

Wellspring Club
Missions is the Workplace

MISSIONS CONFERENCE ABUJA

POWERED BY 

THEME:
Strategic Planning for the Great Commission
at both global and Regional levels

Go into all the world and preach the Gospel.
Mark 16:15



Gregory Sharpe
Missionary and Team Leader International
Mission Board, Niger, West Africa



Pastor Jimson Olufuye
Pastor and Missionary



Dr. Olapeju Otsemobor
President WellSpring Club/Convener



Rev. (Dr.) Idowu Akintola
Host

Date&Time: January 19, 5pm to January 20, 8am 2018

Venue: New Estate Baptist Church, Plot 1057, Chris Abutu Garba Street,
Off Odumegwu Ojukwu Street, Apo-Gudu, Abuja.

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DAY 1

OPENING

The meeting started with praise and worship at 4:33pm; led by Ifeoluwa. This was followed by an opening prayer and the singing of the conference hymn by Pst. Idowu Akintola and Pst. Gracious Okoronkwo respectively. Thereafter, Mrs. Lydia Kolade welcomed all guests and also introduced the vision and mission of WellSpring Club to participants. This was followed by the welcoming of special guests by Pst. Akintola.

Dr. Otsemobor in her welcome address expressed her desire in rallying thinkers and solution finders around to proffer strategic solutions to critical issues. She challenged all participants to find out the temper of the times and know what to do like the "Sons of Issachar". Further, she explained that the meeting would enable participants to think far, plan far and do things differently in their 'Missional Engagements'. She believed that as people who were born of God and full of the Holy Spirit, the 2 day meeting provided an opportunity for them to seek God and to understand His mind for His church and to pray them into existence.

2.0 PRESENTATIONS

The conference witnessed presentations from two guests; Rev. Greg Sharpe and Pst. Dr. Olufuye respectively.

The first speaker, Dr. Olufuye read from the book of Acts 1:6-11 and spoke extensively on Missions to Muslims. He emphasized the need for a new mission strategy in the world. He expressed concern over the fact that many people are not witnessing to the Muslims despite the fact that Christians have them around. He opined that a Muslim is someone who has submitted to the will of Allah. He urged participants to be more concerned about the Muslims because about 50% of Nigerians are Muslims who are largely excluded from all 'Missiological Interventions' because the church does not have any clear strategy to reach them. Dr. Olufuye remarked that although Christianity is nice a product, it is not well marketed by Christians. Poor marketing was some of the reasons behind the wrong approaches that were employed in the past by Christianity when they went into various 'crusades' to tackle the threat of Islam. This time the church must seek for better ways of responding to them. The Muslims hold a number of positions that are largely unsupported by historical facts. There are gaps in their beliefs as expressed in the Quran. A focus on them would help them to have better understanding about the person of Jesus and His purpose for their lives. He drew participants' attention to the fact that many Islamic countries are bedeviled by civil unrest, militancy and various social vices which were already causing disaffections among many Muslims and that had created the needed opportunity to win them to Christ. Finally, he urged the 'church' to rededicate their lives to Christ by obeying His commands - "Go into the world and preach the gospel to all creatures". Muslims should be constructively engaged and not avoid them.

On the other hand, Evang. Gregory Sharpe read from Romans 1:16. He lamented the fact that some people pray that God would destroy the Muslims. He believed that the Muslims are not better sinners than us; they are only being deceived. He asked participants to state responses they got each time they had the opportunity to minister to Muslims. The responses included: resourceful, agree, animosity, surprised, arguments, some ask further questions, some express impossibility some use the Bible to ask questions, some feel Christians are hypocrites but some of them accept Christianity wholeheartedly. Evang. Gregory proceeded by telling participants that despite the animosity they see in the lives of Muslims, they should focus on the mandate of winning them to Christ. Although winning Muslims to Christ could be difficult and frustrating, Christians should be encouraged by the fact that God will surely bring the needed harvest at the right time. Therefore, he urged all to be involved in all conversations throughout the conference by their words and strategic thinking. Further, he informed participants that Muslims don't know where they would spend eternity and are actually bothered about this. Christians should help them to understand the will of God for humanity concerning the issue of eternity.

Further, Rev. Greg proffered remedies on how to win Muslims. They included:

1. Avoid arguments: Christians could create a desire in the lives of Muslims without necessarily arguing with them. Christians should seek for wisdom and must contextualize their preaching to make them understandable and adaptive to the needs of the people (Lk. 4:16-17). He believed that Christians would do better if they were good students of the Word of God.
2. Christians should be excellent listeners by depending on the power of the Holy Spirit.

