

THE SEND

DISCIPLESHIP AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

MATTHEW 28:19-20 (NIV)



A Letter From The Editor

BY NNEOMA EWURUM

Beloved,

I'm excited to share our theme for this month's newsletter: Discipleship and the Great Commission. This is a subject that lies at the heart of our mission as believers and is foundational to our calling to spread the gospel. Every follower of Christ is called to participate in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), but somehow even when talking about this important call, we fail to emphasize the aspect of discipleship. Somehow, over time, it seems like discipleship has been omitted from the Great Commission altogether when the original intent suggests it is the principal thing.

A study of the book of Acts shows us an early church that modeled fulfilling the mandate of the Great Commission with discipleship at the core of efforts to propagate the gospel. I believe we have a lot to learn from this model. The goal is the same: spread the gospel and make Jesus known by making disciples that make other disciples. I cannot think of a more worthy calling or greater life purpose. My prayer is that the contents of this newsletter not only informs you but also inspires you to take bold steps in your personal life and walk with God.

As we reflect on the importance of the Great Commission, let us remember that it is not just a call for some, but for all who believe. Each of us plays a vital role in God's grand narrative redemption. Together, may we embrace this challenge and commit ourselves anew to making disciples who make disciples.

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Hands & Feet of Jesus: Spreading the Gospel through Community Outreach

BY KAREN OWUSU

It was love at first sight when my eyes laid hold of Uganda, the Pearl of Africa. My heart found home in a split of a second when my feet touched ground in Entebbe Airport. From the warm welcome on the sign boards to stepping outside, experiencing the



outpouring of the rain on my skin, I couldn't help but smile even though I don't take delight in walking in the rain, my heart was filled with joy like a little child by the simple fact that I was home. Although, it was not my first time in Uganda, it felt like it. If home is where the heart is, I have found it right here in the Pearl of Africa. The morning sun arose, filling the sky with shades of blue, announcing the arrival of a new day. As children played in the streets, their laughter echoed, side by side, I felt God's presence so strong

and near. For the first time, I was going to stay in Uganda for several months. With excitement in my heart, I set out on a journey eager to serve in the remote villages not knowing what each day will unveil. I served alongside other missionaries with Baris Healthcare, Good Hands Dental Care Africa, Treasure Harvest, Project Orphans and Caring Heart Breakthrough Ministry. The journey was not without its challenges, but as I treaded on dusty roads in the villages, crossed paths with new faces while facing the unknown, I was reminded of the words of Isaiah 6:8, *"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I. Send me!'"*.

In serving I was reminded of the Great

Commission, the assignment in Matthew 28:19-20 to go in the world, preach the gospel and make disciples. So overwhelmed with God's love and His heart for His children, each day in Uganda was a blessing. One of my fondest memories in Uganda, was being able to give back to the community. The smiles that unraveled from the faces of those who received care packages filled my heart with joy. I remember one particular occasion, when I went out to give the gifts to

the street kids and I had one more bag left filled with basic supplies. I gave it to a child and thereafter another child followed expecting something from me but the one I gave the last gift to, sat on the sidewalk and shared with his friend. It was a beautiful sight to see. From no electricity, no water on for days, to kids running to receive a bag of supplies, to street evangelism, distributing Christmas packages to the community, early morning outreaches in the villages, and being able to spend Christmas with the orphans at Caring Heart Breakthrough Ministries, my journey to Uganda was remarkable and so worth it.

Amidst the sight of poverty and hardship hovering all around the community, I found joy in serving the marginalized, for it is written in James 1:27, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world". For there is no greater joy than being the hands and feet of Jesus. Leaving Uganda was very hard for me but looking back, the memories I created and the souls I cross paths with made this mission trip worth it. As I returned home, my heart overflowed with gratitude for the opportunity to serve God's people. As I sit down to reflect on my past mission trip experiences, I can't help but feel a sense of anticipation building within me for the journey ahead. So as I eagerly await the next mission trip, I know that God has been faithful and no matter where the road may lead, God is with me. The Father's heart beats for souls and I take great delight in every opportunity that I get to be a laborer in the Vineyard.

