

MOBILIZING YOUNG LEADERS FOR MARKET PLACE MINISTRY

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There is a strong intersection between marketplace people and the youth. They are the youngest, the strongest, and have the largest demography in our workforce. From John 4:3, missiological principles can be derived.

The first principle is that, just as food is for everybody, the mission of God is for every Christian. The marketplace people constitute 99% of Christians. Mission is everybody's business and we must all get involved in any capacity we find ourselves and wherever we are located. If we continue to think about a missionary as what has been thought of for the last 200 years, especially with the Western dominance of missions, we will miss God's moment because the call God has given us now is for every Christian to be missional. One may be a doctor, but must be a missional doctor, a teacher must be a missional teacher and a farmer must be a missional farmer, and not necessarily having a title of a missionary.

Secondly, the mission is to the Father first and not to the nations, not to anyone but first to the Father. We need to watch out for what the Father is doing.

The third principle is that mission to the nations is not unidirectional. There is Ghana to the nations in terms of leaving Ghana, but there is also Ghana to the nations in terms of Ghana receiving the nations.

The 99% of Christians fall in the category of the marketplace people and they have to be encouraged, envisioned, empowered, and be made not to feel like second rate citizens of the kingdom.

From John 4:34-36, Jesus said, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work..."

The question is, what nourishes our marketplace

Christians today? What nourishes our youth today? What satisfies them? What energizes them? What do they eat? What do we eat or better still, what eats us?

The thing that eats us is the thing we are most concerned about most. The fact that 99% of Christians are not professional missionaries or vocational ministers tells that the church needs to make sure that this 99% also come to a place where their food is to do the will of Him who sent us all and to finish his work. We are incredibly mistaken if we think that the 1% apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers will finish the great commission. No! It is going to take all of us (100%), but especially the 99%. God gave us the 1% to equip the 99% saints in the marketplace, including young people for the work of the Lord, to do the will of Him who has called us and to finish his work. The 1% exists to support the ministry of the 99%, to catalyze the ministry of the 99%, to envision the 99%, to empower the 99% until we all attain the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

We have Christ. We are a Royal priesthood. This is the priesthood of all believers and if I may add, we are not all called to be missionaries but we are all called to be missional.

The marketplace is so key. One of the reasons is that not everyone will go to church, but everyone goes to work. Not everyone will go to church or a temple, but everyone goes to the marketplace, whether it is education, politics, government, law, sports, entertainment, everyone goes to the marketplace. That is why marketplace leaders should be central in our envisioning and our mobilization.

When we look throughout the book of Acts, we

see that in the early church, the 12 and the 120 were in the upper room, we can call them the 1% missionaries. However, when the Holy Spirit came on them, they spoke the message and it was the crowd that had gathered in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven who sent the message back to the nations. In Acts 8, when the persecution started, it was 99% who scattered. The Bible says those who were scattered preached the word wherever they went, Acts 8:4.

The 1% Peter and co were still back in Jerusalem. It was later that revival broke out in Samaria, and Peter was asked to come and see what was happening in Samaria.

We find people like Saul and Barnabas being specially commissioned as missionaries in Acts 13.

The church needs more, not less vocational missionaries. We ought to see the 1% as arrowheads, knife edges, and catalysts to mobilize the 99% to make our food, to do the will of God, and to finish his work.

We must repent of getting fulfillment out of doing the work ourselves and rather learn to receive fulfillment and satisfaction out of empowering others, to do the work of Him who has called us and sent us all out.

Mission is to the Father. That is what Jesus says. Our mission is not to the nations. Our mission is to see what the Father is doing and to do the will of Him who sent us and to finish his work (John 20:21). Jesus says that, as the Father has sent me, so I send you. The ministry we have entered is the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son to the Father through the Spirit for the sake of the church, and the world.

In our world today, as we respond to Ghana to the Nations in the mission of God, we have to do a smart mission because everything is smart. Now, we have smartphones, smartwatches, smart cars, and all of that. The smart thing to do is to look at the waves that God is creating and to serve those waves. That is how Jesus did it Himself. The bible says, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, only what he sees the Father doing (John 5:19).

Let us look at what God is doing. What is God

doing with Christians in Ghana these days? What is God doing Christians in West Africa?

If we look at what God is doing and we ride in His wave, we will be amazed how God will flood the nations from Ghana to the nations.

What are some of the patterns? What are some of the things we see God doing now? T.V Thomas mentions polycentric mission, that is, mission is not from the West to the rest, but God's people everywhere, spreading the gospel everywhere, and Ghana is included. One of the key patterns we are seeing in the world right now is the movement of people. There are more people on the move now in the world than ever before in the history of the world. It is almost 300 million people from 2017 statistics.

People are moving as a result of a crisis or for work or school, people are on the move, Ghanaians are on the move and the people on the move are one of Ghana's greatest mission potential.

