

**BEING RELEVANT AND COMPASSIONATE IN A BROKEN WORLD**

*“Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; and you shall be called the Repairer of the Breach, the Restorer of Streets to dwell in.”*

Isaiah 59:12

That we live in a broken world should be obvious to anyone. That our fallen world needs changing is beyond question. When our newspapers and films glamourise immorality, undermine traditional family values and encourage selfishness, greed and lust; when criminals escape justice by legal technicalities; when half the world suffers under totalitarian dictatorships and persecution; when pornography, perversion, abortions, terrorism and the occult are increasing – then we must know that this is a broken world that needs to be changed.

But most Christians have abandoned their moral responsibility to bring the Light of the Gospel into heathen darkness. Many Christians are allowing their own children to be brought up by godless humanism in state schools and entertained by occultism and pagan magic through Hollywood films and television.

There are many anti-Christian forces seeking to undermine and destroy the Christian Faith, including persecution by Muslim and Marxist dictatorships, secular humanist domination of educational institutions, brain washing by the Hollywood entertainment industry, rearranging of reality through secular humanist news media, and even false Gospels and un-Biblical heresies within many theological seminaries, and all too many churches.

We have allowed ourselves to become misinformed, brainwashed and intimidated into feeling guilty for the great achievements of Christian missionaries and Reformers over the past centuries. Christians who are ignorant of history have ended up apologising for those faithful Christians who converted cannibals, ended inter-tribal genocide, abolished child sacrifices, eradicated widow burning, defeated witchcraft and won whole nations to Christ.

Many Christians today have surrendered to the forces of darkness, entered into negotiations and cooperation with idolaters, removed “*offensive*” Bible passages from their preaching, and lowered standards to allow the unconverted easy access to the church.

In the past the church went out to conquer the world for Christ. Today, in all too many churches, Christ is being sold for thirty pieces of silver, or less. Instead of the church changing the world, in all too many cases the world is changing the church.

For decades now, many Christians in the West have been turning away from the God-oriented, Bible-based, Christ-centred foundations of the Reformation. Instead, many Christians have been turning to the man-centred humanism of the Renaissance, which has always inevitably led to the extremes of permissiveness or totalitarianism, as seen in the French Revolution and the Soviet Revolution.

The results of this apostasy are plain to see in the abortion holocaust, the pornography industry, the AIDS plague, the political protection of perversions and the drug epidemic.

The results of abandoning God’s eternal standards as revealed in the Word of God are: families that fail to nurture, governments that fail to provide security for their citizens, courts that fail to punish the guilty,

schools that fail to educate, and churches that fail to be houses of prayer for all nations, making disciples and teaching obedience to all things that the Lord has commanded.

We live in an age of guilt manipulation when all too many Christians are being prepared for slavery by the abuse of Scripture and by the manipulation of our emotions.

**So what is the solution?** What can we do to minister with compassion and relevance in a broken world?

Firstly, we need to study the Scripture more intently to learn the objective truth. The Word of God must be the judge and solid foundation of all our actions. This is where the Reformation started. Back to the Bible. Until we know the Word of God, we can be easily misled. Scripture alone is our ultimate authority.

Secondly, we must realise the truth is never determined by majority opinion, but only by the Word of God. We must never confuse change with advance. New is most certainly not necessarily better. The fact that our kids have lots of computers, does not necessarily mean that they are more intelligent than people of generations past. Computers cannot make up for a loss of character. *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”* And knowledge is not the same as wisdom.

**Information is cheap.** Raw information such as makes up the bulk of newspapers and the Internet today does not cost very much and in fact is used to start fires, or to line cat litter boxes, or is thrown out only a few days (or hours) after it’s published.

**Understanding is valuable.** Wisdom and discernment which helps us grasp the essence of an issue is of great value. Penetrating articles and any insightful analysis or books tends to be filed for future reference or action.

**Participation is precious.** That which helps us get involved in making a difference in any important project is most precious. Whatever can help us be more effective in fulfilling the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ is of eternal importance.

We must warn our people about the dangers of humanism, immorality, idolatry, and false religions like Islam and Marxist revisionism and distortion of history. We must wake up to what is happening around us and expose the tactics of anti-Christian forces. We need to *“understand the times and know what Israel must do.”*

Thirdly we need a clear Biblical vision of God and what he wants done. *“Without a vision a people perish.”* We need to inspire and involve our people in fulfilling the Great Commission. Our children need to be educated and enlisted in reaching the lost for Christ. We need to motivate our people and mobilise them to be Salt and Light, to rebuild the moral walls of our society.