3.0 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The meeting provided answers to questions like

- Does Allah mean the same thing as God?
- Is the response of the Church adequate against the onslaught on Christians?
- What should then be the response of the church to the menace of Islam around the world?

The answers were:

- Allah is the name Muslims use for God. God means the same as Allah.
- Muslims believe in Jesus but do not believe that He is the Son of God.
- The Church must avoid fighting herself and should respond to Pastors excess in love
- Christians should shine as light around the world.
- Christians should respond to the issue of refugees by not only providing assistance but should go beyond that to share the gospel with them.

The meeting came to an end at about 7:40pm with a closing prayer which was led by Rev. Gracious Okoronkwo.

REPORT ON THE MISSIONS CONFERENCE HELD ON 19TH AND 20TH JANUARY, 2018 AT NEW ESTATE BAPTIST CHURCH ABUJA

DAY 2

1.0 OPENING

The conference continued on January 20, 2018 with an opening prayer praise and worship which was led by the choir at 8:10am. The program progressed with the Conference Hymn "Stand up Stand up Jesus" led by Rev'd Gracious Okoronkwo. This was followed by a recap of the events that took place the previous day by Mrs. Lydia Kolade. Further, Dr. Olapeju Otsemobor did a brief rundown of the expectations of the conference. Again, she urged participants to write down the ideas that come into their minds in the course of the programme.

2.0 PRESENTATIONS

The meeting then progressed with a teaching by Pst. Dr. Jimson Olufuye. He broke his presentation into two parts namely:

- Teaching
 - Proffering of strategic solutions
- He taught from Luke 23:33-34.

He urged all participants to:

- Seek for the necessary equipping to be able to talk to Muslims. Ask questions about Islam and the belief of Muslims.
- Know what the Muslims believe by knowing what the Bible teaches on creation, atonement, Old Testament, New Testament, Redemption, New Birth, Death, resurrection and final judgment
- Enhance belief by trying and practice
- Jesus portray Jesus positively by being friendly to Muslims
- Practice what they preach
- Take the literature Muslims give them and make their belief relevant
- Pray for the Muslims

WHAT TO DO

- Don't speak rudely about Mohammed
- Don't lambast the Quran
- Speak positively about Allah
- Don't start discussions with complicated issues like Trinity
- Don't use the title 'Jesus' except already explained
- Don't be afraid to quote the Bible
- Carry the Bible with respect
- Don't talk about discrimination
- Don't argue with Muslims
- Don't witness to the opposite sex alone
- Don't eat pork in their presence
- Don't give up so easily
- Be patient

3.0 NEW MISSION ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The New Mission engagement was an executive summary, creating a strategic framework for witnessing to the Muslims (John 14:16). The framework among other things will:

- Energize Christians to reach Muslims, provide funds, clear communication, risk management and security
- Promote strategy that will change the errors in the Quran
- Prepare a structured program to reach the Muslims

The justification for the framework is based on the understanding of the fact that the church cannot go to war without adequate equipping.

4.0 HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGY

Phase 1: Develop a strategy document. What needs to be in place to develop commitment?

Phase 2: Set up base and banking process

Phase 3: Measurement phase

- Missionaries should be well funded. Churches can choose to keep certain percentages of their incomes to fund missionary projects.
- Have a list of materials in our websites
- There should be communication strategy. Social media should be used to strategically communicate strategy; emails should be used to circulate non confidential materials.
- The website should have a policy statement. This will help international donor organizations to know how serious we are.
- Call centers should be established
- Staff should go through mandatory training programs to inculcate clear understanding of strategy, proper accounting and integrity.
- A tactical team should be engaged to manage a 'victim's base'. Welfare, hospitality, welfare outreach. Refuge centers should be setup for the persecuted.
- Sign MOU with Bible Societies and organizations. There should be an implementation Committee.
- Risks should be identified and should be mitigated through strategic planning
- Annual budget should be developed
- Succession plan should be developed
- Security should be considered and taken seriously
- Ceaseless prayer and fasting; periodic and systematic security protocols should be maintained
- Cloud based CCTV should be used
- All significant gaps which had made missions to Muslims ineffective should be bridged.

5.0 PRESENTATION 2

Dr. Olufuye's presentation was followed by another presentation by Dr. Mike Oye. Dr. Mike Oye taught on "Sustainability for Missionaries". He started his teaching by informing all participants that Christians are expected to be missionaries which was one of the surest ways of making Missions sustainable. Secondly, a missionary should not be a beggar or suffer unnecessarily. They should be able to look around and create wealth. Children of missionaries should never regret the fact that their parents are missionaries.

