quite astonishing how quickly my circumstances changed. Within a week I had a new job with a car and an income package more than adequate to meet my family needs.

Fortunately the friend who had hosted me at the event was wise enough to wait until I came out of the euphoric state before he moved in with some practical advice.

The first things he told me was that his role was now to start the process of helping me to hear God for myself. He then suggested that the place to start would be to read the bible and that I should commence by reading the gospel written by John and so the process of becoming a disciple of Jesus began.

I share the above to lay a foundation for the next vision/dream that I had. I say vision/dream because it is as if someone switched on a movie in my mind. But it is not as if the movie played out in one waking session (a vision) or during one night's sleep (A dream). It just kept on playing in instalments. Some at night whilst asleep, but with total recall when I awoke. Some at the oddest times like whilst having a pub lunch with a friend!

It started when I told my Christian mentor that I was struggling to understand the meaning of the phrase 'being born again'. He tried to explain but to no avail. He then did something I have really come to appreciate. He said: "Go and ask Father God to give you a revelation of this!"

Shortly thereafter I was lying in bed when the movie started. In the movie I was dressed in hiking clothes with a staff in my hand and a full hiking bag strapped to my back. I was walking along a concrete highway that seemed to stretch forever before me. When I looked over the left or right of the road all I could see was clouds below me and I just knew that if I stepped off this road I would fall into infinity and never stop falling!

I then suddenly found myself confronted by a set of huge brass gates that completely blocked my progress. The concrete floor could not be broken, the gates were too high to scale, the padlock on the gate had no keyhole and trying to climb around the side of the gate was impossible. I then peered through the bars of the gates and saw the road stretching before me. But now I could see a destination because in the far distance at the top of a mountain was a magnificent mansion with bright light streaming out of every door and window and I just knew that this was where I was heading. But now I had a problem! How do I get through, round, over or under this apparently insurmountable brass gate?

At this point I seem to have fallen asleep because it was only the following day whilst driving to work that the next episode switched on.....

Suddenly I noticed that there was a sentry box to the left of the gate and that there was a man dressed in ancient Roman Armor standing in this sentry box. I immediately approached him and asked him to please give me the key to the gate. His response was to tell me, without even blinking, that he was sorry but that only people who were born in the Kingdom on the other side of the gate could live there. I tried to argue that I knew I had to be there. I told him how diligently I had walked so far and how I was the exception to the rule because after all I had been a reasonably good person and I was such a nice guy!

He remained totally unmoved.

After a while I ran out of words and was about to go into despair when he looked down at me and with a strange look of compassion and challenge, he said “Michael, if you want to enter that Kingdom you need to die here and be born again there.”

I immediately knew that the question he was asking was “Are you prepared to die to everything you have considered precious in the past that you may embrace only that which is considered precious in the Kingdom of Jesus?”

I said yes! Immediately I found myself on the other side of the gate! The first thing I then noticed was that there was a man standing alongside me BUT he had no face, no features that I could use to identify him.

I then asked the question, more to myself than to anyone in particular “Who is this man?”

A voice answered saying “This is the man I have appointed and anointed to walk with you for a while. He is going to help you unpack and repack your backpack.

In your backpack you have all the equipment for living that you have accumulated during your lifetime on earth so far. Some of it is good and to be kept for the journey going forward, some of it is

bad and needs to be dumped and some you may choose to keep but understand that keeping these things may slow you down later.”

I then noticed that to the side of the road on the left was a large bramble bush and that a number of men and women in clerical garb had walked into this bush and their clothing had become caught up in the thorns. I then noticed that they were arguing like crazy! The same voice then said to me “Avoid religious theologians. They spend so much time arguing about which thorn to unhook first when all I want them to do is to shed their old garments and get back on to the road that I have prepared for them.”

The next thing I saw was a number of people forming into groups ahead of me. They had obviously, like me, just come through the gate and were preparing for the journey ahead.

As they formed into groups, I could see that some groups were very small and some were huge **BUT NO ONE WAS WALKING ALONE!**

The movie then shifted and panned into one of these groups. As it started to pan in, I could see what appeared to be a wave moving back and forth and sideways through the group. As I panned in closer, I could see that the wave was actually people walking upright suddenly stumbling and falling, but as they fell the people on either side would grab them and stop them from hitting the ground and being left behind.

They would carry them for a distance until they were able to walk on their own again. As the strong ones on either side completed the task of stabilizing the walk of their companion, they too stumbled and had to be helped by others in their group and often by the very person they had just assisted!

My attention was then directed to a scene on the right of the road where there was a beautiful meadow. The grass was lush and green and there was a bubbling clear stream running through it. In this meadow there were several people just chilling out. Lying there ignoring the activities of the people forming into groups and ignoring the occasional call from a group leader on the road to come and join them. The voice then said to me “Those people think that just getting into my Kingdom is enough. What they do not realize is that when the clarion call comes some of them will be killed in the rush!” For a long time I had no theological explanation for this part of the dream as I was fairly convinced of the doctrine of once saved always saved. More recently, I have come to reflect on the concept of the unforgiveable sin (Mark 3:29) and the parable on the marriage of the King’s son (Matt 22:14). I have also seen that I have not lost the capacity as a human being to choose as Adam did and reject God the Father’s plan for me and have concluded that it is possible to lose/renounce your salvation. I know that this is a contentious doctrinal issue but it does have a very simple resolution. No Christian who pro-actively pursues God’s will for their lives and is immersed in God’s word need ever worry!

As the movie panned away from the meadow a typical military parade ground came into focus. On this parade ground were several soldiers dressed in Roman Armor going through training under the supervision of officers. As I watched them train, an officer came running on to the parade ground with a message. A platoon immediately formed up under the command of one of the officers and off they jogged onto the road and started to run towards one of the groups further up the road. It appeared that serious internal conflict appeared to be occurring in this group. (It actually looked like an Asterix & Obelix Comic strip where I could see no details but where it was clear that they were fighting amongst themselves!)

Without hesitation the soldiers dived into the group. For a moment the intensity of the fight seemed to escalate and then suddenly calm prevailed and the soldiers and their officer came out of the group and formed up into their platoon and headed back to the parade ground with much cheering and appreciation from the people in the group they had just left. Clearly, they had sorted out internal conflict in that group! As the platoon arrived back and was absorbed into the parade ground activity the voice said ‘Michael, you now have a choice. You can either join the next group forming on the road or you can volunteer to join the soldiers on the parade ground to be trained up for special tasks in my Kingdom.’ In my dream/vision I volunteered to join the army.

That was forty-one years ago!

Over the last four decades reality has forced me time and time again to examine the principles illustrated in this dream.

The dream has not been found wanting.

You as the reader may well identify principles or moral imperatives in this dream that I have yet to see but this is what the dream has meant to me.

1. Being born again is a spiritual reality with implications as dramatic as illustrated in the dream.
2. Death to the dominion of the world to becoming a new creature under the dominion of King Jesus is a choice that all who want to be true followers of Jesus need to confront.
3. God will appoint different spiritual mentors in our lives at different times. (It is called discipling!)
4. Never argue about doctrine. I define doctrine as man's opinion about what God said or intended. Each of us has a journey to walk and God wants us to support one another as opposed to us elevating ourselves above our fellow human beings because of perceived superior knowledge or ability to interpret the word of God.
5. God intends us to walk in community.

6. The pathway to our destiny needs to be wholeheartedly embraced. Being seduced by the comforts of the abundant life is extremely dangerous.
7. Not all people are called to the Five-Fold Ministry, but if a person is called the role/office has to be embraced voluntarily. Whilst all new Christians go through an induction process into The Body of Christ, those called to the fivefold ministry need to appreciate that, due to the level of responsibility they are given, they are likely to be required to endure a level of 'boot camp' that will precede their commissioning! The Five-fold Ministry as described in Ephesians 4 are the primary life givers to The Body of Christ and are essential to the well-being of the Body of Christ. (There are three places in the New Testament where God talks about "Gifts" to the Body of Christ. In Romans 12 he refers to the seven redemptive gifts given by the Father as part of every person's DNA. These gifts define the persons likely positioning in the Body as a good fit. The second is in 1 Corinthians 12 where He talks about the nine power gifts that come from the Holy Spirit. The third is where scripture informs us about the gifts of governance and administration given to the Body by King Jesus to equip it function effectively and is known as The Five-fold ministry)

Since the dream finished, I have obviously learned more and happily share what I have learned as appropriate.

