

LESSON 8

THE WITNESS IN AFRICA: AFTERMATH AND AFTERTHOUGHT PART I

Christianity came to Africa at an early date. The Acts of the Apostles records the conversion of an Ethiopian eunuch. The Patriarch of Alexandria boasts a direct line to St. Mark, the evangelist. And everywhere there are evidences of the Christian faith on the African continent.

And yet in a mysterious way the faith did not envelop the continent in the same way or at the same speed as it did Europe—Nor as Islam was to do in succeeding centuries. It was left for the European and the related agencies of imperialism and colonialism to introduce to the other Africa the bane and blessing of the Cross.

Baptist Witness began and developed in relation to four important events and in four time periods. The first established Baptist Witness came in the wake of the resettlement of "freed" Africans on the West African coast. The philanthropic and humanitarian efforts of the Anti-Salavery Movement and interest in Africa led to the creation of Sierra Leone as in French circles it had led to Libreville, and later to Liberia. These efforts at the establishment of free black States led also to the establishment of Baptist Witness since Baptists were intimately involved in these freedom movements.

The second period of establishment occurred in the late nineteenth century and this coincided with the voyages of discovery by Livingstone, Stanley, Burton and others, as well as with the "Scramble for Africa" consequent upon the Franco-Prussian War and the activities of Bismarck, Rhodes and King Leopold of the Belgians. It was at this time that Central Africa as well as East Africa came to the notice of Baptists.

The third period succeeds the first World War and coincides with Depression in Europe and America. It was the age of the immigrant, artisan missionary. It was also a time of strong millenarian views and this also coloured the enthusiasm, content and numbers of Baptist missions. To these times we owe the numbers of separate Baptist Missions, especially those from the United States of America. It was the time also when Black Baptists began to assert themselves more than they had done before. The influence of African religious form and structure reacted strongly with mission Christianity and the phenomena of the African Independent Church, which was mostly Baptist, emerged.

The Acts of the Apostles records the conversion of an _____

(Ethiopian, eunuch)

The first established Baptist Witness came in the wake of the resettlement of " _____ "

(freed, Africans)

The second period of establishment coincided with the voyages of _____

(discovery)

The third period coincides with the _____

(Depression)

The fourth period comes in the 1950s and reveals deliberate planning and an effort at consensus. Two events are most responsible for this change. The first was the Baptist World Alliance post-war policy of relating the "mission fields" to the "mission houses" in a more fundamental way. After the London Congress in 1950, mission was seen in more co-operative terms. In any case, due to the drain of reserves occasioned by the War (1939-45), the United States Baptists assumed a bigger role. The second was the survey visits of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention at that time which revealed not only the presence of independent work but also the gaps in Baptist Witness on the continent. The Southern Baptist Convention committed itself to meet both needs in varying degrees.

In conclusion it is instructive to note that in each case Baptist Witness reacted to world events and trends, and the impression is left that the Witness came more as an aftermath to events already taking place. And further that only when the events played themselves out did Baptist begin to take themselves seriously.

Sierra Leone

The first Baptist Witness on the continent began in Sierra Leone with the arrival of David George in 1792. George was the pastor of the Selburne Church and of the New Brunswick Baptist Church in Nova Scotia and most of the membership migrated to help form the new Sierra Leone colony.

Late in 1791, John Clarkson was persuaded by his brother, Thomas, the scholar of the Anti-Slavery Movement in Britain, to go to Nova Scotia and invite black settlers to Sierra Leone—the Province of Freedom. These black people had been settled there by the British on the surrender of their forces at the conclusion of the American War of Independence. Scores of blacks had poured into Nova Scotia, others had gone to Trinidad, New Providence (Bahamas) and Jamaica when the American colonies won.

The need to persuade them to go to Sierra Leone lay in two things: (a) the cost of paying for the colony in Canada was becoming prohibitive to the British government, and (b) the idea of a free state ruled and peopled by "Christian blacks" had long been an ideal in liberal British thought and faith. The establishment of Liberia and Libreville no doubt had some influence in this direction.

An expedition set out in February, 1792 from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone, and George and his church set out together. Thus the first Baptist Witness on the African continent was established.

David George was born in Virginia, about sixty miles from Williamsburg. He was a slave on the Chapel plantation and in an interview he gave to Dr. John Rippon (a founder of the Baptist Mission Society, London), he mentions his parents, four brothers and four sisters. He was one of the younger children, since he mentions an older brother and sister. He ran away and after several adventures settled

The fourth period reveals deliberate _____

(planning)

David George began the first Baptist Witness in Africa in _____

(Sierra, Leone)

*Is the following statement true or false?
Sierra Leone was the province of freedom.*

(true)

David George was born in _____

down at Silver Bluff with George Galphin, a slave owner in the region. While he was here he married and became interested in the faith.

It was in Silver Bluff, South Carolina that he encountered George Liele the founder of the Baptist work in Jamaica. Through his ministry and that of his own wife he was converted. He taught himself to read and became an assistant preacher to Liele, but when the American War of Independence (1776) broke out and Galphin, his master, abandoned his slaves, he went over to the British and was set free.

During this unsettled period, Liele left for Jamaica and George and his family went to Charlestown and subsequently made their way to Halifax in Nova Scotia. Here he developed a work in Shelburne, preaching in a clearing made for a new town. The congregation was both white and black and here George baptized many, despite the opposition of a few unemployed sailors who destroyed the houses of all the black residents. He moved from Shelburne and was engaged in an itinerant ministry, preaching in Methodist and Presbyterian churches and in the "open air."

