



Mission Africa

Its origins, present work and future

It is an amazing thought that God *chose us in Him before the foundation of the world.* (Eph. 1:4) He has our destinies mapped out for us even before we are born. My parents met when they were serving in the British army in Egypt during the Second World War. They married in Cairo and then went to Alexandria for a short honeymoon. It was there that I was conceived and that the connection with Africa began!

Thirty years or so later I was working as a lawyer for a large chemical company and living with my wife, Carol and our two children in a beautiful old farmhouse - all inglenooks and beams - in a picturesque village near Chester.

To the outside world I was a success but inside I was deeply unhappy and saddled with big debts. I masked this unhappiness by making myself frantically busy. I was going out virtually every night getting involved in one thing or another.

During this time I attended the village church and was even a sidesman, greeting people at the door and giving out the hymn books. If anyone had told me at that time that I was not a Christian I would have probably been highly offended.

The truth is that to me Jesus was just a very good man who lived a long time ago - a role model whose example I tried in vain to follow.

One day during this time I met a man called Robert Weston who had recently moved to the area. He spoke about Jesus in a way I had never heard Him spoken about before, as a personal friend to whom he spoke frequently, and who answered his prayers on a daily basis –

with such frequency and accuracy that was beyond all level of coincidence.

It suddenly dawned on me whilst he was talking that if Jesus died and rose again He must still be alive! It was like having a black and white television turning to colour overnight. Everything suddenly looked different. I had a huge hunger to make up for all the time I had been 'off track'. I read as many books about Jesus as I could lay my hands on and started attending meetings. I found the words of the Bible coming alive, almost leaping off the pages.

I had a great desire to share my new discovery with others. It was like finding the cure to cancer- it would have been selfish to keep it to myself.

This led in time to my joining the Walk of a Thousand men. Taking two weeks off work each year we used to go to different parts of the country. We took no money with us, slept on church floors and worked in small teams, going into pubs and schools, visiting people in their homes to tell them about Jesus. We saw a number of people healed as we prayed with them.

While we were recounting what had happened during one of these missions, a Ugandan pastor who happened to be there invited us to come to Africa and do the same sort of thing.

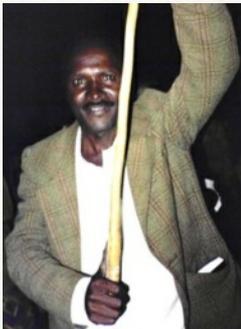
Four months later in February 2000 a group of us found ourselves in a bush area in Central Uganda going from house to house, or rather



mud hut to mud hut. As we told people about Jesus we saw entire households coming to Jesus one after another. We had never seen anything even remotely like this before: the response was simply huge!

We did this every morning, and then went out again in the afternoons to hold a crusade meeting. This was just a simple wooden platform built in at the junction of two tracks in the bush – out of sight of any house. As soon as we started singing, to our amazement people began to emerge from the bush in their hundreds.

We saw God doing some amazing miracles of healing. One morning two of the team encountered a man called Paul, who was sitting by the side of a track. He had hurt his knee and had been to a witchdoctor who had most helpfully responded by bashing some red hot nails into it! He was in such agony that all he wanted to do was to die. They prayed with him, saw a measure of healing and invited him to come along to the afternoon crusade.



Paul came along early with his stick, just as we were setting up and we prayed for him some more. The next time I saw him, two hours later, he was in the middle of a group of dancers, waving his stick in the air and totally healed!

At that time I had an interesting job as a lawyer travelling to many countries, but as I saw what God was doing in this mission I felt such a strong pull that it made me want to leave my job immediately so that I could be *totally* available for what God was doing in Africa.

And so it was that in the company of two others who felt the same way that Mission Africa was founded. We felt God leading us to take the Gospel to the remotest areas of the continent – to the places where people could not get to the big city missions and where evangelists did not come – in other words, making our way to remote villages.

God moved to join us with some wonderful like-minded Africans who have a similar heart and vision. We travel in teams, taking every-

thing with us, cooking pots, charcoal stoves, mattresses to sleep on, candles, plastic bowls to wash in . . .