Please feel free to communicate with me anytime at givelife@communitylifegivers.com

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH —

WHAT ARE WE REALLY DEALING WITH?

History, both biblical and otherwise, is full of stories of people being motivated, inspired and even occasionally terrified by dreams or visions. Just do an internet search on ‘numbers of books written about dreams and visions’. The figure is staggering. But should we be surprised? I believe not.

Every person is consciously or otherwise seeking to develop an approach to life that enables them to cope with life’s complexity and apparent paradoxes. This approach to life or way of thinking is often referred to as a belief system or worldview and I suggest that there are six philosophical questions that underpin the establishment of every person’s worldview:

1. Where do I come from?
2. Who am I really?
3. Why am I here?
4. Where am I going?
5. Why is there evil in the world?
6. What is the solution to evil?

Every one of these questions demands an answer and ultimately the credibility of the answer is dependent on the degree to which the answer is free from the subjective opinions of other

human beings. Prof Bennie V der Walt in his book discusses the variety of different world views and the way in which they seek to answer these questions. Right now all I want to note is that every religion/philosophy/culture from the Mayans to the Quebec Indians in Canada through to the Goths of ancient times to the ancient tribes of Africa makes reference to an external non-human or supernatural communication that assisted in giving substance and direction to the formation of their worldview. Often communicating in the form of dreams or visions.

If we accept that not all dreams and visions are generated by our internal psyche after too much pizza or other rich pie, we then are confronted by the need to discern those that may have more significant meaning and import. (Again I go to the internet and again I observe the phenomenal range and number of offerings from ‘spiritual gurus’, all suggesting that they have the method of interpreting dreams and visions. My conclusion is that borrowing a definition from the internet will be selfdefeating in the context of this book.)

For me the dream of the people of Africa being fully reconciled to Father God through Christ Jesus, and then

1. Being healed from the hurts of the past,
2. Becoming justly governed by their own people and

3. Maximising their economic prosperity, has never left me.

It has been a source of ongoing motivation and inspiration for nearly four decades. Whatever setbacks I have experienced, whatever disappointments or perceived betrayals, a time of reflection on the content of this dream and further reflection on the principals underpinning the vision that followed it has enabled me to deal with the issue, reposition myself, get up and go again!

I have interpreted this dream as a personal call to live out of a 'life giving' walk on this earth. A walk that impacts the people of Africa! I believe that when I arrive in heaven, hearing the words "Well done good and faithful servant" will be dependent on the degree to which I contributed in my lifetime to the fulfilment of this dream.

Many years after first experiencing this dream I started to read and research the driving forces that motivated the founders of Africa's 'liberation movements' and discovered that every one of the great African leaders who pioneered the overthrow of colonial domination was driven, at least initially, by a vision whose substance was significantly aligned to the content of seeing Africa healed from the hurts of her past, justly governed by her own people and maximizing her economic potential! Many, as mentioned earlier particularly in

the South African context were also Christians. This is my justification for calling the dream “The African Dream’.

However, I am fascinated to note how quickly and how easily these highly motivated spiritual people got derailed. Most of them ended up choosing a form of socialism over genuine democracy.

A form of socialism rooted in the religion of Secular Humanism.

In this process they allowed themselves to become the beneficiaries of adoration and worship from their people and in the process established personality cults wherein they became above the law. Why did this happen?

Before I answer this question, we need to address the issue of whether Secular Humanism is in fact a religion? According to Wikipedia “ A religion is an organized collection of beliefs, cultural systems, and world views that relate humanity to an order of existence.”[[]

Advocates of secular humanism have very clear set of beliefs, cultural systems and a world view that clearly assumes that man has the ability to solve his own problems. For example Secular humanism says:

- It is right to kill babies in the womb to make life more bearable to those already born.
- It is right to take a family home away just because they cannot pay the mortgage EVEN THOUGH the reason they cannot pay is directly related to the greed of the institution that lent them the money in the first place.
- It is right to allow perverts to express their lust through deviant sexual behavior just because they are (unlike those killed in abortion) are alive and voters in the system.
- It is right to give access to quality health care to only those who can pay for it.
- It is right to allow families to disintegrate just because the one spouse wants to commit adultery or engage in some other deviant conduct.
- It is right to give cartels who control the provision of essential goods and services the right to control their own industries.
- It is right to deny entrepreneurs access to capital just because in the process of honest endeavor they failed once

So, clearly Secular Humanism is a religion. Albeit a religion camouflaged in sheep's clothing!

to answer the question of why this happened, we need to understand the relationship between the natural and the supernatural because man operates in both. (Generally, this is

something the indigenous African understands intuitively.) Man is a spirit being who has a soul and lives in a body. I have no intention of getting into a detailed theological discussion in this book. But I do believe that this fundamental truth is lost to many Christians. Somehow, we appear to have allowed ourselves to see the truth of a good God sending his son Jesus to pay for our sins, but as true as that is, we have lost sight of the reality that he had to do this because of the presence of an evil enemy called Satan whose only objective is to steal kill and destroy all that Father God had intended.

We also appear to have lost sight of the fact that just as Satan works his deception through man, so Father God brings the good news of our salvation and redemption from sin through man. I believe that every man woman and child who has embraced the good news has a role to play in demonstrating what this means in the context of the society we live in.

By sharing the above I have tried to create a context within which we can go forward. You now have some insight into where I have come from, my philosophy, my thinking about where to from here and you hopefully understand my motives. It is my hope that the content shared so far will also inspire you to look for how you too can contribute towards the fulfilment of the dream of Africa being healed from the hurts of her past,

Africa becoming justly governed by her own people and Africa maximizing her economic potential.

DEVELOPING A BIBLICAL STRATEGY FOR AFRICA

Earlier I talked about God dealing with us human beings on different levels. I used the analogy of a jigsaw puzzle based on a story I once heard where the storyteller asked his audience the question “If I gave you a ten-piece jigsaw puzzle without the picture, how long would it take you to put it together. Everyone responded “In no time at all”. I mean how difficult can it be? Four corner pieces and six remaining. Easy! The storyteller then went on to ask “What would happen if I gave you a one-hundredpiece puzzle without the picture? The answer was clearly “A lot longer!” and of course the next question was “And what if I gave you a one-thousand-piece puzzle and no picture?” at which point most of the audience threw up their hands and said “I quit!”

What he was trying to illustrate was that most of us appear to be almost exclusively interested in getting together the ten-piece jigsaw puzzle of their own lives without realising that even if we do get our personal picture in place, we nevertheless remain but one piece in the 100-piece puzzle of the community we live in, which in turn becomes a piece of the one-thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle of the society we live in. We are all looking for meaning to our lives but if anyone asks the six

philosophical questions in purely the context of the tenpiece puzzle of their own existence they must inevitably get it all wrong! Think about it. How often hasn't history shown us, from the earliest times until now, how revolutions always seem to catch many in power by surprise. I call this the Marie Antoinette syndrome. "If they have no bread then let them eat cake!"

I believe that we have that phenomenon present in Africa in a serious way. Men and women preoccupied with their own self-interest have lost sight of the degree to which millions of their fellow Africans are deprived, disadvantaged and impoverished by a system designed to make the rich richer and to protect the privileged status of a few.

There are two places where scripture talks about 'my people perishing/dying'. The first is in Hosea 4:6 "my people perish for lack of knowledge" and in proverbs 29:18 "without a vision my people lose their restraint and perish". In both instances the context is an admonishment for turning away from the Word God as the guiding light of the nation of Israel.

In the New Testament we have the verse in Mathew 6:33 "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness " But what does this entreaty mean on Monday morning?

During the 2010 Soccer World Cup in South Africa I saw an article written by Neill Bester an extract of which says:

“While driving in my car my eye caught a Soccer World Cup slogan - It read:

“One dream, One cup, One winner!”

All the teams that are here in South Africa have one Goal.
They want the cup.