He returned to Shelburne and rebuilt the work, but by this time he was in great demand so he left one of the Elders in charge, and travelled as an itinerant evangelist. He visited and preached in Fundy Bay, St. Johns, Birchtown, Annapolis and Frederick Town. On one of his journeys, the boat capsized and George was so badly frostbitten that the church was not sure that he would ever walk again. It was this condition that impelled him to go to the warmer climate of Sierra Leone, where he was accompanied by John Cuthbert and Peter Richards, two senior Elders of the church. Not all the members of the church migrated, some remained, either returning to New York or because of personal local ties remaining in Halifax to become the nucleus of the Halifax Church referred to in the early Baptist history of Halifax.

On his journey to Sierra Leone, George stopped in London where he met the directors of the Sierra Leone Company, as well as the Baptist leadership in London. In 1794, George was back in London, accompanied by John Cuthbert, one of his Elders, and together they visited the British churches and held discussions with the Baptist Missionary Society on their needs. They were able to raise a considerable amount of money to build a new church and the Baptist in Britain promised to grant a scholarship of a year to any candidate for the ministry.

However, 1795 turned out to be a disastrous year for the colony. The French attacked the Company, destroyed the houses and looted everything. The Baptist appealed to London and John Kizell, who was in the Company's employ, contacted Dr. Rippon and Mr. Pearce, who were the leading Baptist Missionary Society officials in London for help. They gave him clothes, books and a plan for a new chapel. But the Governor would not allow George to erect the chapel because he feared another attack. This caused

(Virginia)

He encountered _____

(George, Liele)

Liele left for _____, and George went to _____

(Jamaica, Nova Scotia)

What led David George to migrate to Sierra Leone? _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Give two benefits from George's stop over in London on his way to Sierra Leone. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The colony was attacked by the _____

some tension in the colony and apprehension in British Baptist circles.

That same year the Baptist Missionary Society decided to begin its own witness in Africa and chose as a place to begin Sierra Leone. Two men were chosen, Jacob Griggs and James Rodway, and they were valedicted on September 16 in that same year at the Annual General Meeting of the Missionary Society in Birmingham.

They carried with them letters of introduction to David George and the evidence shows that they were well received and preached quite regularly in the new chapel. Unfortunately, Rodway did not keep good health and returned to England in 1796. Jacob Griggs on the other hand had been advised to work outside the city limits. It appears that John Gavin, one of the Company's schoolmasters, and Jacob Griggs resented the attitude of the Company's chaplain, John Clarke. This was made worse because Clarke the Anglican and George the Baptist had a free interchange of pulpits and "open" communion to which Griggs was opposed. Griggs had a suspicion that the arrangement was meant to give the impression of "establishment" in religious matters. But Clarke was after all the Company's chaplain and Macaulay, steeped in the tradition of British "establishmentarianism," was anxious to keep everything on an even keel and so sustained Clarke's authority. This was most irksome to Baptist disestablishmentarianism.

The situation was further complicated when the Company began to request "rents" for the homestead lots. The settlers objected on the ground that the lots were a grant and Griggs supported this cause. As a result, Griggs was ordered to go to Port Logo and to stay there, only returning to the Company's property with express permission. He refused on the ground that this was tantamount to religious persecution. He was then given three alternatives: either to go to Port Logo and continue to develop Baptist work, *or* to go to America, *or* to return to England. He chose to go to America and so severed his connections with the Baptist Missionary Society as a result.

The result was that the Baptists of Sierra Leone were left isolated. And since they had come as an ethnic group with a strong social bond and with the withdrawal of the wider Baptist Missionary Society reference, they remained an ethnic church. This was to plague the Witness until its demise in 1923.

In the earlier decades Baptist work flourished. Evidence exists to suggest that in the 1840s the Rawdon Street congregation was large. It had even founded a work in Kissy Town. But during the same decade, in 1844, the fellowship split along racial and social lines. The Ibos left the church and formed their own fellowship in Goderick Street. The Nova Scotians continued but both church groups fell on bad times. In 1853, T.J. Bowen on his way to Nigeria was invited to ordain ministers for both churches. J.J. Brown and George R. Thompson were ordained and given financial help.

(French)

The Baptist Missionary Society opened its work in Africa in _____

(Sierra, Leone)

Jacob Griggs resented the attitude of the Company's _____

(chaplain)

Griggs supported this _____

(cause)

The Baptists were left _____

(isolated)

Is the following statement true or false?

In spite of the conflicts the Baptists in Sierra Leone have faced, the Baptist work has experienced tremendous growth. _____

In 1855 the Foreign Mission Board of Southern Baptist Convention decided to put Thompson on their staff, but this soon ceased. Nevertheless, Jamaican Baptist gave a grant to the Rawdon Street Church up to 1923. But these churches did not develop an association and continued as separate entities and today Baptist Witness is almost defunct in Sierra Leone.

South Africa

Baptist Witness in South Africa itself has already been discussed since it developed from a pattern of migration which characterized the nineteenth century. As it developed it adopted a British pattern and a Missionary Society developed which had a mandate to establish Baptist work in other parts of the continent.

But Southern Africa was itself considered to be a mission field. The National Baptist of the United States of America responded to requests in that region which came from independent groups with Baptist orientation. The African Methodist Episcopal Church was even more forthcoming and developed a large work in the area.

In 1881, the South African Baptists constituted themselves into a Union. And in 1892, the South African Baptist Missionary Society was formed to develop work in Cape Province, Natal and Transvaal. In the same year, the Scandanavian Independent Baptist Missionary Society began to work in Natal, supported by the Swedish Baptists of the United States of America.

In 1927, the South African Baptist Union decided to constitute the congregations of the Bantus into the Bantu Baptist Church. Prior to this both groups were members of the same Union and Society. The decisions of 1927 effectively divided the Bantu churches because each church was set up as a semi-autonomous congregation with its own unlimited freedom and expression.

Today, the Union has 480 congregations while the Scandanavian Mission has approximately 40 congregations. Side by side with these larger groupings there exists work associated with the Alliance of Reformed Baptist Churches of Canada.

