

ALIGNED

FOR MISSION

By Rev. David Wells, PCCNA President

The mission of the church, as commissioned by Jesus, has been before us for close to 2,000 years. His people, empowered by the Spirit and motivated by the love, grace, and truth of our Lord, are to go to all peoples and proclaim the good news, which brings transformation. The mission's fruit is to see disciplined followers of Jesus developed, who in obedience are baptized and observe all that Jesus commanded as they too go and make disciples. This cycle of disciple-making indicates the mission is being fulfilled.

It is always good to be reminded that the Giver of this commission is the "Lord of the harvest," the One who oversees this mission. Our responsibility is to obediently hear the call and follow the Spirit's guidance as we participate alongside of the Lord's entire body.

Here's the thing—the whole mission does not rest on one person, one church, one group of churches, one Christian communion, or even one generation of Christians. It is way bigger than any of those. The Lord calls, and we respond as have millions before us, and 100's of millions are doing even as I write. All His people, called by His name, whatever their "branding," are chosen to be witnesses to those in the multiple contexts He sends them to.

In many Christian circles, 2033 is being commemorated as the 2,000 th anniversary of the death and resurrection of Jesus, His ascension, and His outpouring of the Spirit on His Church to fulfill His mission. This has resulted in a unified understanding in many parts of the global church that the Lord of the harvest is calling His people to be "aligned for mission." Amid global signs of the times like Jesus spoke of in Matthew 24, there is also a recognition of what He stated in Matthew 24:14, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (NIV). A decade-long, multi-component focus pointed towards a unified mission that the gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world. This mission is occurring. For instance, the Pentecostal World Fellowship Executive and Advisory at the Pentecostal World Conference in Korea passed a resolution calling on Spirit-empowered congregations across the globe to focus on fulfilling the Great Commission by 2033. The resolution reads,

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The Pentecostal World Fellowship encourages its members to work towards fulfilling the Great Commission in this generation. We affirm the numerous 2033 initiatives focused on “everyone” hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ. We call upon our member congregations to mobilize prayer, leadership, compassion, and resources to contact every unreached person. We believe the next ten years will be the greatest decade of fulfilling the mandate of Jesus as together, empowered by the Spirit, we proclaim the “Good News” and establish new churches.

This re-personalization of sharing the gospel calls for a focus to go to “everyone” by everyone. Personal witness and evangelism are not optional for a people committed to the mission given by our Lord. The evangelists among God’s people will be called on to be equippers of all believers along with fulfilling their distinct calling to reach the unreached. Ministries that facilitate evangelism in secularized contexts such as Alpha are envisioning enhanced partnerships that will allow for greater fruitfulness.

This call to “everyone” is essential for the church multiplication movements envisioned over the coming years. The World Assemblies of God Fellowship in its MM33 initiative is by faith strategizing for a total of one million churches by 2033. Aligned multiplying network endeavors need to be front and center as our various movements partner together for kingdom increase of disciple-making communities. This is occurring in other initiatives such as “Finish the Task” led by Rick Warren and the FINISH initiative of the Church of God and the Global Church Network, which calls on churches to Find, Intercede, Network, Invest, Send, and Harvest.

Running like a spine through all these initiatives is prayer movements such as “World Prays,” whose theme is “Every Church in Every Nation a House of Prayer.” Prayer movements are seeking to be electronically linked as they pray for every nation, community, and person on the planet. In the coming season, prayer movements will need to consciously focus on the primary mission of the church and not be distracted by secondary focuses.

By faith, picture with me church movements and resource ministries aligned for mission—globally, nationally, regionally, and locally. Together the people of God are marked by first love, prayer, and intercession, proclaiming the gospel and truth through personal witness and cooperative evangelism, done by every believer in unity with justice and sacrificial service. Empowered by the Spirit, vital churches multiply as disciple-making communities.

The good news is that our Lord, by the Spirit, is at work globally in ways that we cannot think or imagine. Let us determine to align with the Lord of the harvest and His people of every descriptor and context to see this gospel of the kingdom preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. “Even so come Lord Jesus. Enable us to align our hearts, minds, and strategies with yours and those who love you so that together we may see your mission fulfilled in multiple transformed lives. For your glory, Amen.”