We don't stay in smart hotels but on the concrete floors of simple village homes, sleeping on rush mats or mattresses. We use water

from jerry cans to wash in, which itself has often had to be carried from a mile or so away. The toilets are just a hole in the ground well away from the house. It's a bit like camping really!



Women in the team prepare amazingly tasty meals on charcoal stoves or over open wood fires. It is very different from the designer kitchens that are all the rage here in Jersey!



Once we are in a village, we gather leaders of the churches from the surrounding areas and use the mornings to train them in evangelism, and then, much as the Jesus sent out His first disciples, we send them out in the afternoons in twos and threes.

Knowing that they are heading into areas where witchdoctors are very active they usually go out in fear and trembling, but invariably return two or three hours later full of joy and with powerful testimonies of all they have seen God do. *Many* witchdoctors have come to faith in Jesus, and the lame are empowered to walk.

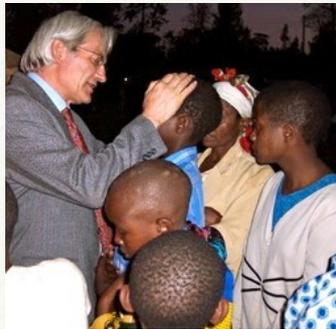


People come in their hundreds to the crusades we arrange every afternoon, attracted by the sound of the worship. We are blessed to have

loudspeakers which take the sound many miles – which is important in these remote areas.

People walk miles to join us. Such is the sense of God's presence that one lady in Rwanda, who had walked for eight hours over the hills to be with us was immediately healed as soon as she reached the crusade, without anyone needing to pray for her. Many people come forward after the Gospel is preached, often with tears rolling down their faces, to ask Jesus into their lives. Nothing gives me greater joy than when this happens.

Then, as we pray for those who are sick, we see God regularly moving in great power. The deaf start hearing, the blind see and many with AIDS are completely healed. (We have seen many certificates from doctors to confirm this). Those who have been paralysed as the result of strokes are instantly healed and then hand over the sticks they no longer need to us. How we praise God for His faithfulness!



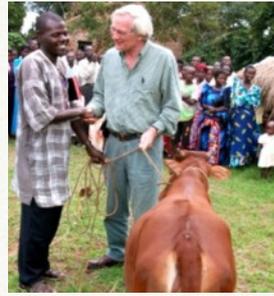
By the time we finish praying for the sick, the sun has gone down, and we show a film, projecting it onto a sheet at the back of the stage. In these remote places, this is often the very first time anyone has ever seen a film. How wonderful that it should be about Jesus! It makes the deepest impression.



We have been conducting these missions for twelve years now. As we go from village to village, and from country to country we visit many schools, hospitals and prisons, giving away hundreds of bibles each year.



We have even been able to give cows to the poor,



build churches



and schools, baptising the new believers,



many of whom were Muslims. Barely a month passes without us organising a mission or a conference – and God continues to do the most amazing things.



Here are a couple of examples of what we have seen God do:

Marco

We were due to go to a village called Kasokwe. In that village there was a very tall witchdoctor called Marco. He had a stick shaped as a serpent. Such was his reputation that all he had to do was point it at some one for them to die within two days.

On the morning of the day that we were due to arrive, a very strong wind was blowing. Marco was still in bed but he pointed his stick towards the wind and commanded it to stop. It didn't. In fact it blew him out of bed cut his

head open!! He went to the hospital to get himself stitched up and then went straight from the hospital to the crusade we were organising. There and then he gave his life to Jesus!

Immediately he asked for a bible and invited us to go to his house to lead the rest of his family to Jesus. He wanted to donate some land to set up a pre-school nursery.



He surrendered his two hundred year old stick to be burned – which – to the enormous joy of the crowd – we did the following evening on the platform. It was like a gigantic party!

People came from up to twenty miles away to see what was happening. Such was the power of the Holy Spirit in our midst that they fell their knees when they arrived. Marco was the *last* person they had ever thought would take such a step!

