

Sunrise at headquarters

Reconciliation Report

Jim Sutherland, Ph.D., Director

5608 Bradford Avenue
Chattanooga, TN 37409-2211

Phone: 423.822.1091
Fax: 423.822.1091
Email: Jim@RMNI.org
Home: 423.825.6221

*Researching, Teaching,
Mobilizing, for the Name—
Serving Primarily the African
American Church*

Inside this issue:

Praise & Prayer Points	2
2001?	2
Financial Report	2
140 Years!	3

www.RMNI.org

WebWatch:

- **Check the Sudan section of our site**
- **Excellent search engine: northernlight.com/**
- **Discount fares—your airports: smarterliving.com/**
- **Official time: www.time.gov/**
- **Christian books, good prices—christianbook.com**

140 Years! For What?

By Dr. Dick Allen

The dynamic emerging church around the world has a debilitating and crippling birth defect ... economic dependency on "the West." The resounding chorus heard from ministry leaders from over 50 developing countries (including, I might add, poverty-stricken communities in the U. S.) is: "We have unparalleled opportunity for ministry growth but can't move forward unless you folks in North America help us more financially." Sadly, this is the net result of 140+ years of missions!

Don't misunderstand; God's remarkable redemptive plan has taken root around the world. Hector Gomez, Ahab Rahab, Mundo Capri, Rosemary Mugabi ... faceless names ... yet they represent a world of dedicated, gifted nationals leading dynamic ministries of welcoming the orphans, establishing churches, healing the sick, and setting captives free. These leaders throb with potential and weep for the hopeless and the lost in their world. They possess remarkable passion and vision for their villages and homelands. (to p. 3)

2000 Director's REPORT

We're grateful to you who pray, give financially, work shoulder-to-shoulder with us, and generally befriend. I'm especially grateful to our Board and webmaster. For whatever has been accomplished, we offer our amazed and grateful thanks to God. The highlight of the year was participating in the first service of the New Life Presbyterian Church at Kajjansi. You, Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church, the other churches and their Team members who traveled to Uganda, and Ugandan Brothers and Sisters came together for that reality, not slighting the Spirit of God.

The basis of ministry is relationships, which I don't know how to quantify. The goals of RMN continue to be researching, teaching and mobilizing, serving African Americans particularly—striving to see 5,000 African American missionaries.

Research: Dissertation published at our website; article published in upcoming African-American Experience in World Missions (Wm. Carey Lib.), completing recruitment ar

Consequently, in some areas a portion of the population now testify to being Christian. In others, there is but a trace of commitment. All the result of 140+ years of missions

140 Years!

Historically, the birth process of ministries in developing countries has been economically energized by people from other countries and cultures, particularly Western Europe and North America (i.e. “the West”). However, this same funding has literally robbed people in the emerging church of experiencing joy and excellence in the grace of giving. **Without this Christian grace, the emerging church is stymied in growth and health.** Economic dependence on the West is blocking open doors. 140 years of ministry for this?

Contrast this with Zacchaeus’ experience: A little more than a year ago, Zacchaeus was returning to his village after attending an exhilarating 3-day conference in Kampala, Uganda. For the first time he realized that his ministry was not only economically tethered to and strangled by “foreign aid,” but his people were being robbed of experiencing joy in the *grace of giving* (...see that you also excel in this grace of giving. II Corinthians 8:7b). His heart pounded! He no longer wanted his people to remain strangers to stewardship. His mind raced with strategies for imparting this new challenge to his church!

Less than a mile from home, Zacchaeus was met by the entire village. They were not running to welcome him home, they were fleeing the attack of rebels who confiscated their homes and possessions. He had no choice. He had to turn around and flee with his family and friends to a refugee camp ... where he resides, in disgusting and ghastly conditions, to this day.

Zacchaeus confesses to several months of anger, bitterness, and discouragement. One day, he decided to review his conference notes, his only worldly possession. It occurred to him that even life in the refugee camp did not excuse him or his friends from the command to *excel in the grace of giving*. Subsequently, he organized and hosted a small “banquet” right in the middle of the refugee camp. Forty-two people accepted his invitation to attend. Zacchaeus shared his vision and heart for planting new churches in unreached villages. Remarkably, he raised \$450 (US\$) in cash from the forty-two refugees who participated in this small event. Can you grasp the magnitude of this? \$450 is 2 ½ times Zacchaeus’ annual salary ... under circumstances where financial resources were believed to be unavailable! Furthermore, the joy experienced by the givers sparked unparalleled evangelism in the refugee camp. Hundreds of decisions were made to accept Christ. A new church was born!

The time has come! It is time to address the addictive and crippling dependence of the emerging church on outside sources and the pathological fear of losing “western sponsorship.” The past has not been a mistake ... but it is choking the future!

The next major step in the growth of the emerging church is the commitment to exercising stewardship and financial self-determination. Church leaders must do it for the sake of their ministries and for the sake of the vast numbers of people in their own countries yet to be presented with a clear presentation of the Gospel. There is no quick fix. Reversing a 140-year-old mindset of funding from the outside will not be easily accomplished. It has taken a hundred years for the results of missions to become missionaries. It will take a long time for the results of stewardship to become stewards.

Whether in a remote village or a bustling capital city, gifted ministry leaders must be equipped to welcome the orphan, establish the church, heal the sick, and free the captive ... all as a result of *excelling in this grace of giving*.

Editor’s Note: Dr. Allen recognizes the responsibility of Western Christians (the rich) to be generous to those having less (1 Tim. 6:17). While RMN does not use banquet fund raisers, we recognize the range of methods God seems to bless.