Some dreams will be shattered, but they’ll go down fighting.

They have planned, strategized, studied, worked hard, gone through the pain and paid the price in many different ways and areas over the last number of years in order to be in a position where they can have this goal and be in a position to take the cup home.

What do you think any member of any one of these teams will answer if you ask them why they are here?

Do you think they will say: “Oh, I’m just going to do what my coach tells me to do!”

Or will they say: “I have studied all the previous soccer world cup games and I know all the people who scored all the goals

in every single game played since the inception of the World Cup.”

Or will they start talking about how much they love the game of soccer and how they cannot believe that there is anyone on this planet that doesn't enjoy it?

It is probably possible that some of the comments above may be included, but the predominant answer will be - We are here to win the Cup!

And they have a plan.

Sometimes their strategies do not work out exactly the way they planned because their opponents also have plans, but they regroup, synchronize and go forward.”

These days I hear too many stories of people who have no strategy whatsoever. They claim to be intercessors or something similar and when I ask them what their strategy is, they have none. If I ask them what their focus is, they give a vague religious cliché such as: We pray for whatever God tells us to pray. These people have many facts; a lot of data and information, a great passion, high character, a willingness to sacrifice, a readiness to embrace pain, BUT no strategy.

The world has coined a phrase that says: If you don't know where you're going, any road will do.

Many Christians seem to walk this out. Any road will do. This leads to lack of commitment and compromise.

I recently heard someone declare that man-made strategies are useless. There is only one way to get results and that is to pray.

His confession is correct, but incomplete, because all strategies are not man-made.

Scripture is full of principles, types and analogies that give us profound strategies.

Study of the ministry of Jesus shows that He had a calling. BUT He also had a strategy. He had a plan. He knew what He was supposed to do and He did it.

(There is a difference between walking by faith and not knowing where you are going.).....

My objective with this message is to point out a couple of areas where I think things are "broken" or not working well. It may appear to look good or perhaps even be good and therefore nobody dares to confront the mutual admiration society who manages perceptions. Perhaps because they are so inside the small picture, that they are unable to see the big picture.

Or else it is simply because so few are prepared to walk in reality for whatever reason. Maybe because there are a few good things happening from time to time which causes mediocrity or else the mesmerizing spirit is so prominent that the deception is the norm.

If you are really interested, do an internet search on “What the bible says about planning” and you will see that it has much to say and my understanding of all of these scriptures is that any person who plans their lives with the thought in mind of “what do I think is best for me” is totally wasting their time. According to Psalm 139:16 “Your eyes saw me before I was put together. And all the days of my life were written in Your book before any of them came to be.” My understanding of this is that Father God had a plan for you and me before we were born and you and I have a choice. We either seek Gods plan for us or we take over and live our lives within the constraints of our own wisdom and knowledge. Hardly a particularly intelligent approach. Think about it. You and I cannot even see what is around the corner right now and yet we reject God’s plan when He can see everything from the moment of conception to the moment of death! This brings me to another interesting issue....

I often ask Christians the question “Why did Jesus die on the cross?” It amazes me how many answer “To save me from hell”

or “To pay the price for my sins”. This is not the primary reason! Yes, the price needed to be paid BUT the purpose was to reconcile us to The Father because He loves us that His Kingdom may come, His will be done on earth as it is in heaven! Go and read the Gospels again with this thought in mind and tell me I am wrong!

Everything is about God’s plan coming to fruition. Matthew 25:14 to 30 makes it perfectly clear that we are to be stewards of the talents (resources) God has placed in our care. Flowing from the parable of the talents mentioned above is a definition of stewardship (courtesy of Arthur Burk of Sapphire leadership Group) I really like:

“Stewardship is about fulfilling someone else’s aims and objectives using someone else’s resources!”

In other words God says “I expect you to achieve MY vision and I make all of my resources available to you to achieve that objective!” Unfortunately we seem to have twisted the message to read “I

Father God have created the earth and everything in it. By accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour we can by faith have access to all the resources of earth to indulge our dreams and desires for security and personal prosperity.” Eish! No wonder the earth is in such a mess!

Does that mean that Father does not want us to enjoy the provision of blessings? NO! He is our Father and as any parent he delights in blessing His children. (Psalm 35:27)

BUT, he expects the blessings to pursue us, not for us to pursue the blessings! He wants us to understand that He blesses us that we may be a blessing NOT that we take his blessings and just accumulate personal assets that we cannot take with us into eternity.

The conflict between God, The Majestic Creator of the Universe and Satan the aspirant usurper of His power is ongoing and the prize is the souls of the men, women and children living and working alongside of you every day!

Our role as Christians is to bring people of the world into The Kingdom of God by sharing the good news that because of Jesus' willing sacrifice on the cross and subsequent resurrection:

1. The price for our sin has been paid
2. We are reconciled to The Father for all eternity when we accept Jesus as Lord and Saviour

3. Father God wants ALL people, no matter how bad they have been or how ashamed they are of their past to personally accept this grace filled act of Jesus and surrender control of their lives to Him

4. Satan is now a defeated enemy

5. We are able after the Baptism in The Holy Spirit to enforce Satan's defeat through the demonstration of God's power within us.

It is all about who is exercising dominion in your heart. Another way of saying this, is that it is all about demonstrating who is really in control. And in this regard there are only two options. God or Satan! (If you don't agree please challenge me with your alternative!)

Think about it. The last funeral you attended. Was the person whose burial you witnessed in control of the circumstances of their death?

Either it was a peaceful death in God's perfect timing at the end of a life lived to the glory Of God or it was an intrusive death stealing their potential, killing their mortal body and destroying the potential they may have had to extend The Kingdom of God!

Now remember, we are not discussing whether the person went to heaven or not! Satan's first prize is to stop you from enjoying eternal life with Father God in heaven BUT his second prize has to be to negate or nullify your potential to bring more people under the dominion of The Kingdom of God!

He does this by stealing your joy, stealing your health, stealing your peace, stealing your money, stealing your time. He loves to kill your enthusiasm for sharing the good news of the gospel. He loves to destroy your potential testimony and the impact it may have on the lost people of this world!

Jesus through His life demonstrated that it was possible as man with the Holy Spirit leading him to walk in dominion on this earth PROVIDED HE DID NOTHING BUT THAT WHICH THE FATHER SHOWED HIM. (John 5:19 & 5:30)

And Jesus promised that He would send The Holy Spirit to us and that The Holy Spirit would give us the power to walk in dominion just as He did.

So are we doing that? Are we walking in dominion?

There are individuals who appear to be walking in Dominion, particularly if we observe the fruit of the work they are doing and the level of personal blessing they enjoy. I also note that there are local churches that appear to be getting something right as well, BUT we as The Body of Christ as a whole are clearly not! And yet imagine what impact The Kingdom of God would have on our society if we could walk in dominion as one body!

- Just, righteous and efficient Civil Government
- Unprejudiced non-racial, non-sexist Legal System
- People becoming vocation driven NOT money driven
- Service delivery in terms of utilities and infrastructure

- Honesty, Integrity and hard work the prevailing standard in all sectors especially Commerce and Industry
- The principle of fair exchange of value in trade
- Encouragement and support of Entrepreneurs
- Wholehearted engagement in innovation in science and technology
- Good education for all
- A free, independent and honest media reporting facts not fiction and separating facts from opinion
- Only Godly role models being honoured in the sports & entertainment sectors

- Morally sound entertainment freely available and encouraged
- Families living together in unity and security
- Ready access to health care and family welfare resources
- Men and women relating to one another according to God's design
- Food security through application of biblical principles in Agricultural sector
- And much more.....

This is what I believe God is calling us to.

Motivating, Inspiring and equipping The Body of Christ to become the dominant influence in African Society!

Motivating inspiring and equipping The Body of Christ to become passionate, prosperous, fear free, hope filled, pro-active, life giving builders of God's African dream!

WHAT OBSTACLES DO WE NEED TO OVERCOME TO BECOME THE DOMINANT INFLUENCERS FOR GOOD IN AFRICAN SOCIETY?