**And we cannot have victory without a battle.** Sacrifice and risk are essential. We can never win if we keep avoiding the battles. We must solve the problems. We must solve the problems by facing them and dealing with them Biblically.

*“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* Philippians 4:13

We Christians are in a full scale World War of Worldviews. But we don’t seem to be doing much fighting! The Church is being attacked by the powers of darkness. Spiritual warfare, sin and worldliness are crippling and undermining the church, and yet we don’t seem to be aware of it.

All of us have friends and family who are under the attack of the evil one. We have family members chained by the devil, friends trapped in addictions and sinful habits. The churches have sheep who are

being chained and carried away captive by the false prophets and filthy demons of hell. We are missing opportunities, squandering resources and wasting our time on trivialities.

The devil has tragically rendered whole congregations ineffective by tempting, blinding, deceiving and deluding Christians to engage in false priorities, embrace false doctrines, employ human solutions, become ensnared in sinful habits and addictions, and by keeping Christians from the Bible and hindering us from prayer. Weakened by worldliness many are casualties of carnality.

The devil is waging an all out war against the forces of Jesus Christ and we seem to be confined to barracks, tamely singing our choruses and enjoying fun and fellowship. Others are mesmerized by make-belief, sucked into soap operas, enslaved to fashions, prisoners of peer pressure, locked into the Internet, “*Mix It*”, “*Space Book*” and “*My Face*”.

Napoleon once said, as he looked out over the vast expanse of China on the map: “*There lies a sleeping giant – let him sleep; for if he wakes he will shake the world!*” And the devil could be saying the very same of the church today: “*There lies a sleeping giant...if she wakes, she will shake the world!*”

I believe that we can liberate the world for Christ. We can reach every tribe, tongue and people for Christ - is this generation. There is no limit to what God can do, in and with and through you, if He is not quenched. No limit! “*Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord of Hosts.*” Zechariah 4:6

It was said of the Christians of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century that they “*turned the world upside down*” (Acts 17:6), and this is exactly what true Christianity, and the power of the Holy Spirit, always accomplishes. Read through the Book of Acts and notice the incredible impact that the Christian lifestyle and message had on the Roman Empire. Whenever the Gospel was proclaimed in the power of the Holy Spirit there was either a Revival or a riot. Indifference was impossible to such a radical message and such an invincible power.

Are you dissatisfied with your present Spiritual experience? Are you frustrated by the inroads that the world and the flesh have made into the Church? Do you long to see Christians making a greater impact on society? Is it a burden of your heart that the evangelisation and discipleship of the whole world, in this generation, becomes a reality?

If you determine to stop quenching and resisting the Holy Spirit and humble yourself, and seek His face and turn from your wicked ways, if you seek first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness, with a thirsty heart, then as you ask, seek and knock, God promises to fill you with supernatural power and vibrant Spiritual vitality and abundant life.

What do we need in order to turn this world upside down, right side up, back to God? **What is needed for us to reclaim the nations for Christ?**

Well, firstly we need dedicated Christian disciples wholeheartedly committed to Christ, freed from the chains of sin, selfishness and worldliness. **We need Christians filled with the Holy Spirit.**

We need these Christians to be able to be led by the Spirit and to God’s will, to do and to say the right things, at the right time, to the right people, in the right place. God gives the very best to those who leave the choice to Him. **We need Christians led by the Holy Spirit.**

Thirdly we need Christians who will pray in the power of the Holy Spirit. God acts in answer to prayer and if we don’t pray then we cannot expect God to act. Prayer releases the power of God. The only foundation for Spiritual work is prayer. Prayer is our priority. A prayerful life is always a powerful life. A prayerless life is always a powerless life. Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer, except that which is

beyond the will of God. When we pray in the Spirit then we are releasing the greatest power in the universe. **The Church needs Christians who will pray in the Holy Spirit.**

As Andrew Murray declared: *“The one thing needful for the Church, and the one thing which above all others, men ought to seek for with one accord and with their whole heart, is to be filled with the Spirit of God.”*

*“Greater is Him who is in us, than him who is in the world.”* 1 John 4:4

We need to squarely face the great moral challenges of our day. The **symptoms** of our broken world are obvious: deception in the news media, degenerate entertainment, dishonesty in business, decadence in government, pornography, homosexuality, AIDS, the escalating crime wave and abortion.

