

Reconciliation Report



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

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WebWatch:

- "Global Missions Trends" charts are available at our home page above
- Urbana Black missions site: <http://www.urbana.org/feat.aamission.cfm>
- Dr. Walter Williams: <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/economics/wew/articles.html>
- Black Facts: <http://www.blackfacts.com/>

Global Mission Trends

The Good News is: the Kingdom of God is winning against all competing belief systems. But how in the world can we evangelize (let alone "convert") the competition? The visible Church in 2000 years exploded from about 3,000 to the *religion* of 1 in 3. Not that a third are truly born from above. The mustard seed has become the tree of healing for the nations (Matt. 13:31-33). Evangelization (sharing Christ understandably) of unreached people groups has progressed from 50% in 1974 to 66% in 2000 (*Mission Frontiers* 6/2000). While the number of professing Christians as a percentage of world population has declined very slightly since 1900, the number of born again believers has risen from about 2.5% to 11.2% of world population in that interval (Lausanne Statistical Task Force).

Islam

While Islamic adherents—our major faith challenge— have risen from 13% to 19% of world population in the last century, much of this growth is due to birth rate and polygamy. However, Pentecostals have a *conversion* rate growth over 7 times that of Muslims, and Evangelicals' conversion rate is over 5 times greater than Muslims (*Missions Frontiers* 6/2000).

Missionary Deployment

While the percentage is decreasing, over 70% of Protestant missionaries go to the "reached." Ironically, the fewest missionaries per million are in the hardest to reach people groups—Islam (3) Buddhist (5) and Hindu (6), while missionaries to Jews are 59 and to Christians are 186 (*Missions Frontiers* 6/2000). While this seems completely inverted, Jesus' command was to make disciples, not simply to evangelize. Should missionaries go where there is a great spiritual harvest, or to unreached peoples? Yes. A minimal goal should be to disciple the national church until she at least sends and supports her own cross-cultural missionaries.

Urban Mission

Global migration is to cities. 129,000 non-Christians enter the cities daily (Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2001; 1:5). The Christian presence has waned. Eighteen of the top 25 cities were Christian in 1950, to only 11 of 25 in 2000 (Barrett, 2:536). For the foresee-



able future, Christians will not be more than about 40% of the urban population, down from 69% in 1900 (Barrett, 2:534).

Other Rapid Growth Trends:

Bible Translation: The Wycliffe Bible Translators Orlando headquarters displays many of the approximate 1,500 translations to which they have given birth. 3,000 remain, and they *aren't* intimidated. Worldwide, languages with scriptures have grown from 537 in 1900 to 2800 in 2000 (*Mission Frontiers*, 6/2000).

Pentecostal/Charismatics: From 981,000 worldwide in 1900 (3% of Christians), they are now 533,581,000, or 26% of all believers (David Barrett & Todd Johnson, "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2001," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 1/01, p. 25). They lead Christians in percentage growth. Give me a such a friend in spiritual warfare.

The Jesus Film: By 2001, 4 billion have seen this life of Christ from the book of Luke, and 139 million have professed faith in Christ as a result (www.jesusteam.org, accessed 4/24/01). Over 1,195 Christian organizations have used this tool, now showing in 654 languages. We've found Ugandans to be extremely receptive—even cheering Jesus when he rebuked the Pharisees. (I've had little success with it in Chattanooga housing projects—too much entertainment competition.)

Short-term Mission Trips: Jets and low airfares have turned the journey of weeks and months into hours. Youth groups, early retirement, affluence, and mission organization trip facilitation (and Southern Baptists) have strongly promoted it. Crossing salt water doesn't make a missionary—but it helps. Southern Baptists alone average sending 20,000 annually. While no figures for total participation are known by the writer, upwards of 100,000 (or way more) from North

America will go this year. I found that 57% of Black missionaries I surveyed became such due to a short-term trip. I invite you to serve in Uganda with us, Sept. 7-30th.

Jim Sutherland



How do we approach the urbanite or the subsistence farmer?

Prayer and Praise Points:



↑ Volunteers, including our pastor, Joe Novenson, have on occasion joined weekly evangelism and discipleship. Judge Hill is seeing many teens on the street profess Christ.

↑ Please pray for Christian college students during exams, including our 3.

↑ Pray for a Uganda Team of 15—5 are on-board. No Black pastors going yet.

↑ Continued prayer for Board members to replace 4 retiring in 2002.

↑ For faith, open doors for teaching and energy. OK, I'm praying Jabez' prayer too.

↑ Safety while Ethan flies

↑ Wisdom to develop excellent PowerPoint presentations—one to promote world missions in Black churches—we

now have a video projector!

↑ Effectiveness in teaching finances to homeless men and women at Church of the First Born.

↑ Praise for God's financial provision and help with IRS forms.

↑ Thanks for 675+ website visits last week. Visitors are global.