This is a topic worthy of a book on its own! Possibly the biggest challenge we have is to differentiate between root and fruit. In

His interaction with the Pharisees during his ministry Jesus was often caught in a discussion where the Pharisees would focus on the external behaviour but Jesus would focus on the internal driver of the behaviour. The healing of the blind man on the Sabbath is a classic example. The Pharisees could only see the breaking of the law by 'working' on the Sabbath and were oblivious to the presence amongst them of a blind man whom they knew well, who once was blind but now could see!

In John 8 Jesus is talking to His disciples but he makes the clear distinction between being a disciple and a believer. My understanding of John 8 is that Jesus is saying that knowing Him makes a person a believer but knowing the truth about His

mission and purpose and devoting our own lives to becoming His messengers on earth is the result of intimacy with Him and His word and causes us to become His disciples. We are obsessive about both!

At the same time Ephesians 6:12 (KJV) clearly says “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

In the abovementioned scripture Paul made it very clear that our warfare is not against people but against the spiritual powers that operate behind the scenes through people. Therefore, we cannot win a spiritual battle with carnal weapons. We must realize who the real enemy is and fight with the spiritual weapons the Lord has given us (see 2 Corinthians 10:4 and 2 Corinthians 10:5). For example: We often think that anger will put people in their place. But “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (James 1:20). Anger against people makes us play right into the hand of the devil. The way to overcome the spiritual powers that come against us through people is to turn the other cheek (Matthew 5:39). That makes the demons flee in terror. Again, my understanding of what Jesus meant is that we should come in the opposite spirit to that of the enemy. For example: The enemy comes to steal our joy through abusive taxi drivers on our roads. Coming in the same spirit would be to pack a gun and shoot them! Coming

in the opposite spirit involves RESOLVING to be courteous to other drivers irrespective of their behaviour!

Another example: Our natural tendency when we are poor is to hoard or even steal. However, we are not engaged in a physical battle. Through giving when we are in need (the opposite spirit), we frustrate all of Satan's plans and loose the power of God on our behalf!

I mention all of this to ensure that we stay focused on dealing with roots not fruits. Again, as mentioned earlier in the book I observe an enormous preoccupation with dealing with issues like HIV/AIDS at a superficial level. Calling on people to either abstain or if they do insist on having sex try and remain faithful to one partner and if you cannot help yourself from being a serial sexual gymnast then use a condom will never stop the disease! The cause of the pandemic is satanic dominion operating through the lusts of the flesh!

To give us a perspective on differentiating between roots and fruits let's have a look at some of the observable evidence of Satanic dominion:

- Poverty. The human Suffering Index created by the Population Crisis Committee compares living conditions in 141 countries.

Of the 27 countries with extreme human suffering, 20 are in Africa (V D Walt Understanding and Rebuilding Africa)

- Hunger (And yet fish in the Congo River die of old age!)
- Low income leading to dehumanisation
- Injustice
- Prevalence of sickness and disease particularly HIV/AIDS
- Satanic murders
- Corruption and embezzlement of public funds

- Prevalence of absent fathers (A colleague who is in the Real Estate sector commented recently that 80% of new home purchases in his area were being made by single mothers)
- Extreme Feminism
- Legalised abortion and homosexuality
- Autocracy and Dictatorship
- Absence of accountability
- Preoccupation with materialism
- Prevalence of immorality in the entertainment sector

- Intertribal strife
- Cronyism
- Secret societies
- Poor agricultural practices
- Neglect of infrastructure
- Prevalence of racism
- add to the list as you see fit!

RACISM: Given that I am a South African and that so much of this book is written in the context of South Africa, I particularly feel the need to address this issue. Amongst the counsellors I

asked to critique the manuscript of this book, the inclusion of this sector provoked the most intense debate. Essentially the debate was around 'Political Correctness'. The one school of thought advocated by a Christian brother who is a prominent member of the African National Congress (the ANC who are the current ruling party in South Africa) was that I would risk alienating a key sector of the population to whom the initiative represented by this book was aimed at. The alternative view was that those very same people needed to be challenged.

My view is that WHENEVER society uses something over which no human being has any control (such as skin pigmentation, race, gender, hair color) as a criteria for justifying denial of access to opportunity to that person, we are contravening God's standard of equality before Him and contravening the application of God's principle of design in terms of which we are all created to fulfil a specific purpose and calling.

Apartheid entrenched a system of discrimination against black people introduced by the European colonialists. Black Economic Empowerment entrenches a system of discrimination against white people introduced by the ANC Government.

A few years ago I gate crashed a leadership conference in Johannesburg to which no white people had been invited.

A Nigerian delegate, observing the absence of white faces posed the question and I quote verbatim “Do you have to be black to be an African, but more importantly, do you have to be black to be a leader in Africa today?”

I was absolutely stunned at the response of the panel. They had clearly never considered the possibility that amongst the many fourth to tenth generation descendants of European settlers in South Africa that there might be some who could be significant leaders in modern Africa. The fact that I make this comment does not mean that I am against the concept of fast tracking the delivery of empowerment resources to previously disadvantaged people. My problem lies with the fact that we have used race and gender (two of the realities that no human being has any control of) as the primary qualifying criteria for being granted access to empowerment resources. This is social engineering at its extreme and unfortunately I cannot find a social engineering exercise anywhere in History where the backlash over time did not exceed the benefit.

There is only one race in The Kingdom of God – The Human Race and I am convinced that until we dismantle race or gender-based discrimination through After the 2014 elections I made a comment to a group of church intercessors who had been passionately praying for the country during election time. My comment was that the Body of Christ has seriously let the nation of South Africa down. I based this comment on the fact that the parties who made reference to Biblical values underpinning their manifesto collectively got less votes than the top two political parties, both of which based their manifestos on the religion of secular humanism!

In the minds of the people of South Africa the politics of power has usurped the politics of principle!

And yet throughout the Bible we see God honoring those leaders who courageously stood on His Word and applied moral principle as opposed to man pleasing compromise!

THE REAL PROBLEM: At the beginning of this book I suggested that our real problem was “Wrong Thinking”. I also suggested that wrong thinking came from believing lies. According to The Bible Satan is the ‘Father of all Lies’ and anyone who has ever tried to live a life acceptable to God our Father (Holiness?) will concede that he is extremely clever in

coating his lies with very palatable wrapping! But what are the attitudes that make Africa so vulnerable to Satan?

I suggest that the three soul roots that we need to deal with in Africa are:

- The Love of Money
- Pride (manifested in desire for status and recognition)
- Witchcraft (Looking for intervention from the Spirit realm to assist us to get what we want in the natural realm)

NOTE: Followers of Jesus look to Holy Spirit to protect them from evil, provide for their needs and guide them in life, NOT so that their personal desires and purposes can be achieved, but that His Kingdom may come and His will be done in their lives. I believe that this is one of the key principles that the Body of Christ has inadvertently compromised because of the deception referred to in the Foreword to this book.

None of the demonic drivers referred to above is exclusive in its outworking to any one group of people in Africa. Love of money is as prevalent amongst the European, American and Chinese capitalists as it is amongst the beneficiaries of corruption in African governments. Racial pride underpinned Apartheid just as effectively as BEE exclusivity underpins the current social and economic structure in South Africa and witchcraft is by no means the exclusive prevail of black

Africans. Just have a look at the degree to which Freemasonry has impacted Africa's history!

There is an excellent book written by Vaughn Martin entitled 'Transforming the Heart of Africa'** that goes into serious detail and tracks the history of Africa in the context of the above three items and I suggest that this book should be required reading for all Christians seeking to become pro-active members of African society. Apart from his clear articulation of the manner in which these three drivers manifest in current African society, he also totally debunks the popular suggestion that Colonialism was the root cause of all of Africa's problems! These three drivers were present as far back as the times of Nimrod! Both the resident occupants of Africa AND those who chose to come here from other shores are subject to this demonic dominion!

However, to ensure a basic appreciation of the substance of my suggestion let's briefly consider each.

LOVE OF MONEY: The Bible tells us that "Love of Money is the root of all evil" (1 Tim 6:10) But why?

Emotion is a major driver of behavior. And love of money provokes two very strong emotions. The emotions of fear and greed. During my business and ministry careers I have interacted with, walked with, counselled and advised people

who were extremely poor AND people who were extremely rich. It has amazed me how consistently I have come across the two emotions of fear and greed in both camps.