Making Disciples who make other Disciples

BY TAYO AKINLABI (AN INTERVIEW WITH PASTOR VICTOR RAJ)

Making disciples who make disciples is the main goal of the great commission (Matt. 28:18-20). Apostle Paul emphasized this in 2 Timothy 2:2 – *“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others”*. Our main task as a church is to raise disciples whose heart, mind, affections, will, relationships and purpose have been

believers. He has been in the ministry since 1999 (25 years ago) with a call to reach the most remote villages in India with the gospel. His labor has not only led to the establishment of churches in these distant villages but also the founding of two Bible colleges – one in Tamil Nadu while the other is Punjab, the north of India. We had the opportunity to ask him about his commitment to disciple making. Here are some excerpts from our conversation:

How did you recognize your call from God in regards missions?

My call to ministry started when I was in 11th grade in a youth meeting. God spoke to me through Isaiah 6:8 – “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”. It was through this encounter that I received a clear call to reach the

village has no electricity or clean water. The villagers worship idols, spirit gods and all sort of witchcraft practices. I had to walk for 3-4 kilometers (2 – 2.5 miles) to get to the closest bus stop for a bus to the city. I also experienced numerous spiritual and physical attacks. Nevertheless, a church was started and now the church has about 100 members. To God be the glory. Seven years ago, the Lord entrusted me with the vision to establish a tuition free Bible College, aimed at equipping and raising end-time harvesters. The Bible college, named “The Kingdom Bible College”, provides believers with an immersive study of the scriptures and prepares them for missionary work over a 15-month period. To date, the college has graduated 70 ministers from diverse languages and villages, where they serve as pastors within their communities. The second Bible College in Punjab started last year with 50 students.

Who is a disciple and why is discipleship important in missions?

A disciple is a follower of our Lord Jesus Christ, a learner from our Lord Jesus Christ and a doer of what the Lord has commanded. Discipleship is important because it is the primary goal of missions. The outcome of discipleship inevitably leads to more people being involved in missions.

Share with us some testimonies from your discipleship effort in India

One of the testimonies we have is related to one of our students at the Bible college. This student and his wife, who are in their fifties, use to work at a clothing factory. Two months after they graduated from the Bible College, they both left their jobs and became full time missionaries.



completely transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. One man dedicated to the task of disciple-making is Pastor Victor Raj. He is a teacher, pastor and a spiritual mentor to many in India. He is born and raised in the southernmost state in India called “Tamil Nadu”. His family originally practice Hindu before his grandmother and father encountered Jesus and became

most remote villages in India with the gospel. After this call, I gave myself to God completely. Rather than pursuing a secular education after my 12th grade, I devoted three years to studying at a Bible College to honor God’s call upon my life. After I finished my studies in the Bible College, God led me to the first village He is sending me to. The

This family conducts crusades monthly with more than 400 people coming to accept Jesus Christ at each crusade. Our greatest testimony is that most of our students are now fully involved in the great commission, baptizing and discipling converts in their local communities. I give God all the glory.

What are some of the challenges you have faced in regard to discipleship?

One of the physical challenges is related to my mobility. I have an old motorcycle that I use to move between villages in extremely hot climate for more than 100 kilometers daily. When I arrive from such trip, I feel immense stress and pain. I am trusting God for a van to help reach



out to more villages. With the van, my family and other disciples can assist me in the work. I have also encountered several spiritual attacks, but I appreciate God for giving me victory over these attacks.

Who is responsible for making disciples? Are there qualifications for a disciple? Can anyone who knows Christ disciple new converts?

Everyone who has been saved is responsible for making disciples. The job of raising disciples is not only for church leaders but for all believers. Fruits are used to produce more fruits. Likewise, every Christian home should be a Bible College and every Christian is qualified to disciple new converts.

What is the role of the church in making disciples?