However, we need to go beyond the outward symptoms and recognise **the root causes** of this catastrophe: ineffective churches, insipid preaching, irresponsible leaders, the rejection of God’s Law as the foundation for our families, churches and nation, neglect of the Bible, prayerless, selfishness, confusion, compromise, cowardice and at the very core – a lack of wholehearted love for God.

If our churches are motivated primarily by growth in numbers, finance, buildings and community prestige then issue evasion, a policy of non-confrontation and compromise, is inevitable. Building our own empire does not allow for serving the Kingdom of God.

In the demand for greater and more spectacular crusades, many churches have concentrated on how to get converts – not what they are supposed to get converted for (to love, worship, serve, obey and honour God).

The Great Commission then becomes the Great Omission.

This is because – escapism sells better than service,  
Forgiveness attracts more attendance than teaching obedience,  
Blessings are far more popular than sacrifice.

This has produced churches that primarily stand for escape and entertainment, offering forgiveness for those who neither want to obey nor serve. Churches which are obsessed with growth, cannot afford to upset the peace and affluence of their adherents or prospective adherents.

For many this is a choice between: popularity or principle,  
Prestige or persecution,  
Prosperity or powerful Christianity,  
Sensationalism or spirituality,  
Success or sacrifice,  
Serving man or serving God,  
Church growth or church depth,  
Respectability before man or Revival from God.

The result is that all too many of our churches entertain their members rather than educate with expository preaching of God’s Word. They comfort their members – rather than challenging them and confronting sin. They prefer rejoicing to preaching Repentance.

What is needed is for our churches to return to the Biblical vision of righteousness, justice, love and compassion.

We need to show compassion to **the victims of tragedy**, to the victims of our sexual ethics, or should we rather say lack of moral standards:

Abused children – victims of pornography and of the ‘use and abuse’ mentality;

Abandoned children – victims of the selfish, materialistic, throw away culture;

Victims of divorce – victims of the self-centeredness and lack of loyalty of many;

Victims of rape – victims of the pornography industry and those porn addicts who see women and children as objects;

Victims of AIDS – victims of the prevalence of promiscuity; and

Aborted babies – victims of the callous indifference of selfish people who view life as disposable.

***“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did it for Me.”*** Matthew 25:40

We need to be compassionate to the victims of a selfish and materialistic society: the unlovely, the ‘failures’, the poor, the homeless, the handicapped, the unwanted children and the forgotten elderly. We need to compassionately pray for and speak up for, and, where possible, practically help the victims of political betrayal and exploitation: (for example those Christians who are persecuted for their Faith in Red China, Cuba, Pakistan, North Korea, Sudan and Zimbabwe, etc.); refugees (for example from Zimbabwe); victims of racial hatred and strife (such as the foreign victims of the xenophobic riots in South Africa); victims of man-made famines (such as in Sudan and Zimbabwe); victims of crime (especially those committed by murderers, thieves, rapists and terrorists released from jail).

***“Comfort, comfort My people, says your God.”*** Isaiah 40:1

It is our Christian duty to comfort the afflicted, and to afflict the comfortable. *“A true Christian loves God, a true Christian loves God’s Word, a true Christian loves to pray and a true Christian hates sin.”*

***“Brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.”*** 1 Thessalonians 5:14

This is the message of the Good Samaritan: ***“Love your neighbour as yourself...go and do likewise.”*** Luke 10:27-37

True Christianity is caring for widows and orphans in their distress. It was the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His great Commandment to love our neighbour that mobilised Frontline Fellowship over 27 years ago to cross the borders into communist Mozambique and Angola, to evangelise in the war zones, ministering to combatants on both sides of the many conflicts, and to those caught in the crossfire.

It has been one of the greatest priorities of Frontline Fellowship to serve the persecuted churches. This we have had the privilege of doing in Mozambique and Angola in the 1980’s and 1990’s; in Rwanda shortly after the holocaust in 1994, in Sudan in the 90’s and throughout this last decade. And in Zimbabwe. It has been our privilege to assist persecuted Christians and prisoners with many books, encouragement, Bible teaching and emergency relief aid (including many tons of medicines, foods, clothes, agricultural tools and seeds and Bibles and Bicycles).

It was our privilege to provide thousands of Christian textbooks for the over 100 schools which we had helped establish in Sudan. Frontline Fellowship has delivered and distributed over 300,000 Bibles and Christian books in 21 languages throughout fourteen regions of Sudan.