I recall an instance where a very rich man who had been brought up in a solid Christian family, was very content with his lot and sought to have lunch with me looking for guidance as to where he should be doing his charitable giving. As we chatted what came to mind was the parable of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:21.

Without thinking I said: “Why don’t you sell all that you have and come minister with me?” HE WENT WHITE AS A SHEET and the conversation just died.

I tried to make light of my comment but that was it and whilst I have seen him several times since then, he is polite and courteous but not interested in chatting any further!

By contrast I was counselling a Pastor in an economically underprivileged area of South Africa and the key topic was tithing with the key issue for him being to determine if tithing was supposed to be calculated on the gross or net income received. He had no money, his congregation had no money and yet his fear of not having enough was sufficient for him to debate the couple of dollars a month involved. He missed the point completely. In my view, tithing is not about how much, it

is about releasing a universal principle through demonstrating a heart condition of obedience!

In another instance I was working for a prominent bank and was asked by a wealthy divorcee with two young daughters to assist her to balance her investment portfolio. I asked her to consult with her daughters and let me know how much they felt that they needed on a daily basis to continue to live in the luxury to which they had become accustomed. This was an attempt on my part to give her a perspective on her wealth. After some resistance she agreed and came back to me with a figure of US\$1000 per day! I then evaluated her assets and concluded that if she were to sell all her assets and invest the proceeds at 10% per annum, she would earn US\$3 800 per day before tax. Her immediate response when I shared this with her was to say with an absolutely poker face “Oh Dear. That is just not enough!” The look on my face must have been something special because it did cause her to blush and bluster for a moment. She was subsequently fired as director of a high-profile Public Company and fined by the Johannesburg Securities Exchange for insider trading.

By contrast there was a young lady in the same congregation of the pastor referred to above whom I had always expected to become a pillar of the Christian Community in the poverty-stricken area she lived in. One day I asked the pastor where

she was as I hadn't seen her for a while. With embarrassment he told me that she was now working as a manager of a local shop that prevented her from attending church. I went to see her. It was no local shop. It was an illegal liquor and drug distribution outlet set up for her by her new 'boyfriend'. I tried to talk to her. Her response was 'Pastor Mike, this is the only way I can get the things I want out of life!'

Last I heard she was still working in this illegal den but had contracted HIV/AIDS and was now unlikely to ever enjoy the things she had been pursuing!

As Jesus taught, the lust to do something is just as bad as the act itself (Matthew 5:21-28). The solution isn't staying poor; it's dealing with the lusts of the heart.

However, the other side of this coin is that money also presents opportunities that poor people don't have.

Warren Buffet, the American Multi Billionaire and investment guru is publicly recorded on TV as saying, "I absolutely believe that all men are born equal BUT this does not mean that all men have access to equal opportunity!"

This reality is further supported by a superficial study of economic history. More new millionaires have historically been able to trace their roots to times of recession than in

times of prosperity. The reason being that this is when the barriers to entry into traditional markets are lowest.

It's the love of money that is the root of all (kinds of) evil (1 Timothy 6:10) not money itself. Money is just a tool. It's neither good nor bad. Money can be used to fund a heroin factory or it can build a Kingdom asset in the hands of people with the right hearts.

It is interesting to note that a snare is a device for hunting. It uses bait to lure its victim into a trap. It is the fatal attraction of the bait that seduces the prey. The bait is usually something that is good and healthy, but its association with the snare is what is wrong.

In this context the bait that Satan uses to trap us is the suggestion that money can solve all problems. Money in itself isn't bad. We all have to have some of it to live. It is only when we begin to love the power to indulge ourselves that money can give us that we enter into the snare of the devil. We can have money as long as it doesn't have us.

There are also many temptations to which wealth introduces people. Certainly, one of the subtlest and most damaging is the temptation to minimize their need for God. Wealthy people are often deceived by the power their money wields; they think they can do anything on their own and they don't need God.

This certainly was not the case with Abraham, David, and many other wealthy men in the Bible, so this doesn't have to happen to people today. However, this is, without a doubt, one of the pitfalls of wealth that people of substance have to be on guard against.

A close look at African history going right back to long before the Europeans ever arrived in Africa show how almost all inter-tribal wars and conflict were about either livestock or slaves (for the early African kings slaves WERE just an item of livestock!)

History also shows how many post-colonial African rulers quickly abandoned whatever ideals they may have advocated prior to their election in favor of accumulation of personal fortunes. One estimate which I have not been able to corroborate suggests that if only 3% of all money exported from Africa due to corrupt activities and rapacious business activities were to be returned, Africa would be able to build all the infrastructure she needed to support a season of prosperity for all. I wouldn't mind if only 1% came back!

AFRICA IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE FINANCIALLY.

If only 3% of all money exported from Africa due to corrupt activities and rapacious business activities were to be

returned, Africa would be able to build all the infrastructure she needed!

WATER AND ENERGY RESOURCES

The Nile, Zambezi & Congo Rivers could provide Food & Energy Resources for the whole of Africa!

The fish in the Congo River die of old age and yet Africa's people are starving!

PRIDE: As a young man I recall hearing a catholic priest share in his sermon a description of 'humility'. He said, "A humble man knows EXACTLY where he stands on this earth in relation to his God and his fellow men". This definition has stuck mainly because as he said the words, he made the sign of the cross with his right hand indicating the vertical as relationship with God and the horizontal as relationship with man! By implication, if a person knows about and understands the fullness of the redemptive work of the cross of Jesus, they would appreciate how totally dependent on God they are and with this knowledge would come an awareness of how important it was to conduct oneself in relationship with God and your fellow human beings according to God's order.

If we acknowledge pride as the opposite of humility, then pride means ordering your world according to what we consider as best for us and conducting ourselves in relationship to fellow

human beings on the assumption that we are the one that counts the most. Oh, and how easy it is to fall into this trap!

The biggest mistakes I have made in my life were all because of pride. And the real tragedy was that one of the biggest mistakes started out as a consequence of me taking a major step of faith!

“Pride comes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov:16;18)

HOW PRIDE TOOK ME TO THE CLEANERS!

Around about 1986 I had started a venture capital and private equity investment company that specialized in investing in young businesses. I was already a fully committed Christian; I had experienced The African Dream; I had spent extensive time in the USA and Europe and I had seen the degree to which the USA economy was underpinned by small to medium enterprise and I had developed a conviction that the economic prosperity of Africa was going to be totally dependent on giving access to capital to emerging entrepreneurs in all sectors of the economy.

In 1989 I was approached by the then president of the Johannesburg Securities Exchange to assist them with the creation of what was going to be South Africa’s very own

Venture Capital Sector. In no time at all I was basking in the limelight of being an expert in the field of identifying great new business opportunities and structuring the sort of deals that would result in their ultimate success!

I was being feted at conferences, asked to talk to and educate stockbrokers and bankers and generally being elevated into the status of infallibility(at least in my own eyes). And then came the great deception and the great temptation. A stockbroker took me for lunch at the best restaurant in Johannesburg and posed the question “Given that you are the role model for Venture Capitalists in Africa, why don’t you float your company on this new sector of the JSE?” I took the bait hook, line and sinker!

After a whirlwind of promotional activity (including making the cover story of Leadership Magazine) my company was listed on the 1st April 1990. The irony of 1 April being All Fools Day has not been lost on me. What transpired over the next two years is worthy of a book on its own. Suffice to say it quickly became apparent that I had got the timing wrong. In mid-1992 the company crashed and I lost everything. The fancy car, the fancy house, the fancy friends and the status of success. Every investor, every journalist and every stockbroker were after my blood. I was accused of being a crook, a con man and a rip-off artist. I was investigated by the JSE, the auditors and

the share transfer secretaries. By the grace of God and the magnificent commitment of my very special wife Dawn, I survived and in 1994 a statement was issued by the JSE exonerating me from any wrongdoing. But the best was still to come. Once the statement from the JSE was issued the then editor of the Financial Times wrote an article in which she said “It appears that Mike Clarke is actually an honest man. Unfortunately he is also clearly incompetent!”