The church has a major role in raising disciples. The church should have a robust, healthy discipleship plan for new believers. Disciples should be trained on how to raise other disciples. Today, many churches are involved in many programs. How many of those

programs are channeled towards disciple-making? The success of our church programs should be measured by the number of new disciples it brings.

What advice do you have for anyone who is hesitant to engage in discipleship?

Every Christian is expected by God to raise disciples. Jesus is our

perfect example. He raised disciples during His ministry on earth and through His disciples, billions of disciples have been raised. He is inviting us to join Him in making disciples until the whole world has come to accept Jesus as their Lord and personal Saviour. There are rewards for those who are committed to raising disciples.

I am also using this opportunity to invite every member of Agape House of Worship Family of Churches to India. I am a member of the church, please visit me. Send my regards to the entire pastoral team and the church. God bless you all. Amen.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Uganda Missions Trip 2024
www.ahowfc.org/missions

JLM Inaugural Gala
(Visit
www.jidelawore.org/gala24
for more information)

JLM Ministry Trips
www.jidelawore.org

Missions Monthly Prayer
“Till The Whole Word Hears”
Last Sunday of every month
6:00pm - 6:45pm
(908) 293- 8320

Monthly Prayers for missions,
missionaries, unreached
people groups and lost souls.

For questions and more
information on the missions
ministry
Email:
missions@agapehousenj.org

Harvest of Souls: Spreading the Gospel & Raising Disciples.

BY KAREN OWUSU

Oswald J. Smith once said, “The light that shines farthest shines brightest nearest home.” Throughout scripture, we are reminded of light, the radiance of God’s glory, symbolizing the presence of God, truth, righteousness,

love. It reflects the desire for others to experience the grace, forgiveness, peace, and eternal life that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. We have tasted and seen God’s goodness and it’s time for the world to drink from the well that never runs dry. Sharing the Gospel is critical to the unfolding of light amidst the darkness and reveals God’s plan for the world.

Discipleship, on the other hand, focuses on nurturing believers to grow in their faith and understanding our walk with the Lord as well as shaping believers to walk with the Holy Spirit and bearing witness of what Christ has done. Francis Chan once said “Discipleship is not a sprint. It’s a

of life.

C.S. Lewis once said “The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time.” This quote is reiterating that the church has a huge assignment with its primary purpose being able to lead people to Jesus Christ; equipping them to teach new believers in such a way that their lives become a reflection of God’s character. If the church fails in playing their role, as C.S. Lewis stated, the resources such as sermons, missions and even the Bible can be seen as ineffective because the church has missed the mark in fulfilling the Great Commission.

The role of discipleship and our response to missions, is essential to the spread of the Gospel. There is a mandate given to us by Jesus and we must arise and take action. Millions of souls are at stake and dependent on us. Souls are perishing but the laborers are few in the vineyard. The harvest is plenty but the laborers are few due to being occupied with the world’s demands but the command for us to share the Gospel still remains as the heart cry of the Father. We must arise and play our role as followers of Jesus Christ; embracing the call upon our lives as we ensure that we are making an impact and winning souls for the Kingdom. The assignment is great and impossible without the hand of the Lord in our lives, but with God, all things are possible.



and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Light is Christ, our living hope. Light represents what we as children of God are called to be in this dark world; a source of illumination, guiding others away from darkness. We are called to be carriers of God’s glory all around the world. At the center of our Christian faith is a command for followers of Jesus Christ to go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). Sharing the Gospel is the Father’s heart; a direct command not to certain believers but to all who follow Him. This command for us to go out into the world to proclaim the

marathon. Perseverance is an essential element.” The journey of being a disciple is a lifelong journey and commitment that requires grace, endurance and patience. Unlike a sprint, which is fairly short, a marathon requires applying pressure fueled by the Holy Spirit for one to run this race. The process of running a marathon is not for the faint hearted. It isn’t easy but worth it in the end because this process is transformative; just as the journey of being a disciple reshapes a person’s character and perspective