Since 1977, the Southern Baptist Convention has had a fraternal relationship with the Union in co-operating in theological education in Cape Town and Johannesburg. The Convention also co-operates in pastoral work at Port Elizabeth and nationally assists the Department of Evangelism.

The South African Baptists face grave challenges today—not the least of which is in the area of civil liberties, human rights and race relations.

Lesotho

Lesotho came into contact with Christianity as early as 1829. It was the arena for the work of the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society. The missionaries did not fare well because of the uncertain political disturbances of the time.

(false)

South African Baptists constituted themselves into a _____ in _____

(Union, 1881)

The Bantu congregations were constituted into the _____

(Bantu, Baptist, Church)

Give one grave challenge that faces South African Baptists today. _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The disturbances were settled when Britain assumed responsibilities for the region in 1868.

It was during this period that English-speaking Missions made headway in the region. The London Missionary Society was particularly active and the evangelization of the region owes much to them.

It is not quite clear when the South African Baptist, Missionary Society established missions in Lesotho. But the churches developed here formed a part of the Bantu work.

Liberia

The foundation of Liberia rested upon the anxiety of the whites in the United States to reduce the number of "free blacks" in the slave-owning States and to send undesirables back to Africa. At the same time it coincided with that anti-slavery sentiment which saw the establishment of western acculturized Blacks as a weapon with which to fight the institution of slavery. So in 1816, the American Colonization Society was founded for the specific reason of sending Blacks "back" to Africa. By 1820, the first of these had sailed, and supported by American capital, the colony of Liberia was set up.

At the very outset there was Baptist input into the new colony since some of its resources had in fact come from the churches. In 1821, freed slaves had met in the home of a deacon of the First Baptist Church, Richmond, Virginia and organized themselves into a church and had gone to Liberia in this fashion. Lott Carey, who was one of this original group, on arrival, started the Providence Baptist Church with himself as pastor.

Despite the official preference given to the Basle Mission and later to the Protestant Episcopal Church and the Presbyterians, the Baptists held their own. They grew steadily and by 1880 the churches came together in the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention, Inc. This Convention had indeed enjoyed the input of the Southern Baptist Convention from its inception in 1845 until 1875 when missionaries already there under the Triennial Convention declared for the Southern Baptist Convention. And so Southern Baptist Convention work began.

The Liberian Baptist scene is varied and betrays the influence of the United States of America in this regard. Most of the Black Baptist Conventions have representatives there and have developed close ties with this nation. The reason is that not only in its origins but later in the Marcus Garvey movement in which Liberia became the symbol of African desire, identity and unity for the descendants of African slaves in the New World. There is established work by the National Baptist Convention, United States of America, Inc. and its rival the National Baptist Convention of America. There are the Lott Carey Baptist Mission, the Mid-Liberia Mission and the co-operative work of the Southern Baptist Convention with the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention, Inc. It must be observed that the Lott Carey Mission is administered by the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society.

*Is the following statement true or false?
A group of freed slaves met in the home of a Baptist deacon of the First Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia and organized themselves into a church before sailing for Liberia.*

(true)

Name the Baptist groups working in Liberia.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

It was not until the 1950s that Liberian Baptists attempted to work co-operatively. There had been inputs not only from the United States but from the West Indies, particularly Haiti and Jamaica from which trained personnel had been recruited to help in educational work. With the emergence of William Tolbert, a Baptist minister and executive head of the Liberia Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention, Inc. in the political arena, first as Vice-President and then as President, Baptist work took on a new importance. In 1958, Tolbert became President of the Convention and in 1960, the Southern Baptist Convention was persuaded to return to work at his invitation. Their task was to gather together the several strands of Baptist Witness. They used education, where most of the nation's needs were centred. In 1960, the Ricks Institute was supported with personnel. In 1962, the "Eliza Davis Geroge" churches, which had been founded by a lone missionary from the United States of America in Greenville, Sinoe County, were strengthened and their scope of witness enlarged. Eliza Davis George Training School for pastoral education of ministers and their wives using Theological Education by Extension was developed. Elsewhere the same integrative movements occurred. There was also a ministry in medicine where clinics were held for babies. Mass media communication techniques also played a major role with gospel puppet shows, a cassette ministry for training and inspiration, slides, filmstrips, the movies and the local radio stations each contributing to the whole. This was enhanced when Tolbert was elected the President of the Baptist World Alliance in 1965. Since that time the witness has been geared towards expansion. In 1976, the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary was opened and provides a four year course eventually leading to a Bachelors' degree.

In more recent times, however, with the violent overthrow and murder of Tolbert in 1979, Baptist have been suffering some small set-backs. But things appear to be settling down and the work which he initiated continues.

Cameroons

Opening the Witness

The Witness in the Cameroons began in 1841. John Clarke and George Prince who had been stationed on Fernando Po (Santa Isabel) made an exploratory trip to the "kingdoms" of "King Bell" and "King Acqua." While there they were told of a "King William" in Bimbia but did not visit because as yet William was still an active slave dealer. Before they returned to the island, however, Acqua had given permission for a school and had designated a site.

It was not before 1843, however, that firmer contacts were established. Between 1841 and 1843, many events had occurred which conspired to make a Baptist mission to Africa a joint venture between British and Jamaican Baptists. So that in that year Joseph Merrick could report

List the contributions of William Tolbert to the Baptist Witness in Liberia.....

(Compare your answers with the text.)

In 1841, the Baptist Witness began in the

(Cameroons)

that he had been received by King Bell with courtesy and kindness.

Joseph Merrick was Jamaican born. He was born at Port Royal on August 24, 1818. At the age of twelve he was taken by his father to the local Baptist church, and he worshipped there until his parents moved to Spanish Town, the capital city.

