

Reconciliation Report

Problems of Providence



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*Researching, Teaching,
Mobilizing, for the Name—
Serving Primarily African-
Americans*

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Note: Issue #18 will be produced in March

WebWatch:

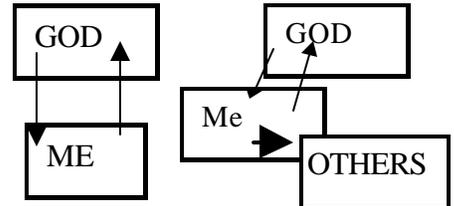
- RxList—Complete info on prescription drugs: <http://www.rxlist.com/>
- IRS forms to download: <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/index.html>
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Our greatest as-

sets can be our greatest liabilities. Beauty can devolve into narcissism. Intelligence and charm easily morph into snobbery. The impregnable city walls fall by lassitude. Consider gratitude. Jesus esteems thankfulness-- "Jesus asked, 'Were not all ten [lepers] cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?'"¹ We are to give thanks in *all* circumstances². Yet even thankfulness has its perils.

As I visit Black churches, and as I've studied the distinctive "core" values of general Black theology, at the foundation is the theology of Providence. You will visit White churches in vain to find the morning intercessor thanking God for waking him up (in his right mind) that morning (assuming he is fully awake), for example. It is nearly ubiquitous—including common variations such as, "We just stopped by this morning to say Thank ya!!"—in the Black church. During slavery every little blessing was appreciated, including the ones most Whites now overlook. Being thankful is a virtue.

The problem is that unless our theology moves from self to others, we will be guilty of a selfish Christianity, and a parody of the plans God has for us to serve HIM in the Kingdom. We can use praise to keep God at arms length, while (p.3)



2001 Director's REPORT

"LORD, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished you have done for us." (Isaiah 26:12 NIV).

Thank you for your love—gifts of friendship, a kind word, intercession, concern, money, co-labor, and service. We have four excellent new Board members, and our great webmaster. We have the obligation to report our progress to supporters of various kinds, and in that spirit, here is a summary of 2001:

Research:

Further research done on recruitment article; was one of the editors of the book—*The African American Experience in World Missions*; researched global missions trends and used it in 6 PowerPoint presentations and at website; assisted 2 researchers with bibliographic work; researched cults; African-American census study, including finances; studied history of missions; researched church management software; provided Jehovah-Witnesses resource sites

Teaching:

14 \$ workshops; 3 SS classes; helped Crown Ministries startup in Chattanooga; \$ teaching into PowerPoint format; 2 sermons; 1 Child Evangelism workshop; began Black missions media presentation; In Uganda--taught 8 subjects during 3 weeks, preached twice; progress in contextualizing \$ seminar for black churches; progress on a marriage seminar

Counseling:

31 \$ counseling sessions; 4 \$ phone counseling; 7 general counseling; 14 ministry/career counseling

Missions Mobilizing:

Negotiated \$6,000 for Uganda primary school; provided missions candidates to funding Black church; 3 Uganda recruitment presentations; 2 meetings for local black missions conference (postponed); provided black mission info to local church; Uganda recruitment meeting; created Uganda PowerPoint recruiting presentation; attended COMINAD black missions-mobilizing conference in Orlando; hosted Ugandan pastor for 5 days; recruited and trained Uganda team of 4 others; Uganda trip results presentations in 2 churches & posted to web; worked as Secretary, African Christian Training Institute; Attended 2 missions conferences; provided resources to two starting ministries; recruited for Dominica trip

Urban Ministry:

Street ministry: 55 ministry occasions; chaired committee giving 2 study scholarships for Black pastors; arranged speakers for most of year at Urban Ministers' Network (UMN) and attended 23 UMN meetings; books to 2 urban pastors; arranged summer camps for 3 children

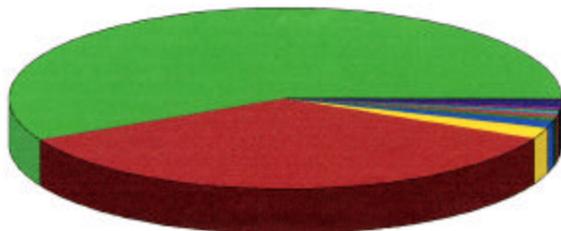
Administration:

Handled all financials, including donor receipting, payroll, tax reporting, banking and monthly reports to Treasurer; produced and distributed monthly Reconciliation Reports; revised and updated website, RMN brochure and business card; purchased video projector; developed RMN video presentation; recruited 4 new Board members; hosted 4 Board meetings; various computer upgrades; reported to supporting churches; developed e-zine Report format with webmaster; obtained office supplies; facilitated Board review of finances; developed time management template

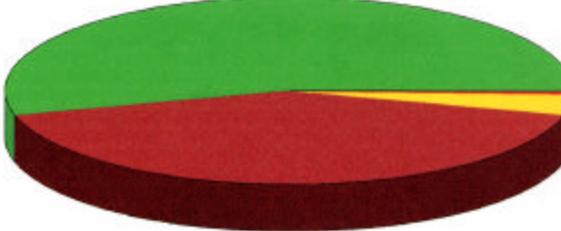
Other:

Hospital/visits to sick: 11; helped in Cedine Homecoming planning; visits to Black churches and ministries: 6+; managed stateside business of missionary in Kenya; 5 discipling meetings; Judi and I gave testimony at supporting church