The point of the above story is quite simple: All around Africa I see men and women who were totally committed to the political liberation of Africa, whose idealistic promises are still echoing in their followers’ ears, who have been deceived into believing that it was them and them alone who deserve the credit. I watch these liberators jockeying for position and status, shamefully showing off their opulence and unashamedly cuing for their chance to get their snouts in the trough of cronyism. Many have elevated themselves or their political organizations into cult status, are enjoying opulence at a sickening level and yet people in their countries are starving and that brings us to the third demonic influence.

WITCHCRAFT: Witchcraft is the use of supernatural powers sourced from the devil and his domain. In Webster’s Dictionary, witchcraft is defined as “the act or instance of employing sorcery, especially with malevolent intent: a

magical rite or technique.” Witchcraft calls upon the powers of the devil or the power of other spirit beings such as ancestors, much like a believer prays and believes in the power of God. It is therefore the illegitimate use of spiritual power to get what you want or to further your own agenda in life. It is a covenantal agreement that a man makes with demonic forces to use their power for his own selfish purposes.

If you believe in God, and believe in what the Bible says, then you must believe in the powers of evil as well. You cannot take one side and then completely discount the other side. So, evil power is real and witchcraft is one of the major ways that the devil’s agenda is advanced. Witchcraft works together with love of money and pride to build a spiritual foundation for the works of darkness in Africa.

In his book ‘Transforming the Heart of Africa’ Vaughan Martin says: “Africa is saturated in witchcraft. For thousands of years, evil men and women have used witchcraft in Africa to get what they want. They have used witchcraft to obtain wealth and revenge. They have used witchcraft to manipulate one another and to compete with each other. The politicians of Africa use witchcraft to gain political power. The soldiers of Africa use witchcraft to protect themselves against the bullets of their enemies. Jealous men and women use witchcraft to curse their rivals. Businessmen use witchcraft to make their businesses

successful and to curse their competitors. Lonely men and women use witchcraft to make someone fall in love with them. Witchcraft is used to heal the sick and to cause people to become sick. Even some of the football teams in Africa have used witchcraft to win their matches.

Witchcraft affects every part of life in Africa. Witchcraft pollutes the culture of Africa. It corrupts the traditional village culture of Africa, is the evil root that gives the enemy access to every part of African Society..... As long as this root is permitted to remain in the heart of rural Africa and the culture of the big cities. It corrupts the political systems and the economic systems of Africa. It corrupts the traditional religions of Africa and the most modern churches. It corrupts the family relationships of Africa and the relationships between different tribes. It is one of the causes of Africa's poverty, its terrible ethnic wars and its cruel dictatorships. For as long as it persists Witchcrafts spiritual strongholds (pride and greed) will have a firm foundation.”

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

In a nutshell: The people of Africa are deeply spiritual. They know that they are spirit beings. They know that there is a God of creation. Africa has been evangelized. Millions have raised their hands at the call of the evangelist. Africa now needs to be disciplined! The great Commission of King Jesus was not to go

and evangelize. It was to go and make disciples of all nations. I suggest that the parable of the Sower and the seed in Matthew

13:18 to 23 is particularly relevant: “ Hear therefore the parable of the Sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and takes away that which was sown in his heart. This person received seed by the pathway. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that hears the word, and with joy immediately receives it.

He persists for a while but he has no root in himself and when tribulation or persecution arise because of the word, he becomes offended.

The next type of person is he that received seed among the thorns. He hears the word; but the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

But he that receives seed into good ground is he that hears the word, and understands it and as a consequence bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.” To give us an accurate perspective I have included here extracts notes from Andrew Wommack’s Bible Commentary

(www.awmi.net) :

Notice that this first type of ground (person) is the only one that Satan had free access to steal the Word from. Why is that? It's because that type of person doesn't understand. Understanding is the first step in getting God's Word to work in our lives. If we have no spiritual revelation of God's Word, then Satan can take it from us.

Therefore, understanding is critical. This is why we minister to children on a different level than adults. We don't change the message, just the way we present it, so they can understand. Those who preach the Gospel must present it in a way that their audience understands it. However, there are also those who refuse to even try and understand as illustrated by Jesus earlier in the same passage of scripture when talking about the Pharisees.

The second type of ground (person) in this parable does not represent those people who reject God's Word. They receive it with joy. But that's not enough. They have to do more than get excited about God's Word. They have to meditate in it until God's Word takes root in them otherwise the moment they are ridiculed they will capitulate. That takes time and effort. Notice this root has to be in ourselves, not others. We can't make it on someone else's revelation. Someone else can point us to the truths of God's Word, but our own hearts must be convinced of their claims. That's getting rooted in God's Word. Tribulation and persecution don't come to make us stronger in our faith.

They are designed by the devil to steal the Word of God from us. Also, persecution doesn't come because the devil hates us. I'm sure he does hate us, but it's the Word that scares him. He knows we can't do anything on our own (John 15:5). Satan is after God's Word. He wants to stop it from getting rooted in our hearts. That's what persecution is all about. So, remember Satan's object in persecution: It's to stop God's Word. When we understand this, we will not be distracted!

Andrew Wommack shares this story "I once received a prophecy from a man who called me out at a meeting. I had been suffering a lot of criticism about the things I was teaching. The Lord spoke through him that I was like a runner in a race. I was doing good and leading the pack, but the spectators were yelling at me that I was doing it all wrong. He saw me getting off the track and arguing with my critics. The Lord told me that even if I won the argument, I would lose the race. Therefore, I should forget the scoffers and just stay on track." This is totally consistent with the dream I had when I felt that the Holy Spirit was telling me never to argue with theologians!

That is a great picture of how we are to deal with persecution. If the criticisms or threats of others cause us to stop preaching the Gospel, then they win, even if we justify ourselves. So, what's the chaff to the wheat (Jeremiah 23:28)? We should keep preaching the Word and forget those in the grandstands.

You don't have to totally reject God's Word to keep it from working—just get offended. The American Heritage Dictionary defines “offend” as “1. To cause anger, resentment, or wounded feelings in. 2. To be displeasing or disagreeable to. 3. To violate; transgress.” Many Christians still believe and know the Word of God to be true, but they resent the rejection or are annoyed by the sneers that standing up for God's Word produces. This will stop God's Word from working for them. Believers don't have to like persecution. That's not the way God made them. But they do have to keep going in spite of it.

It appears to me that the four conditions of people's hearts listed in this parable present a sequence that we all go through. There is a time when God's Word doesn't mean anything to us, because we don't understand it and the devil just steals it from us (Matthew 13:19). Then, we accept the Word; but tribulation and persecution offend us, and we don't let the Word get rooted in our hearts (Matthew 13:20-21). If we pass the first two challenges against God's Word, then come the weeds (“thorns”) described in this verse.

This depicts a plant that took root and was growing. It could have even begun to bear fruit. But the end result was the same as the other types of ground. The fruit didn't mature.

There is only so much nourishment in the soil and, likewise, our hearts. If we focus on other things, this saps the nourishment God's Word needs to work in our lives. So, those who reach the fourth stage, where they are fruitful (Matthew 13:23), have to limit the cares of this world and other lusts that choke out God's Word. This good ground didn't have more than all the other types Jesus described; it had less. True fruitfulness in the Christian life doesn't come to those who are more talented or more charismatic than others. It comes to those who are more focused on the Lord than others. If being less is the key, then anyone can be less.

To me, taking the teaching outlined above into Africa is the most powerful way of setting up disciples. Whilst I fully accept what Jesus was getting at, I make the observation that many who fall into the first three categories mentioned in this parable had NO SUPPORT after evangelization. They went back home to a world steeped in tradition and whilst many held fast to the word it readily became compromised. I believe that by going back into Africa with the specific objective of promoting and developing a culture of discipleship, His Kingdom will come, His will shall be done and Africa's people will prosper!

METHOD OF OPERATING

Before suggesting a method of operating, A Story out of Africa:

“According to tradition at the foot of a very high snowcapped mountain was a village occupied by a small clan of proud descendants of the very first King of Africa.

In the village was a young boy who often gazed up at the huge mountain as he did his daily chores wondering, as young boys do, what adventures awaited him as he sought one day to climb the mountain.