In 1834, he became an apprentice to a liberal newspaper and developed an anti-slavery stance. About this same time he became desperately ill and this led to his conversion. He participated on his recovery in a significant way in the Spanish Town Church and was ordained to the ministry in 1839, as co-pastor with his father. He served for three years in that capacity and in 1842 went to Britain to represent Jamaican Baptists at the Baptist Missionary Society Jubilee meetings.

In July, 1843 he sailed for Fernando Po and from there established the work in Bimbia. Six years later, on October 22, 1849, he died at sea en route to Britain to recuperate from a disease which he had contracted. But Merrick's work was seminal. He made the Isubu people his care and translated St. Matthews Gospel (1846), Genesis (1847), and portions of St. John's Gospel (1848) into their language.

Associated with Joseph Merrick was Alexander Fuller, who had accompanied Merrick to Britain and attended the Jubilee meetings of the Baptist Missionary Society. He was a member of Phillippo's congregation (see Jamaica) in Spanish Town and an accomplished carpenter.

On their arrival in Bimbia, they constructed the first school in Cameroons and used this as a centre to evangelize the Bakweri people.

It was upon this beginning that Alfred Saker, who travelled out on the *Chilmark* together with John Clarke and forty-one Jamaicans, was to build so that in thirty-five years more than 80,000 people on the coastal plains were reached.

Saker began on Fernando Po but soon transferred his work to the Cameroon estuary at Douala in 1845. It was not until 1849 that Saker baptized the first convert, and he had to wait until 1851 to constitute a church. By the end of 1852, however, there was evidence of further expansion.

The earlier years had many problems. Firstly, disease decimated the small missionary band. Five of the original group died within the first three years. Prince went to the United States and Clarke returned to Jamaica as a pastor. Secondly, local opposition made it difficult to penetrate the region because slave-trading still existed and the missionary was seen as the tool of the English. Thirdly, there was dissatisfaction among the Jamaicans who felt that they were not treated properly by Saker and the Baptist Missionary Society. And fourthly, despite the assurances by the Spanish government to allow the Mission to use Fernando Po (Santa Isabel) as its headquarters, on Christmas Day, 1845 the Spanish Consul - General arrived with instructions to allow the Baptists to remain in a private

Outline briefly the life of Joseph Merrick.

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Alfred Saker travelled to the Cameroons with forty-one

(Jamaicans)

Name four problems faced by Saker in the early years.

capacity only. And by 1846, a Spanish Roman Catholic bishop arrived with orders to expel the missionaries and extinguish the Mission. This did not immediately occur since the missionaries and the manager of the leading commercial company were on good terms. And so the Baptist community was able to have a separate existence. Twelve years later, however, due to deteriorating conditions between England and Spain as well as the attempt of Spain to have a foothold in Africa, Don Charles Chacon was sent by the Spanish Crown together with six Jesuits to claim the island for Spain. Among the instructions which he carried was this: "The religion of this colony is that of the Roman Catholic Church as the only one in the Kingdom of Spain with the exclusion of any other; and no other religious profession shall be tolerated or allowed but that made by the Missionaries of the afore-said Catholic religion."

In 1858, Saker moved the centre from Fernando Po to Amba Bay, near to the place in which Merrick before him had set up work and purchased a site from Chief Bile (King William), and named the area Victoria. By 1862, there were some eighty-two inhabitants and a church attendance of sixty.

Between 1862 and 1876, when Saker left Africa the Cameroon work had developed its education and vocational training work to a high degree. Saker focused on translation work and technical skills for the students. He taught his converts carpentry, how to make bricks and construct kilns and to use materials which would endure the woodants and the wet weather. In terms of translation, he translated the Bible and printed it himself into Daula, one of the Bantu languages. He also wrote hymns, school text books, produced a dictionary and a grammar in the same language.

This work of translation and of technical education was not popular with some of his colleagues who felt that it was not very "spiritual." So acute was the tension that in 1869 the Baptist Missionary Society secretary Underhill had to make a trip to the Cameroon to restore peace.

Despite the tension, however, the education side of the church grew. Apart from the two schools which existed in 1869, another school was opened in Bota under Charles Steane. In 1873, Quentin Thompson opened a school at Bonjongo. And by 1879 at least three other schools were opened. The importance of the schools was that they had become not only places of information but also of socialisation, as both the Bakweri, a mountain people, and the Wovea, a fishing people, were in attendance.

Saker was succeeded by George Grenfell. Grenfell had his tutelage under Saker and during his seven years, attempted to penetrate the inland and to establish churches along the rivers. His strategy was to make use of the boats that plied up and down the river and to provide boats himself as a means of communication and so to seek opportunities to preach the gospel. But the unstable political events of the time hindered his work.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

In 1858, Saker moved the centre from Fernando Po to

(Amba, Bay)

List the accomplishments of Saker in the Cameroons work.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

The education side of the church grew despite the

(tension)

What was Grenfell's strategy?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

A bone of contention

West Africa became a bone of contention between the European powers. With the ascendance of Bismarck to the Chancellery of Germany and the new thrust for territory, France, England and Germany vied for territorial influence in Africa. And the Cameroons became the focus of Anglo-German rivalry.

When Saker and the Baptists had planned Victoria, the hope had been that the British Foreign Office would use the bay as an alternative to Fernando Po in suppressing the Slave-trade. The Foreign Office did not respond and so the missionary at Victoria acted as the British Consul.

It is important to recognize that although there was no formal British annexation of the Cameroons, British influence was unquestioned, and this was mediated through the British representative. It was he who signed the treaties with the chiefs on behalf of the British government. And Joseph Jackson Fullers' name still exists on some of these documents. In July, 1881, the whole issue came to a head.