North America as of 2017 received 58 million people on the move but sent out 5 million. About 25 million people come to Africa, but many are going out of Africa, 38 million. This is important because Africa is about half Christian, about 45% Christian. If half of them are Christians whose food is to do the mission of God, then, that is a potential 19 million mission workforce to the nations by way of sending. Christians should be envisioned and empowered to do the will of God. If Africa is receiving 25 million people, that is a huge field of souls.

Mission is about two nations; it is not unidirectional.

Ghana to the nations is not only leaving Ghana with the gospel but also receiving the nations into Ghana and sharing the gospel. Throughout the Bible, we see mission in those two forms. There is a centrifugal force, which is from the center going out like Naomi leaving Israel and going to Moab with her family or centripetal from the peripheries to the center. Ruth, saying to Naomi, your God will be my God, your people will be my people, and then moving from the periphery to God's people in Jerusalem. The mission is going to and receiving. However, many of us have a mindset that Mission

is going and we are missing the opportunity. God has given us international students and experts from around the world for us to bless them with the gospel.

There are 5 million international students in the world and 10% of them are Africans - that is 500,000. If half of them are Christians, that will be 250,000 young, energetic, passionate, smart, and skillful people who could be envisioned and empowered to be missionaries for the work of God.

These are the days that Daniel spoke about. Maybe we will go here and there to increase the knowledge of many. Most of our international students come from the countries in the 10/40 window, and we can reach them with the gospel.

Have we equipped the church in Ghana with a theology of hospitality and hospitality as a valid and authentic mission strategy, mission practice, and mission tool?

What are the things that are blinding us from seeing the mission of God from the text in John 4.

They came and said, you must have food. Jesus said I have food to eat that you know not. My food is to do the will of God. Many marketplace people have their lives filled with consumables and many young people are not even thinking of mission because of this consumerist culture. May God call the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, and shepherds in this age to get them off this road of consumerism and direct them to the mission of God.

Some are not seeing the mission of God because of cultural reasons. It could be ethnic culture or corporate culture or it could be a church culture. One of the challenges with Ghana is that Ghanaians go to the nations and only reach other Ghanaians.

We need to shift our mindset from thinking of a missionary as somebody who has raised support. We have to look at those potential missionaries and missional students, missional engineers, missional architects, among others. Every Christian's concept of missions has to change.

We have looked at the word go as the main thrust

of Matthew 28. That paradigm has to shift, the imperative in Matthew 28 is not going, it is making disciples. The verse is, as you go throughout the world minding your business, doing your marketplace stuff, make disciples. Dallas Willard's translation puts it like this, 'He says, as you go through all the world, make apprentices for me from all kinds of people, marketplace people, and young people and immerse them in the Trinitarian reality and teach them to do everything I have commanded you.' It is not going; it is making disciples.

Another paradigm that has to change is from Acts 1:8. Many have thought that the great commission is sequential, we finish Jerusalem, we go to Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. Some people will say Ghana still have 19 unreached people groups, why should we go to the nations? We have to go because the word means, do Ghana, do Africa, do everywhere. May God shift this paradigm as well.

Now that COVID-19 has transformed our world and transformed our lives, a lot of mission is online and without borders. We have been called to reach the nations.

How do we mobilize the marketplace and young ones to make God's mission their mission?

- **AWARENESS.** People are not even aware of the mission of God. They are not aware of a missionary God. They don't know that the world in which they are have 3 billion people that have still not heard the gospel. They are not even aware of themselves, that God has called them to be missional. We need to raise the awareness level.
- **ACCEPTANCE.** We pray that when people become aware of the mission of God, they will accept God's invitation to join Him because fundamentally it is not our mission. Our mission is our committed participation and engagement. It is not about engaging an organization, engaging GEMA, SIM, no! It is engaging the missionary, God.
- **ENGAGE.** If people encounter the missionary God, everything will change. Mission has lost its ultimate ground and cannot be sustained. We have to get marketplace people and young

people not to engage in the idea of mission and fall in love with the idea of doing Ghana to the nations but to fall in love and to dance, to get into fellowship with the Father, Son, Spirit so that the love and resonance will make God thrust them into his mission.

- **PRAY.** Encourage people to pray. They can intercede, use prayer tools, or pray silently but consistently. When we are diligent and faithful in prayer, the Lord of the harvest works.
- **TALK MISSION** at Family Altar. Families are encouraged to talk about missions during their prayer times. Children are never young to be exposed to mission. The best time is to engage them when they are young so that they can develop a passion for mission no matter the career path they choose.
- **SHIFT PARADIGM** to Missional. God has called us all to be missional. The whole church must be exposed to mission and go everywhere with the posture of involving in missional activities.
- **BUILD CAPACITY.** Get resources and get trained.
- **HOST** 'The Other'. Be hospitable and use that as a point to spread the Good News.

- **ENCOURAGE.** Inspire Missionaries and Mission Organizations through prayers, kind words
- **GIVE**
- **GO**
- **MOBILIZE!**

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This article is an excerpt of his presentation at GEMAFEST 2020 with the heading "The Market Place and the Young Ones."