Further, he read from Joshua 21:1-3 where he pointed out provisions for the Levites. According to him, the Levites were given lands in order to enable them work and supplement what they are given by the people. He believed that it would be difficult for any missionary to win any soul for Christ if he depends on his prospective converts for his livelihood. Missionaries should work to supplement what their churches are providing for them. He urged Missionaries to liberate themselves from denominational encumbrances or beliefs that have imprisoned them for years. Having read from Acts 20:33-34 and 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 3:6-11, he urged Missionaries to work hard to provide for themselves and stop transferring burdens to their churches.

Evangelist Sharpe on the other hand taught on "Introducing Others to Jesus". He opined that Muslims are concerned about where they will spend eternity and therefore desire the assistance of the Christians. Therefore, all outreach to Muslims must start by getting to the root of the matter -Muslims have been trained not to believe the bible from their childhood and they consider it unacceptable to them. He urged participants to be more sympathetic towards Muslims and to seek for ways to win them to Christ.

6.0 GOODWILL MESSAGES

The meeting paused for a while to receive good will messages from Rev. Akintola, Dr. Okorie of the Navigators Bible Club and Pastor Olowodola of the Foursquare Gospel Church. The speakers took turns to emphasize the invaluable benefits of the conference and thanked the hosts of the conference for the job well done. Pastor Akintola in his words opined that the lack of cohesion within the Christian faith is the reason behind the invasion of Islam. He urged all the fathers of faith in the conference hall to use their invaluable wealth of experiences to proffer sustainable and strategic solutions on how to do Missions to the Muslims better. Further, he charged the conference to be apostolic and prophetic.

Pastor Olowodola encouraged all to do more to more to help missionaries. The church should start by capturing the entire middle belt for Christ and use it as a fulcrum for reaching out to the entire North.

Dr. Okorie of the Navigators Nigeria while drawing the attention of participants to the impact he made in Zaria using the indigenes, he urged the churches to start building indigenous churches because the Northern states were already getting poorer due to the insurgency; this has continued to make people migrate to other states, leaving the North without the gospel. Secondly, he urged churches to invest on the youths because they had the power to move the gospel to the hinterlands. Thirdly, he urged church leaders to ensure that their gospel was holistic and discipleship should be combined with development.

7.0 PRESENTATION 3

Having completed the goodwill messages, the meeting continued with another presentation by Dr. Mike Oye. Having read from Genesis 4:20, he drew the attention of participants three brothers; Jabal, Jubal and Tubal-Cain who although were ministers but were also professionals in tending fields. He therefore urged Missionaries to be

resourceful and use their natural talents. He mentioned that as Missionaries, God may give heavy responsibilities but would always make provisions. However, Missionaries must work with their hands and make investments and leave credible legacies at the end of their stay on earth (Prov. 20:13). Missionaries should look around them and seek opportunities; team up with other people and provide their basic needs. Also, he urged the church to be accountable and show responsibility toward Missionaries because they were in the battle field. The church should also mobilize people towards mission work.

Other highlights of Dr. Oke's message included:

- Missionaries should be visionary
- Thoroughly cleansed and regenerated
- Should be husbands of one wives; no concubines! Because, godly people are always respected Job 1:1
- Missionaries should be productive everywhere they go Prov. 6:6-11
- They should be organized and creative
- It is wrong for a missionary to be poor because poverty is not sweet
- Churches are to emulate the Catholic Church and seek to do investment.

The conference lamented the fact that there is no cohesion among churches concerning the welfare of Missionaries and therefore urged that there should be a development of database to collate the names of Missionaries and synergize to support them.

Further, the class deliberated extensively on the issue of distractions occasioned when Missionaries do other businesses aside ministry. Dr. Oke responded by urging the Missionaries to learn the art of delegation. Their ministry duties should not be allowed to suffer on account of the other business they do outside their primary assignments of soul winning.

The conference made some suggestions as a way forward for future Missionary Engagements.

- Monthly allowance should be given to missionaries
- Avoid taking care of missionaries individually; they should be treated as a team.
- Know their affairs
- Churches should set aside weekly income for missionaries
- Missionaries should go to their mission fields with their profession
- Avoid the use of the word 'adopt' to 'partnership'.
- Missionaries should be given adequate orientation before sending them forth.
- They should be given plans
- Identify persons who have desire for mission and encourage them to either support or partner with missionaries
- Missionaries should learn the art of 'cultural adaptation'.
- Creating a business venture or a club like Wellspring Club which does not depend on people's goodwill to partner with Missionaries should be highly encouraged.

8.0 INPUTS FROM THE BREAK-OUT SESSION

The meeting had a break for about 30minutes to allow participants meet as groups to proffer critical solutions to some issues prescribed by the conference. The participants returned after the break-out-session and provided the following suggestions as outlined below.