In that year, the British Consul Hewett on his journey in the region formally made Victoria and the Baptist Mission a British possession and set off across the estuary to Douala. By the time he got there the German Imperial Consul - General, Dr. Natchigal, who was on the same mission of concluding treaties with local chiefs, had raised the German flag on July 14 over the German trading posts which were scattered along the Cameroon River. Within a week Victoria, which was the centre of the British Mission, was completely surrounded by German flags. King Bell and King Akwa (Acqua) who had been most favourable to the British had been persuaded to sign, having been offered substantial compensation and so the British were isolated.

But pro-British feeling was high and the other chiefs took unkindly to the actions of Bell and Akwa, and war broke out. Using this as an opportunity the Germans sent in gunboats and landed troops, and in the ensuing action the Baptist Mission was destroyed.

In 1885, a missionary conference was held in Bremen, Germany and there it was proposed that German missionaries take over the British work. The Basle Mission was approached, but was reluctant until they heard that the French Roman Catholic Mission was seeking entry into Kamerun.

The Basle Mission took over in December, 1886, and two days before Christmas four missionaries arrived. Within four days one was dead.

Thomas Lewis, who had succeeded Grenfell, whose interest had been transferred to Congo, was in charge of the handing over. He arranged that the native churches should retain their own chapels and their Baptist doctrine and that their independence should be respected.

With the withdrawal of the Baptist Missionary Society, the non-English personnel were transferred to the Congo

The missionary at Victoria acted as the

(British, Consul)

Victoria was completely surrounded by

(German, flags)

Is the following statement true or false?

The Germans were satisfied with the political control of the Cameroons. No attempt was made by the Germans to take over the British missionary work.

(false)

and the churches left in the hands of locals. Almost immediately tension arose between the two groups. The Basle missionaries felt that the local Baptists were given too much independence and self-government. Added to which there were divergencies on the teaching of baptism. Any attempt made by the Basle missionaries to improve discipline ran into difficulties and soon schism was inevitable.

On the other hand, the German missionaries interpreted the lack of co-operation as a deliberate hostile act to German ambitions in the Kamerun.

Among the local membership there was a feeling that this Mission lacked prestige because there was no European present in its organization. And so they petitioned the Baptist Missionary Society to send a missionary. The German Baptists in Berlin learned of the desire and discussed the possibility to help. But this did not happen. In 1890, a young American student at Rochester Baptist Seminary, August Steffens, hearing of the need, volunteered and on March 27, 1891, was appointed to go. His arrival was greeted with enthusiasm and he set about his tasks with zeal. In eighteen months he had baptized 376 persons and had an enrollment of 2,000 in school. By 1893, however, he was dead.

His example inspired others from Rochester Seminary to volunteer and enthused the German Baptists in their efforts. So that by 1898, when a final split came between German Baptists and local Baptists the Mission was already established.

There was another aspect of this work and it was the founding of the German Baptist Missionary Society in January, 1898. With the growing importance of the Cameroon Mission the Mission Committee of the German Baptists decided to form a Missionary Society to handle these matters. And so on January 19, 1898 the Committee gave way to a Society. By 1915, the Society had spread its influence in both East and West Cameroon. But the war in Europe had its effect on the Cameroons. German as it was missionaries were arrested either as French or British prisoners of war. And had it not been that Carl Bender was an American citizen the Cameroon Church would have had no missionary. As it was the Benders had to subsist until 1919 without any outside help. And with their departure no missionary arrived again until 1927.

Productive years

And yet these were the most productive years of the Baptist Witness. The leadership fell into the hands of locals who spread the Witness into the grasslands. Between 1922 and 1927, Joseph Mamadu, Robert Nteff, Daniel Hangu and others planted churches in other areas.

After the 1917-18 war, the German missionaries did not return until 1927, when the first Hofmeister was allowed to return to the British sector. He remained until 1935 and together with others opened work in Belo, Ndu and Mbirkpa.

Tension arose between the two groups _____

(almost, immediately)

What success did August Steffens have? _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

On January 19, 1898, the _____ gave way to a _____.

(Committee, Society)

These were the most _____ years.

(productive)

Another development took place in 1935. Up to that time German-Americans had channeled their support through the German Baptist Missionary Society in Berlin. But in that year Paul Gebauer organized a North American Society and incorporated it in New Jersey as the "Cameroon Baptist Mission (U.S.A.)." Between 1935 and 1941 both organizations worked together, but in 1941, all German missionaries were interned and sent to Jamaica and the activity of missionaries was curtailed. But due to the foresight of Gebauer there was not so much dislocation.

Between 1945 and 1954, the Cameroon Baptist Witness grew rapidly, and in that year, with 218 churches, became independent. They formed themselves into a Convention, with some 500 churches and 180 pastors.

The Convention consists of more than forty associations and meets in general session once every two years. A General Council made up of representatives from each area meets annually to conduct business planning for the future and reviewing the needs of the constituency.

The business of the Convention is conducted by a full time executive secretary, who is responsible for the editorship of the *Baptist Voice*, a monthly publication. In 1950, a Bible School was started at Belo and later moved to Mbem. Today, the most promising of these students are sent to Nigeria for further training, but as yet theological education is not being discussed.

Nigeria

The Baptist Witness in Nigeria began with the establishment of a small but unstable cause in Calabar in 1841. John Clarke and George Prince, one a Jamaican and the other an Englishman who had worked in Jamaica, were commissioned by the Baptist Missionary Society in 1840 to discover the possibilities for work in Africa. About this time, Buxton had persuaded the British government to send a mission to the Niger to see what possibilities there were of spreading Christianity, Civilisation and Commerce. The two Baptists tried to obtain a place on the expedition but failed because they were not Anglicans, and so by private means they went to Fernando Po, a small island off the Nigerian coast.

They arrived in time to be of service to the dishevelled remnants of the abortive Niger Expedition. And they also established themselves in Fernando Po and on the Calabar delta. In 1841, a small Mission was established in Calabar with the permission of the local ruler, Eyamba.