In Zimbabwe, from 1982 to this present day, Frontline Fellowship has continued to deliver *Boxes with Love* with medicines, food and other emergency supplies to pastors, pensioners, widows and orphans, caring for some of the most desperately needy people.

We believe that to minister with compassion and relevance in a broken world we need to work in war zones, because so much of Africa has been torn apart by conflict. It is also absolutely vital that we are involved in prison ministry. Prisoners are actually some of the most neglected, yet open and responsive people in the continent. Orphanages, crisis counselling, and adoptions, are all part of love in action. We need to build relationships through exercising the ministry of hospitality, including to strangers. Those who are involved in substance abuse, addicted to drugs or alcohol, need special ministry attention. Some churches have particularly targeted families broken by divorce for ministry attention. All this is vital.

We need to minister to spirit, mind and body. It is almost impossible for people to be spiritually disciplined, if they are not mentally and physically disciplined as well. Therefore, in our **Great Commission Courses** and **Biblical Worldview Summits**, we always incorporate early morning P.T., mountain hikes, and other muscle stretching activities. In order to stretch minds, we have debating skill games such as *Just a Minute*, Bible Drill, Bible exams, missions exams, etc.

We also try to always include outreaches at our seminars. It is not enough to inspire our listeners, we need to involve them. It is not sufficient to educate our students, we want to enlist them into fulfilling the Great Commission.

We have found **True Love Waits** a very important ministry for compassionate and relevant building in a broken world. Their very motivational speakers present abstinence education at school assemblies. South Africa has the second largest **True Love Waits** in the world.

We have also incorporated **The Way of the Master** into all of our evangelistic programmes. Using the Ten Commandments as the school master that leads us to Christ is most effective. *“The Law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul.”*

Ken Ham of **Answers in Genesis** has provided a tremendous service to the Church worldwide through his Creation Evangelism resources. I had the tremendous privilege of visiting The Creation Museum near Cincinnati last year. It is one of the finest museums in the world today. I spent two full days exploring and enjoying this extraordinary museum, and I came back with many great DVDs, books and curriculum resources for my own children, for our mission and for school curriculums.

Karl Marx declared that the first battlefield is the rewriting of history. Certainly Marxist disciples have been very busy rewriting history and turning reality upside down. Tragically most Christians do not know their history and are easily deceived. This is aggravated by a plethora of Hollywood films which claim to be a true story – where the names and places are true but only the facts have been changed to protect the guilty!

For this reason we are producing history textbooks to help Christian schools rediscover our great Christian heritage: ***The Greatest Century of Missions*** and ***The Greatest Century of Reformation***. Both of these inspiring textbooks include discussion and exam questions at the end, and a whole curriculum of well illustrated PowerPoint presentations, lecture notes, questionnaires and multiple choice exams are available to supplement these textbooks.

We’ve also produced: ***Slavery, Terrorism and Islam – The Historical Roots and Contemporary Threat*** along with a ***Muslim Evangelism Workshop*** MP3, which includes fourteen lectures with Powerpoints looking at every aspect of Slavery, Islam, comparing the Bible with the Quran, and practical step-by-step guidance for evangelising Muslims.

We also strongly recommend that teachers contact MovieGuide ([www.movieguide.org](http://www.movieguide.org)) for film reviews. It is important that we know before we go. We need to learn to discern. To choose the best family-friendly films, but to avoid the worst anti-Christian films out there.

We find it important to also promote a Christian Calendar. The very name *holiday* means Holy Day. Most holidays have religious significance. The events that a society chooses to centre its holidays around speaks volumes about the religious worldview and value system of that society.

For example: Ascension Day used to be a holiday in South Africa. Yet, few of us ever appreciated its significance until the government abolished it as a public holiday. The fact that it was replaced with days celebrating mankind such as “*Human Rights Day*”; “*Women’s Day*”; “*Workers Day*” and “*Youth Day*” are yet other indications that our society has rejected Christianity and embraced humanism.

In our mission we ignore those spurious humanist holidays and rather observe Ascension Day, Pentecost, Reformation Day (31 October); International Life Chain Sunday (the first Sunday of October); International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (the second Sunday in November) and a National Day of Repentance on 1 February to mark the legalisation of abortion in this country.

Relevant and compassionate ministry will address root issues and involve daily dedication to fulfilling the Great Commission and Great Commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And “*those who sow in tears will reap with joy.*”

**“*You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea, in all Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.*”** Acts 1:8

**“*Be filled with the Spirit.*”** Ephesians 5:18

**“*Make disciples...teach obedience.*”** Matthew 28:19-20

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