The young boy’s father was a respected man in the village, who led an unusual lifestyle in that he would be home for three or four days and then he would pack a bag, catch the local village bus and be gone for up to three weeks. On his return he was always hailed by the rest of the men in the village as if he were a returning hero and after visiting the headman of the village he would sit with the men around the fire as they drank their local beer and regaled one another with stories.

The young boy could only sit at a distance and wonder why the other men respected his father so highly and what the stories were that his father was sharing.

One day he rose before sunrise and hid on the village bus. At daylight, the people going to the nearby city, including his father, climbed on board for the three-hour journey.

Once in the city, the young boy watched from his hiding place in the storage rack as the bus stopped in a large square teeming with people dressed in strange clothing. It was clear that an expedition of some sort was being prepared and the boy noticed that among the teeming throng were three distinct groups of people.

The first was a group of three men wearing bright orange fur hats who stood quietly some distance from the crowd watching the hustle and bustle.

The second group of about twelve, which now included his father, wore bright green hats and they were supervising the activities of about fifty other men who were wearing plain brown hats and who were busy loading vehicles for the expedition.

The expedition left and after a long hot day, the bus returned to the village where an extremely relieved but angry mother confronted the boy. When he explained what he had done his mother relented but promised that the first thing his father was going to do upon his return was to take him into the forest for a lesson in obedience!

After three weeks of fearful anticipation, the day arrived and off the bus climbed his smiling but weary father. The young boy, believing that getting in first was likely to be in his best interests, ran up to his father, threw himself in to his father's arms and poured out his story and an apology.

His father laughed, put him down and told the boy to join him at the fire as soon as was finished with the headman.

The other men all looked strangely at him as he sat on his haunches waiting just outside the main seating around the fire.

As his father walked up to the fire he bent down, scooped his son into his arms and carried him into the circle of men. He sat down with his son on his knee and having explained to the laughing men what his son had done, he turned to his son, pointed to the mountain which was just visible against the stars in the African night sky and said

“Son, I am a mountain guide. My job is to guide people from all over the world up the mountain. There are three stages to the journey. Everyone starts the climb, but many reach the end of stage one and decide that this was far enough. The job of the men you saw with brown hats is to act as porters for everyone but once we reach stage one, they remain behind with those who stop there. My job, with the others who wear the green hats, is to take the remaining climbers up to the far more dangerous end of stage two. Many decide that this is far

enough and we stop with them because the three men with the orange hats are the experts who lead the few who have the desire to go all the way to the summit.”

He then set his son down in front of him, looked him in the eye and said “Son, only you can decide how far up the mountain you want to go. BUT, if you decide that you want to go all the way, remember that the key to getting to the top is to remember that there is always someone lower down the mountain than you, and if you lean down to help them up there will always be someone higher up the mountain who will lean down to help you up!”

UBUNTU!

Whilst for many people of European, Asian or American origin, the word ‘UBUNTU’ is used to summarize what they do not understand about African Culture, for Southern Africans the word (or similar words like ‘unhu’ in Zimbabwe or ‘uMunthu’ in Malawi) are often used to sum up the notion of a very acceptable philosophy which they suggest underpins a unique worldview that drove the creation of a unique historic ‘African Culture’ and that, if we could establish this world view as the foundation for a new African culture, all would turn out well.

The Christian philosopher- theologian Professor Bennie Van der Walt in his masterpiece 'UNDERSTANDING AND REBUILDING AFRICA' makes the following comment.

“Are Africans able to philosophize? And should their philosophy bear a unique African character? Today such questions may sound very strange indeed. One tends to answer. Of course!”

He then goes on to discuss the fact that for many centuries the people of Africa were forced to accept the imposition of a claimed “superior” European/Western culture which raises the question. To what degree is African philosophy a reaction to this domination as opposed to a unique articulation of all that is African?

Prof Van der Walt then goes on to say...

“In the light of the fact that there are about 800 different African languages and an estimated 2000 dialects some would answer negatively. To speak about an African culture would imply serious over generalization.

Others however - not only Westerners, but also Africans - are of the opinion that it is possible to identify certain cultural traits which are unique and common to the African situation”

I tend to go along with this latter perspective and I am inclined to see the word UBUNTU as summing up these cultural traits.

I say this because as I have travelled through Africa, I observe that there are various common characteristics.

For example: A communalistic/clan-based approach to decision making. A strong respect for bloodline heritage (BUT where bloodline heritage on its own does not always guarantee political leadership) strong presence of shared Traditional African Religious beliefs, the acceptability of 'gift giving' as means of gaining 'favour' amongst those in power plus many other characteristics that govern family life, marriage and courtship. However, I do not see the need to become too preoccupied with this issue as I believe that Jesus came to REMODEL CULTURE NOT BE ACCOMMODATED BY CULTURE.

This is quite well demonstrated in a discussion I held with the central executive of The United African Federation of Churches (UAFC).

UAFC was formed as an attempt to create a platform from which the many small independent indigenous Churches that exist in Southern Africa could speak with a common voice. Many of these indigenous churches consider themselves to be Christian and certainly they carry The Bible, have crosses on

their regalia and a typical 21st Century denominational Christian would be hard pressed on attendance at their services to see why they should not be considered Christian. The problem crops up when we get closer to them and discover the extent to which they have mixed Traditional African Religious practices into their ‘Christian’ doctrine.

I have been privileged to be accepted by UAFC as their ‘Chief Advisor’ as they try and form a strategy to move their followers into the 21st Century and in one of my early discussions with them I posed the question “What is the best thing that has come out of traditional African Culture?” It did not take more than 30 seconds for them to agree that it was ‘UBUNTU’.

I then posed the question “What is the worst thing that has come out of traditional African culture?” Fifteen minutes later they were still arguing but with a tendency toward ‘greed and corruption’ being the answer.

I then suggested to them that the worst thing that had come out of traditional African culture was actually ‘UBUNTU’. This clearly shocked them until I explained that there were many really acceptable and good things that could be said to be incorporated in the word UBUNTU but there were some things

that militated against 21st Century Africans engaging effectively with the 21st Century global system.

I am therefore inclined to focus on CREATION OF A NEW

HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE WAY OF DOING THINGS (CULTURE) based on the application of Biblical Principle in every arena of society. Communities should be at liberty to retain cultural practices that do not conflict with scripture. BUT where cultural practices DO conflict with Scripture this needs to be uncompromisingly highlighted so that individuals may make fully informed choices. Most importantly Christians need to be united in their condemnation of that which is counter scriptural!

Nowhere in history have I been able to identify an instance where the fact that civil society chose to legislate behaviour as acceptable made it acceptable to God. Sin remains sin no matter how we humans try and legitimise it! Our role as Christians is to DEMONSTRATE the benefits of Godly principle-based behaviour NOT spend energy trying to persuade sinners to change by using intellectual logic or condemnation. It is The Holy Spirit who brings conviction of sin and nothing quite beats Him being able to point out an example of someone in similar situation and circumstances who had by surrendering to Jesus achieved a life of significance.

THE STRATEGY

What rapidly became apparent as I tried to articulate a starting point for a strategy for The Body of Christ to become a serious influencer in African society was that we had a few serious challenges.

1. Many of the members of most churches have at best a superficial understanding of personal calling, purpose and destiny and very little understanding of personal ministry or the role of the five-fold ministry. A short while ago I by chance tuned in to a TV interview with a prominent American Church leader who was being interviewed on the topic of 'The American Mega Church'. He made a dramatic statement. He said, "I know just how to turn a ten-thousand-member mega church into a onethousand-member church overnight. Just ask the people to start behaving like they were really Christians!" He went on to produce data that demonstrated that one of the Cities with the worst crime, porn, prostitution, drug addiction and alcohol abuse statistics in America was the same city that had the most people as a percentage of the population who attended a Christian church service each Sunday! I cannot help observing that 70% of South African citizens consider themselves to be Christians BUT look at the problems we are experiencing. In all the elections since 1994 the political parties advocating a Biblical Christian World View have garnered the lowest percentage of votes!