The Jubilee of the Baptist Missionary Society was in 1842 and so Prince and Clarke decided to return to England to report. They were blown off course and ended up in Demerara from which they went to Jamaica. They subsequently arrived in England in 1842. The Baptist Missionary Society accepted their report and in 1843 hired a boat, the *Chilmark* to take some Baptist Missionary Society personnel and Jamaicans to Africa. In 1845, Prince and Clarke were again in Calabar but were told that since their departure, other plans for mission had been made

Who was Paul Gebauer? _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Name two persons commissioned by the B.M.S. to explore the possibilities for Baptist work in Africa. _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Is the following statement true or false?

Prince and Clarke reached an amicable agreement with the Presbyterian missionary and withdrew from establishing a Baptist Witness in Nigeria.

with the Presbyterians. In 1846, Presbyterians from Jamaica led by the Rev. Hope Waddell arrived in Calabar and began a Mission. Since the three men knew each other, an amicable agreement was reached. Prince and Clarke withdrew from Calabar to concentrate on the Cameroons and established Baptist Witness there.

It was some four years later that Thomas Jefferson Bowen of the Southern Baptist Convention arrived in Nigeria in August, 1850. The Eleduwa war had dislocated Yoruba society and one resultant was the forcing of the Koran upon the people by the Fulahs. When Bowen arrived therefore it was to a somewhat disorganized, disgruntled and disillusioned people.

Bowen was a rough diamond. He had held a commission in the United States Army and had fought in Texas and in Mexico. He was born on January 2, 1814, and was baptized in 1840. He began to preach in the following year. He was a self-taught man who indeed studied all his life. Bowen was appointed by the Southern Baptist Convention as a missionary to Africa on February 22, 1849, and sailed almost immediately to Liberia, where the Southern Baptist Convention already had a Mission. He went from Liberia to Nigeria.

Beginning at Abeokuta, about sixty miles inland, he investigated possibilities of establishing a permanent work. But he did not succeed. But King Kumi of Ijaija, a village not very far away from Abeokuta, gave him permission to begin a Witness. By 1854, a church had been built but unfortunately in 1856 he had to leave.

During these early years, the Baptist work grew slowly despite the large turnover of missionaries. The records show that over twenty volunteers served this period. Perhaps the most outstanding were the Hardens who rebuilt Baptist work in the Province. The Hardens were American Blacks.

With the outbreak of the Civil War in the United States of America, the enthusiasm for overseas mission and the lack of funds and personnel made for the decline of the Mission. As a result Harden had to seek employment in a brickmaking factory nearby. When he died in 1864, the work fell upon Mrs. Harden and Moses Stone, an orphan rescued from the carnage of the Ijaije - Ibadan War of 1852. And the establishment of Baptist Witness is a testimony to their work.

The Nigerian work may be divided into five periods: the era of planting; the era of consolidation; the era of expansion; the era of indigenisation; and the era of internationalisation.

The first period dates roughly from 1850 - 75 and spans much of the work of Bowen and the early American missionaries. It appears that in these early years as many as twenty men and women were sent by the Southern Baptist Convention to Nigeria.

The second period spans 1875-89, and has as its backdrop both the aftermath of the American Civil War, which affected severely the availability of personnel and of

(true)

Who was Thomas Jefferson Bowen?

(Compare your answer with the text.)

Perhaps the most outstanding were the
 _____ They were American

(Hardens, Blacks)

MATCH the following. DRAW lines from the statements in COLUMN A to the correct answer in COLUMN B.

A	B
Era of planting	1890 - 1925
Era of consolidation	1950 -
Era of expansion	1850 - 75
Era of indigenisation	1835 - 49
Era of internationalisation	1875 - 89
	1926 - 49

finance of the work in Nigeria, and also the imperial expansion of Europe with the territorial adjustments and resultant tensions. Two things emerged from these tensions: (a) there was a split among the Baptists along tribal and other lines and a Native Baptist Church was formed, and (b) the Americans, W.K. David and W.W. Calley, had to start almost from scratch as they began the task of the reorganization of the Mission.

The third period (1890–1925) was one of church expansion and covers the opening up of the resources of Nigeria by the British. It was the time of popular education; and medical missions were started. The “Native Baptist churches” began to multiply and for their part began to seek aid overseas. Added to which, Moses Stone, who had been the cause of the 1889 split, proved to be a good Baptist as well as a good evangelist and this was of national benefit.

The fourth period (1926–49) was one of indigenisation. It was at this time that Nathaniel Ayorinde, Daniel Togun and Joseph Ayorinde emerged as national leaders. The stimuli came from within the national churches, as well as from the events of the State. Colonialism was giving way to nationalism and the Church was also affected.

The fifth epoch, (1950–) has seen the Nigerian Baptists take their place alongside the Baptists of the world. This was due in no small measure to the “further training” policy of the Mission in educating the best recruits for ministry in the United States of America, chiefly at Southern Seminary, Louisville.

It was also due to the missionary zeal of the Yoruba trader who took his religion with him and so provided for the Nigerian Convention the arena in which to lead.

Baptists of Nigeria are among the largest group of Baptists in Africa and are the best organized. Most congregations are self-supporting and their outreach programmes have been handed over to local associations and the Convention. Baptists now operate *three* hospitals in Eku, Ogbomosho and Shaki. And there is a Dental Centre in Ibadan, while a school of nursing is attached to the Eku hospital.

There are also significant inputs into education. There exists a High School at Jos, but most of the elementary schools have been handed over to government. There are three pastors-schools and Theological Education by Extension is also used. There exists also training to degree level at Ogbomosho where degrees are granted in association with Southern Seminary, Louisville, United States of America.

Supportive ministries in literature, radio and television, and homes for orphans exist in several centres. The Nigerian Convention has 261,200 members and 1275 churches. However, the Baptist population is more than this because there are “independent churches,” which have broken away but still consider themselves Baptists.