CHRISTIAN AGENDA FOR MISSIONS IN NIGERIA: A CALL TO RESPOND TO MISSIONS BY ALL CHRISTIANS

Participants of this group proffered the following suggestions

- Create a process to sensitize Christians on discipleship
- Set up structure for discipleship that can be adopted by all
- There should be intensive prayer for kingdom expansion
- Create softwares that empower people to bring solutions
- The church should effectively deploy the use of the pillars of development which include: Media, Education, Social services, Economics, Health, Politics for missional engagements.

BELIEVERS' RESPONSE TO CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

This group recognized the impact of persecution on Christianity and the fact the persecution is everywhere. It made the following suggestions on how Christians should respond to persecution.

- The church should fashion out ways to recover Christians who have backslide as a result of persecuted.
- There should be an open rehabilitation center for the persecuted
- The persecuted or backslidden should be interacted with though wisdom
- The church should be proactive at restoring or providing succor for the persecuted
- Churches should be mobilized to play strategic roles to cater for the persecuted
- Churches should adopt IDP camps and champion the repatriation of persecuted persons in other countries of the world.
- The church should set up a pool of funds to assist the persecuted.
- The church should be involved in politics

CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO POLITICAL OFFICES AND NATION BUILDING

This group recognized the sad fact that many Christians frown at politics. The Muslims vie for political offices and end up elected into leadership positions leaving the church at the backside and vulnerable. It therefore made the following recommendations.

- Christians should actively participate in politics and seek elective positions
- The group identified the need to ensure that every Christian contesting for political position undergoes discipleship. This is because of how several Christians had disappointed the church in the past.
- Christians should present candidates and or support verified Christians who are contesting for political positions. Levels of support could include: voting, printing of posters, media etc.

- Churches should preach complete and biblically based messages that would help Christians to shine as lights while holding political offices.

ENGAGING THE DIGITAL GENERATION FOR MISSIONS

This group identified technology as one of the veritable tools for soul winning. It is currently estimated that more than 2 billion people use Facebook alone worldwide which should arouse some interest among Christians. They supported the adoption of the use of social media for Missions with Habakkuk 2:14. However, they advised the constructive use of the social media by Christians. Further, they made the following recommendations on the use of technology by churches. They include:

- Focus should be placed on what is important to Christianity
- The use of social media should be encouraged among churches.
- The church should be more active on social media because social media has a wider reach than many other platforms.
- The church should focus on the Creation of contents that would promote the gospel
- The church should champion constructive use of the social media by engaging in useful conversations
- There should be advocacy and policy development –service extension and network coverage.

9.0 WINDING DOWN /PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

The meeting started winding down with words of appreciation by Dcns. Deborah Aber. She proceeded by presenting awards to the following resource persons who had been of great support to the Wellspring Club:

1. Idowu Akintola -This award was presented by Dcns. Eze Ajoku
2. Segun Adekoya – This award was presented by Dcn. Olukayode Senbanjo
3. Mike Oye – This award was presented by Chief Dennis Otsemobor
4. Gregory Sharpe – This award was presented by Mrs. Tracy Ajaiyeoba
5. Dr. Olufuye – This award was presented by Mrs. Titi Dara

The award presentation was followed by a session of photograph with all members of the Wellspring Club.

10.0 PROPHETIC PRAYER SESSION

Furthermore, a prophetic prayer session was handled by Pst. Taiwo Joseph. Thereafter, Rev. Adekoya and Dr. Otsemobor said words of appreciation to participants at the conference.

11.0 RESOLUTIONS

As part of events marking the end of the conference, participants unanimously read out the under listed **S**trategic Resolutions, **P**lanning for the **G**reat **C**ommission at **G**lobal and **R**egional **L**evels.

- Mission is the work of the church and not suggestion, but a command for the church to obey. Therefore, we will all be involved.
- We will contextualize our approach in evangelizing the Muslims by utilizing familiar stories and parables within the context of local and national situations.
- We will be strategic in our approach to evangelizing the Muslims, by learning more about Islam and so be able to engage them effectively for the Lord Jesus to finalize the work of salvation.
- We shall be resilient in the task of drawing Muslims to Christ.
- We will depart from the old order of being totally dependent on outside support as Missionaries; rather, we will make our mission holistic by developing skills and also invest to support our mission work.
- A total of 155 persons attended the conference.

CLOSING

In the absence of other events, the closing prayer was said by Dr. Mike Oye at about 6:08pm. And the meeting ended with a benediction said by Pst. Akintola.