2. The next challenge was to deal with the suspicion of local church leaders around the acceptability of a so called 'collaboration initiative' run by an itinerant ministry. In this regard I believe this concern to be fully justified. Many so-called para-church organizations have allowed themselves to take the focus God has given them and use it to justify passing judgement on the remainder of the Church. My view is that deeper understanding of the wholeness of The Body of Christ combined with a genuine submission to the leadership of local churches will eliminate this concern.
3. We had to have some form of framework or structure that accommodated the diversity of African society, eliminated or at least seriously reduced the capacity for conflict and yet gave everyone a framework to work within.
4. This requirement gives rise to a particular challenge. How does the leader of a local church devise a personal development strategy for each of his/her people when the majority are predominantly Sunday attendees? And I ask the question in the context of having been a member of a mega church for sixteen years and a member of other local churches for over 20 years. An interesting incident perfectly illustrated this point. After attending a Sunday service I happened to stand alongside two men who were chatting. One was a dentist and the other was a farmer. The dentist was telling a story about how he had developed a technique for extracting teeth from children without hurting them. The farmer asked, "Can you do that for

a horse?” The level of disconnect between them was massive because the worlds they lived in outside of Sunday morning were poles apart.

So how do we address these challenges?

Firstly, I categorically state that my purpose in writing this book is to motivate, inspire and encourage Christians to collaborate with one another to become the dominant influencers for good in African society!

I am not a Pastor, I do not lead or run a local church and never want to lead any organization that could be seen in any way as competing with local churches! I do have a small team of committed supporters who are themselves members of local churches and we position ourselves under the banner of The Community Life Givers Initiative as a resource to the local church and actively encourage new believers who come our way to join a local church. Essentially, it is my view that the local church is designed by God to be the ‘launching pad’ for influencers into African society. To do this effectively we believe that the local church needs to position itself as a ‘processing plant’ that typically would take a ‘new Christian’ through a process of

- Deliverance
- Healing
- Restoration
- Equipping to be commissioned into their arena of influence.

(A list of local churches that support our mission, vision and purpose can be found on our website www.leadafrika.co.za/clg)

To address the issue of framework recorded in 3 above and to provide focus for the individual participants we have embraced a model that divides the arenas of influence in society as follows and we suggest that local churches create focus groups around each arena as follows:

1. Civil Government, Law and Politics.

2. Commerce and Finance
3. Science & Technology
4. Arts, Culture, Sport and Entertainment
5. Family Affairs, Health & Welfare,
6. Education
7. Media

This approach is not cast in concrete. As the book of Ecclesiastes makes clear “there is nothing new under the sun” and we are aware that there have over the years been several attempts to develop a theology around what seems commonly to be known as ‘reclaiming the seven mountains of Zion’. From my research it appears to me that most of these attempts have

dealt with religion as one of the seven mountains/ arenas of influence. Our approach is different and my rationale is simple. Religion drives the world view/philosophy/belief system that underpins the establishment of culture. It consequently impacts the way

we 'do things around here' in every arena of society. It is in reality the overarching influence on the individual's ability to find an acceptable coherent and aligned answer to the six philosophical questions posed at the beginning of this book.

1. Where do I come from?
2. Who am I really?
3. Why am I here?
4. Where am I going?

5. Why is there evil in the world?
6. What is the solution to evil?

With regard to the answers to these six questions. I personally have a very clear set of answers supported by Scripture. However, after much debate between my counsellors and I, I have decided not to include these answers in the book lest in so doing I appear to be prescriptive and potentially alienate those who may have different answers to me. You are welcome to email me your answers and I will in return send you mine! The address to use is givelife@communitylifegivers.com

Getting back to the framework. The view that I have taken is that every person, Christian or otherwise, gets out of bed to go and do 'something' and that that something will always fall into one of the seven arenas mentioned above. Consequently, if we as The Body of Christ are going to become the dominant influencers for good in Africa our beliefs need to impact every sector of society.

Ultimately each arena of influence impacts every other. If the people in Civil Government, Law and Politics do not do their job well the people in the arena of commerce and industry

cannot function effectively. If the people in Commerce and Industry do not do their work well there will be no taxes etc.

Until a better way emerges, we are suggesting that each focus group start by asking themselves four questions:

1. In order to ensure a functional society at every level what, according to the Bible, should the core mission/purpose of the participants in our sector be? For example, I believe that the core purpose of Civil Government, law & politics is to create a stable, fear free, hope filled environment within which all citizens can exercise their God given gifts and talents to the benefit of both themselves and their fellow citizens.
2. In light of the above what are we in our sector doing really well?
3. What are we doing badly or omitting to do?
4. What could we do differently?

Using these questions we believe a process will emerge that will make it possible for members of The Body of Christ to connect and interact irrespective of their doctrinal convictions, social standing, level of economic prosperity or cultural background. The interaction is guaranteed to be robust!

For those individuals & churches who are already pursuing the African Dream, please let us know who you are and allow us to learn from and learn with you. For those churches or individuals who find this book challenging them to embrace The African Dream and the mandate set out in this book, please feel free to communicate with us. Not only do we have significant resources available to assist individuals and church leaders to fulfil this mandate, but we truly believe that the impact on society will be compounded if we network you with other churches on the same journey.

We are very aware that one of the issues church leaders have to deal with is the ignorance and apathy factor amongst their members. We are available to address church communities as guest speakers on any occasion and we have devised a short course that focuses on providing individuals with a scripture-based sense of identity, legitimacy and what process they need to follow to become a 'good fit' in The Body of Christ. At the end of the course the individual will have a very good insight into what their personal calling and purpose is, what they need

to do to develop their capabilities to fulfil this calling and will understand what they need to do to position themselves as a good fit within their local church.

CONCLUSION

I believe that this book is supporting a move of God in Africa today. Every move of God in the Body of Christ has taken place bottom up as opposed to top down. Jesus did not start his ministry with the rulers of the day religious or otherwise. Amongst the ranks of His disciples were businessman, a tax collector and a physician. Ordinary people living ordinary lives, and his final mandate was to them, not to the political or religious leaders of the day.

If Prof Van der Walt asks the question “Are African’s able to philosophise?” and the answer is yes, the next question is “Are African’s able to lead?”, or possibly “Do we have leaders or can we develop leaders who can become the change agents required to create this new culture? I believe the answer to be a categorical yes! Provided they have a clear idea of what we mean by Biblical leadership. To assist in this regard herewith my definition of the role and purpose of leadership as I observe it being acted out in scripture:

THE ROLE OF THE LEADER: “To be the custodian of the vision of an organization and the primary source of motivation, inspiration and discipline.”©

THE PURPOSE OF LEADERSHIP: “To take the organization or a division of the organization from where it is to where it has the potential to be”©

To wrap up the message of this book and to give additional perspective to the invitation to become a proactive member of African society herewith my opinion as to why the analogy of the church being a ‘body’ is so prevalent in scripture:

Firstly, the human body is incredibly complex. Even with modern technology we are still discovering new insights into how the human body functions. I recently heard a medical specialist on a radio interview decrying the fact that, as a scientist, and having observed how the body has the capacity to restore itself from the most traumatic injuries and disease, why we human beings do not live forever!

Secondly, there are various parts of the body without which the body cannot function. (Brain, heart, lungs etc.). I believe that in the context of The Body of Christ these essential organs are those called the office of The Fivefold Ministry.

Thirdly, the organs of the human body are unique in their life-giving design but interdependent. Every component of the body is designed to participate in the process of giving life sustaining resources to every other component and receiving life sustaining resources in return. According to Romans 12 we are

all called to one body and each given specific gifts to be applied to the benefit of the body not just for our own edification.

Lastly, the hand cannot go out and plough the field on its own. No one person will be exclusively used by God to bring healing, just government and prosperity to Africa.

Only the whole body operating in unity can achieve this.

We have a dream:

AFRICA HEALED FROM THE HURTS OF HER PAST,
JUSTLY GOVERNED BY HER OWN PEOPLE,
MAXIMISING HER ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

We have a vision:

A COLLABORATIVE FEDERATION OF GOD FEARING,
FEAR FREE, FAITH FILLED, WELL GOVERNED,
OPPORTUNITY FOCUSSED INDEPENDENT STATES.

WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST

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