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Angola

Angola was a colony of Portugal until November 11, 1975, when after a decade of guerrilla warfare the M.P.L.A. established a government. This signalled some interest between the three factions in the country but the situation is much more stable.

The unrest of the 1960s had its significant effects on the Church. It confirmed in the popular mind the collusion of the Roman Catholic Church with the Portuguese government which had been repressive in its methods and had been supportive of the Catholics. And although evangelical Christianity had come to Angola as early as 1854 with David Livingstone not all Protestants were unfavourable to government policy.

Baptist Witness came to Angola in 1876 when Grenfell and Bentley established a centre in San Salvador from which to penetrate the Congo. Since that time Baptist work for the most part, until the 1960s was largely centred on the Zairian border. The *Missao Baptists* together with the Canadian Baptist Overseas Board developed their work there and recorded some 112 churches and 10,886 members in the early 1960s.

Unfortunately, this work was largely destroyed by the liberation wars because it was situated in the forest regions nearest the Zairian border where there was refuge. These times saw the devotion and loyalty of Baptists, who met clandestinely in the forest with their pastors, some of whom were with the liberation movement. It was not before 1974 that these churches emerged from the forest. The work of organization and regrouping still continues.

In the meantime in central Angola the story was somewhat different. In 1929 Manuel Ferreira Pedras was converted in prison and after his release started a Baptist church in Huambo (Nova Lisboa). In 1934 the Portuguese Baptist Convention decided to adopt the work but it was not until 1964, thirty years later, that personnel arrived to aid the Witness.

In 1966, a Danish Baptist layman, Svend Erik Jorgensen employed at the cement company in Luanda started a Bible study group in his home and soon this developed into a congregation. When this occurred they applied to Antonio Pereira who had been sent by the Portuguese Convention for help. And to this group Pereira went once per month.

The next development in recent Baptist Witness came when Harrison Pike and his wife were seconded from Brazil to become fraternal representatives to the Angolan Witness. Pike had carried a concern for Portuguese-speaking Baptists in Africa since the Baptist World Congress of Rio de Janeiro in 1960. And as a result he had made a preaching tour of these regions. In Angola he discovered that there was also work at Lobito and five smaller churches in the suburbs of Huambo.

On his arrival in Luanda he set about organizing the

Baptist Witness came to Angola through attempts to penetrate the _____

(Congo)

Baptists met clandestinely in the _____ with their _____

(forest, pastors)

work and unifying it. By 1974, a church was built and three other missions started.

The foreign personnel left the country in 1975 but the churches have continued to grow. In 1977, the Convention met for reorganization and five pastors were ordained. A Baptist book store functions in Luanda and a Theological Education by Extension project is in progress. The Convention has reported that it has 50 churches and a membership of 21,125.

Congo Zaire

The Witness of Baptists in Central Africa came as a result of their work in the Cameroons. As early as 1892 questions were being asked by British Baptists why Grenfell and Comber to whom the Zairian work had fallen had not pushed up the Cameroon River into the interior rather than entering the Congo. The answer lay in several directions. Firstly, Grenfell and Bentley had tried to penetrate the Cameroons but had received no encouragement from "Home." Secondly, the activities of Stanley and Livingstone were exciting the British populace and so they felt that their chances lay in that direction. Thirdly, financial aid was available in a grant from Robert Arthington supplemented with another from Charles Wathen designated for Congo exploration. And fourthly, the Belgian King was personally interested in the venture, wishing to obtain a secure foothold in the region.

The Baptist Missionary Society had for sometime contemplated some new arrangements in Africa and this offer of Arthington was interpreted as a divine call. Grenfell and Bentley made an exploratory trip up the Congo in January, 1876, and by July 30 went directly to San Salvador in Angola to set up their new headquarters. In 1877, the Baptist Missionary Society sent out Bentley, Crudginton and Hartland to join them and together they set out to explore the region.

Their task as they saw it was to establish a string of mission stations along the river. Thus by 1884 strong stations were established at Kinshasa, Wathan(Gombe Lutete) and Lukelda. Apart from this, enough language study had been done that by this time Bentley had published a grammar and a dictionary in Kikongo. As a matter of fact, the Baptist Missionary Society established itself not only here but in the Eastern Province as well, founding Yakusu in 1885. From there a string of centres were developed: Yalima (1905), Bundu (1906) and Yalikima (1912).

Early on the scene also was the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society who in 1883 was invited to join in the conversion of the continent. The Livingstone Island Mission founded by Mr. and Mrs. H. Grathan Guinness had established Balenge, on the Congo River, had recruited twenty-five missionaries and founded six other stations when it realized that it needed help. The A.B.F.M.S. took over responsibility. It later devolved some of its work on the Disciples in 1889. To this work was allied an independent

When foreign personnel left the country in 1975, the churches continued to _____

(grow)

Name two leaders in the establishment of the Baptist Witness in the Congo _____

(Compare your answers with the text.)

Arthington's offer was interpreted as a divine _____

(call)

They attempted to establish a _____ of mission stations along the _____

(string, river)

Is the following statement true or false?
The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society took over the work of the Livingstone Island Mission.

work of Independent Baptists—the Deermore Mission in South Kwango.

Between 1912 and 1925 several Baptist groups entered. The Swedish Baptists located themselves in Bandundu province founding a mission station in Bendala. In the following year the Norwegians arrived and established in Monga. In quick succession came the Canadian Baptist Mission and the Canadian Regular Baptist Mission which both left the scene by 1960 ceding their work to others. There was also Baptist Mid-Missions, who inherited some of work started by the Unevangelized Tribes Mission and the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society. In all there were *nine* Baptist Missionary organizations at work in Zaire apart from the local Baptist Witness which sprang up like the Kimbanguist Church named after a local Baptist leader who broke away to develop his own style.