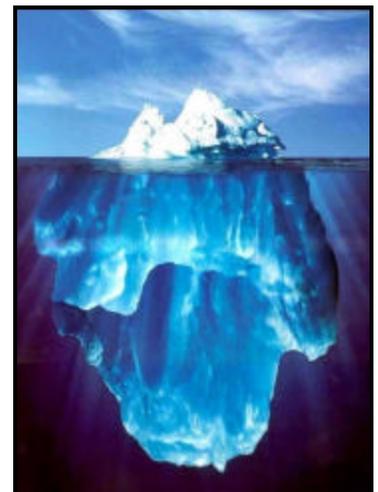
2001 EXPENSES—\$66,288.99



2001 INCOME—\$63,061.71



Payroll Expenses	% 58
Program Expenses	35
Reimbursed Expenses	2
Telephone	1
Office Supplies	.8
Printing	.6
Travel & Enter.	.4
Supplies	.4
Education/conf.	.4
Postage	.3
Other	.8
Church Income	% 54
Individuals' Gifts	42
Foundations	4
Interest Income	.2
Rebate/Refund	.1
Non-cash Contribution	.1



2002 ?

God has graciously given us the gift of a ministry. He has seen fit to fund it through friends, and we have lacked nothing we needed in 2001. Looking at a new year is like trying to gauge the size of an iceberg from the surface. I didn't estimate well for 2001. I looked **several** years into the future. There's a clear plan in my heart—toward more effort in research and mission mobilization, including writing and presenting missions and financial seminars (to free money for missions) in Black churches. "L'homme propose, Dieu dispose" (we suggest, God decides). Judi is going with me to Black churches on Sundays toward developing relationships with Black pastors. I've developed a time template to focus more on priorities and have cut out some meetings. I'm not doing as much financial counseling. Also, by God's grace it's now rare for me to evangelize on the streets alone. I've joined the World Missions Committee at our local church. Walt Robertson and I plan to upgrade our website. We have excellent Board members. The best indication of where we believe God is leading will be found at our Prayer and Praise section. At 55, the days are precious and the time to work short.

treating Him as, in reality, our servant, as we load on the new requests, even expecting Him, as EV Hill once noted, to visit the jails and the nursing homes and, I'd add, the mission fields of the housing projects and the foreign field, instead going ourself. A theology of Providence can sidestep the call to godliness and service. This may be upwardly mobile Christianity, but not biblical Christianity. I sometimes hear zero of the horizontal responsibilities of the Christian-only talk of blessing, wholeness, deliverance, prosperity and freedom. Nothing wrong with being whole, just in being wholly absorbed in personal "wholeness," which in fact is incomplete.

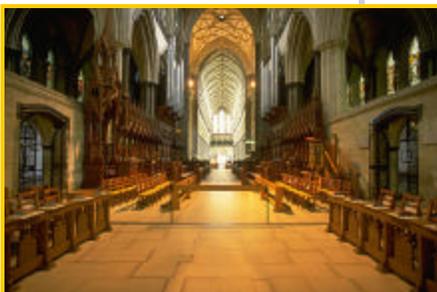
Prosperity theology plays well to Black churches already permeated with a profound sense of receiving God's goodness. Prosperity theology teaches (1 that God wants all His children to be prosperous (2 exactly what to say and believe which, it appears, *must* move God to answer our prayers. Some even try to make us believe that Jesus was wealthy, so that in our emulation of the Master, we're justified to run for Mammon. This heresy certainly dupes Whites and others.

I heard a Black preacher recently who said that when we say "Jehovah Jireh," this puts "pressure on God" to be our Provider. By invoking this name of God, can we exercise a power over this God, putting a "move" on Him, which induces His blessing upon us? This ignores Rom 11:36, "Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?" Is God so paranoid of His reputation and character that He jumps to justify Himself? What amazes me is that God doesn't jump to preserve His glory. He chose to use Cyrus, for example, despite Cyrus not acknowledging Him³. Our God is too small when we think we can put pressure on the One who builds galaxies. God does *whatever* He pleases⁴. The shaman by spell or mantra tries to manipulate the spirit world. In no way can we manipulate God. My wife noted that prosperity theology contains the truth that God ultimately wishes to prosper all His followers, if nowhere else—in heaven. Half-truths are harder to fight than outright lies, as Jesus' temptation illustrates.

Can we be too thankful? Probably not. Can we focus upon being blessed to the neglect of biblical Christian responsibilities and to the detriment of His Kingdom? Yes. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is quoted from *Letters and Papers from Prison*, "Whoever insists upon security and comfort as primary conditions of life cannot have faith." Following Christ is first about Him and His work.

¹Luke 17:17-18, NIV ²1 Thess. 5:18 ³Is. 45:5 ⁴Ps. 115:3; Ps. 135:6; Dan. 4:35

Prayer and Praise



↑ Bertha Lloyd, Judi and Jim plan to go to the Caribbean island of Dominica to teach a marriage conference next month. We're grateful that Bertha, who has gone to Africa with us 6 times, can serve here also. Please pray that the Dominicans we serve will be greatly edified and encouraged.

↑ Judi hasn't had a migraine in December or January!

↑ Maurice in Westside projects professed

Christ recently, and shows spiritual purpose. Pray for his discipleship.

↑ Please pray for good progress on a financial seminar specifically for Black churches, as well as on the marriage seminar. A third presentation—a mission presentation for Black churches needs to be completed by March 22, for a workshop at Cedine Conference Center.

↑ Jim, with sciatica, is in pain, and needs to be

well enough to work at a desk and travel to Dominica. His exercising and movement are very limited at present.

↑ Please pray for the Lord of the Harvest to recruit workers for the Uganda September 2002 Team.

↑ Our 3 in college need prayer for good grades, health and to keep close to the Lord.