After that Marco became a preacher himself, leading other witchdoctors to Jesus. When I met him again last year he was a completely changed man and an elder in his church!



Kikandwa

We accepted an invitation to organise a mission in a remote township in Western Uganda called Kikandwa. A few days later we received an e-mail informing us that the place is a 90% Muslim stronghold and that all people who have tried to preach the gospel there for the last forty five years have been stoned to death.

We were also told that the only place we could preach from would be right next to one of the

three mosques! Such information has a remarkable effect on our prayer lives!

As you can imagine, we immediately asked our many supporters to pray that God would send His warrior angels to go ahead of us to do battle on our behalf.

Three days before I was due to leave for the mission, I received another e-mail to say that the local Muslims were fighting for the right to put up our posters, and that a *Muslim* had given us a piece of land to preach from right in the middle of this township!

When we arrived a Muslim councillor gave up her house for the team to stay in. On the following day the Muslim mayor told us that we were free to evangelise as much as we wanted, and that if anyone gave us any hassle we were to refer them to him!

What a turn around – and all as the result of God answering our prayer!

Many came to know Jesus as their Saviour that week. Twice we organised bonfires to burn items of witchcraft.. At the end of the week many people queued up to have their photos taken with the team – including many Muslims. We have never known anything quite like this again.



Five people wanted to get wrong relationships sorted out, so we arranged a mass wedding for all five, to take place five weeks later. My Ugandan friend and colleague Steve Trint served as best man for all five!

Right by the place where we had been preaching there had been a very tall tree, full of chattering weaver birds. This tree (unbeknown to us), had a resident snake, and had been a place of regular human sacrifice.



When Steve returned four weeks later to make final arrangements for the wedding, he walked passed this tree. As he did so there a strong wind blew the tree over. It just missed him!

The locals said afterwards that it was a sign that as a result of our mission the gods of the area had fallen. Since then many new churches have been planted and the evangelism continues on a monthly basis.

The fires that were lit many years ago now are still continuing to burn! God can do immeasurably more than all we hope or imagine!



We praise God for all that He continues to do through the wonderful team He has given us, all of whom serve on a totally voluntary basis. It is a great privilege to serve alongside them, and we have seen many thousands come to Jesus.

Among the pastors on the team is **Fred Mudde**, who was himself a former witchdoctor. He now oversees over 600 churches! Then there is **Daniel Mulilanyi**, whom God healed of AIDs and whose amazing testimony of his healing touches many.



I would like to draw your attention to one member of our team who is in need of **particular** assistance.

This is Daniel Kato. His Rwandan parents, having taken refuge in Uganda to escape the genocide, were then caught up in the civil war that broke out following General Amin's departure. They were just two of the many thousands of people who lost their lives in central Uganda at that time, leaving Daniel an orphan. He was one of the first orphans in an orphanage set up to look after the many children who were running wild in the bush.



We have had the privilege of helping Daniel through school and then University. Now a

pastor himself he works as an administrator at a Christian secondary school where he has pastoral oversight for many boarders.

Daniel is one of the most effective and diligent mission leaders on the team, but gets paid very little for his work because his school takes in so many needy children. He would like to set his wife up in a small business to provide them with an income. My desire is to fund a small two storey building at the front of the place where he lives. It is in a prime commercial position as a market has just been built opposite. Downstairs could be let out as a shop where his wife could run a secretarial bureau whilst upstairs would make a good site for an Internet cafe. This would create the income that he needs so that he can be set free to minister wherever God leads him. The cost of building this would be in the order of around £8,000.

Any help you can give today towards providing for this would be a real investment into the Kingdom. He is a man who God is mightily using! Please "help the helper to help the helpless."

As for the work of the Mission itself, God has never let us down in meeting all our needs to make our increasingly widespread work possible. How we praise God for all the amazing people we partner with and who support us!

If you would like to consider helping Mission Africa in any way through prayer or financial support please contact Terry at terry.charlton@mission-africa.org

May God bless you!