Baptist work up to 1960, when there was a rebellion, tended to be regionalized because of comity agreements worked out by the Belgian government and the missionary societies. There seems little doubt that up to 1960 there were some aspects of church life, even Baptist life, which were closely allied to Belgian foreign policy.

It was this which in the 1960s caused a reaction against the churches and Missions with the resultant fusion of Missions with their respective churches. Pressure from the government pushed these unity movements even further and now there are "Communities," rather than churches in which geography rather than belief is the operative factor in the administration's mind. The Community is the denomination with its missionary partners who are members of the National Church of Christ in Zaire.

The Baptist Witness in Zaire has been complex. It began at the very beginning with a high social component. By 1907 for instance, there were twenty-seven hospitals and by 1936, seventy-two hospitals and dispensaries. The Baptist Missionary Society has established and maintained a hospital at Yakusu and Bolbobo. American Baptists have three large hospitals and the Canadians also operate medical services. Apart from this there is a Theological College in Kimpese and a new thrust is being made to develop Theological Education by Extension.

Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church traces its history to New Testament times. The traditions of the nation and monarchy predate this and go back to Solomonic times. The legend of the relationship between the Queen of Sheba and Solomon and their son Menelek is very well known.

There is no doubt that the influence and presence of Judaism is strong and has its influence upon the Christian worship itself.

Christianity was maintained in the intervening years from the Muslim incursions by isolating itself in the highland vastnesses and the desert. And out of this came an ascetic

(true)

Several Baptist groups entered between _____ and _____

(1912, 1925)

Now there are "_____" rather than _____

(communities, churches)

brand of the faith usually associated with Egypt.

The Ethiopian Church has always related to the Church in Egypt due to a misreading of what was thought to be a canon of Nicaea. The Abuna was subject to the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the seat of Saint Mark, the evangelist.

The Coptics remained in virtual isolation until 1490 when John (II) of Portugal sent a delegation to make contact. But no records exist to show the result. Nevertheless, a Jesuit mission set out and attempted to bring the Church into submission to Rome. This failed and Catholics have been subject ever since.

In 1825, the Anglicans sent a mission to stimulate interest in the Scriptures and by 1855 this led to the building of schools, the establishment of preaching missions, and the distribution of Bibles in both Amharic and Ethiopic. It also led to contact with the Falasha Jews, who were most receptive. The Anglicans in their approach also set a pattern of co-operation rather than "proselytisation," and this was to be followed by others groups.

In 1886, the Evangelical National Missionary Society of Sweden set up a Mission in Massawa and upon their heels the Baptist followed. The British Baptists co-operated with projects in education and medical care.

Recent Baptist involvement began with the Baptist General Conference of America (Swedish Baptists) who have maintained a small work in the area of medicine.

There was, however, some Italian involvement when under Italian occupation, the B.F.B.S. agent, an Englishman, was expelled and was replaced by an Italian Baptist minister.

Since 1967, the Southern Baptist Convention has entered the country and has, under the auspices of the Coptic Church, begun a work in Menz. From this some small Baptist groupings have developed but the future cannot yet be clearly determined due to national unrest.

What policy did Anglicans establish in Ethiopia? _____

(Compare your answer with the text.)

The British Baptist co-operated with projects in _____ and _____ care.

(education, medical)

Home Study Exercise

Basic activity (Levels 1, 2, and 3). After reading the study guide text, answer the following questions.

1. When did Christianity first arrive in Africa? _____

2. List the four important time periods named by Dr. Russell that were significant in the opening and developing of Baptist work in Africa. _____

3. What was known as the "province of freedom"? _____

4. Identify David George. _____

5. According to Dr. Russell, what is the condition of Baptist work in Sierra Leone today? _____

6. How did the Baptist Witness originate in South Africa? _____

7. What serious challenges are faced today by the Baptists in South Africa, according to Dr. Russell?

8. What did a group of free slaves do in Richmond, Virginia before sailing for Liberia? _____

9. Outline the part played by William Tolbert in the development of Baptist work in Liberia. _____

10. List the accomplishments of Alfred Saker in the Cameroons. _____

11. What was the result in the conflict between Germany and England over the Cameroons? _____

12. Why did Prince and Clarke withdraw from establishing the Baptist Witness in Nigeria? _____

13. Give the names of the periods and the dates in which Dr. Russell states that Nigerian work can be divided. _____

-
14. What was the importance of Baptist Witness in Angola in the past? _____

 15. What effect did the liberation wars have upon Baptist work near the Zairian border? _____

 16. What happened to the Angolan Witness when the foreign missionary personnel had to withdraw in 1975? _____

 17. Outline the Witness of the Baptist Missionary Society in the Congo. _____

 18. How did the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society become involved in the Congo? _____

 19. How was the Baptist Witness established in Ethiopia? _____

 20. What has been the most successful approach to the work in Ethiopia? _____

Supplementary activity (Levels 2 and 3).

1. Why was Sierra Leone known as the "province of freedom"?
2. What was the relationship of David George to George Liele?
3. What part did Jamaica play in the beginning of work in the Cameroons? How did the Baptist Missionary Society develop it?
4. What part did education play in establishing the Baptist Witness in Nigeria?
5. Outline briefly the development of the Baptist witness in Zaire.

Advanced activity (Level 3).

1. Write a biographical sketch of David George.
2. What were the obstacles to the development of the Cameroon work and how were they solved?
3. Explain why Nigeria has one of the largest Baptist constituencies and organizations in Africa.
4. Explain what the "Communities" are in Zaire. What has happened to the Christian Church there?

Seminar Discussion

1. Discuss the idea behind the "province of freedom."
2. Discuss the challenges faced by the Baptists of South Africa mentioned by Dr. Russell.
3. Discuss the motivations for the establishment of the colony in Liberia.
4. Discuss the obstacles to the development of the Cameroon work and how they were solved.
5. Discuss the situation of the Christian Church in Zaire today.