

## **Wholistic Discipleship Training– Samaritan Strategy Africa.**

### **Problem**

Africa, despite its rich natural endowments, is a continent ravaged with poverty, disease, corruption and conflict. For years international aid and development agencies have tried to deal with these problems—with limited success. A predominantly animistic worldview holds sway over the minds of many Africans—a worldview that sees man as a victim of nature, of other people, or of fate. This mindset shifts responsibility for Africa’s social ills to the spirit realm, leaving individuals little hope or motivation for working towards a better future.

The church has been on the continent for nearly two thousand years—and has experienced tremendous growth over the last two centuries. This growth holds incredible potential for the healing of Africa. Yet, all too often, the church is disengaged from the crying needs of the community—focusing exclusively on spiritual concerns. Despite Christians being a majority in many African communities, poverty, disease, conflict and environmental degradation abound. The church is often seen as irrelevant by non-believing community members.

### **Solution**

The church is the solution. It is God’s principally ordained agency for social and cultural transformation. It is perhaps the single most important indigenous, sustainable institution in any community, with members in virtually every sphere of society (the arts, business, governance, education, etc.). This is particularly true of Africa where statistically almost 50% of the population (about 400 million people) is Christian and where an estimated four million churches exist.<sup>1</sup>

Yet, for the church to effectively advance God’s intentions, its leadership requires fresh vision and equipping. Since 1999, a group of dedicated, gifted African men have been doing just that—serving church leaders across the continent, providing them with a fresh vision for the church as God’s principal agent of social and cultural transformation.

The training goes beyond envisioning. It equips church leaders with simple tools that enable them to apply what they have learned immediately, thus beginning the transformation process in their own communities with existing resources—no matter how poor they may be. The training places special emphasis on the importance of mindset transformation and presents

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<sup>1</sup> From [www.globalchristianity.com](http://www.globalchristianity.com). Assumes an average church size of 100 members.

the Christian worldview as the key to social and cultural transformation. Christians are challenged to be engaged in healing relationships with others and to better steward the creation.

Churches that have received the training are making remarkable contributions to the transformation of their communities. They are effectively addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic; responding to conflict with biblical peacemaking principles; and actively engaging in social, political, business, agricultural, and environmental issues. Not surprisingly, they are also more effective in their evangelistic outreaches.

Today, these African trainers have banded together under the name *Samaritan Strategy Africa* to advance this tested training program into every corner of the continent. *Samaritan Strategy Africa* is not a formal organisation but a network of trainers and activists affiliated with The Disciple Nations Alliance (DNA).

*Samaritan Strategy Africa* was formed in 1999 with a vision to extend the DNA training programme to every nation and major language group on the continent. Since then, it has empowered over 300 churches and over 3,000 pastors in more than 24 African nations.

## **Desired Outcomes**

### In the Church

- God is glorified as local churches increasingly reflect His comprehensive redemptive agenda (Col. 1:19-20) and respond compassionately to profound human need in their communities and nations.
- Increased obedience to “all I have commanded” (Mt. 28:18).
- Church growth driven by the witness of love.
- The church increasingly influences every sphere of society (government, business, education, arts, agriculture, and sciences) with a distinctively biblical worldview.

### In Communities and Nations

- Greater justice, less corruption;
- Greater respect for human life (particularly women, children, aliens and the poor);
- Greater self-government and social order, less crime;
- Greater prosperity, less poverty;
- Decreases in disease rates, particularly HIV AIDS;

- Greater dominion and stewardship of creation;
- Local churches are increasingly esteemed in their communities as indispensable assets in community transformation.

### **Basic topics covered in the VISION Conference**

A Samaritan Strategy facilitator helps to lay a biblical worldview foundation for the church's role as God's private voluntary organisation. The material is taken from the larger workshop entitled "Worldview and Development." Subjects include:

- ◆ The Transforming Story – This is a brief overview of God's transforming story and the critical importance of a biblical understanding of man, history, and creation for the development of communities and nations.
- ◆ The Power of Story – This is an introduction to the concept of worldview. In addition to seeing how worldview works, this session explores how the Church has abandoned the biblical worldview and the consequences of that for our understanding of the nature of the Church and the Great Commission.
- ◆ The ABC's of Culture: The Web of Lies – In this session we will see that there are fundamental building blocks of culture. Satan lies not only to individuals, but also to nations. He replaces Kingdom building blocks of culture with his counterfeit building blocks, resulting in the impoverishment and enslavement of nations.
- ◆ The Kingdom of God – This offers a summary of the nature of the Kingdom of God and of the Church's Great Commission to disciple (build) nations.
- ◆ Reviving the Reformation – Prior to the Reformation, all the nations of the world were materially impoverished; the average person was little more than a slave. The Protestant Reformation lifted the nations of northern Europe out of poverty and established some of the most free, just, and compassionate societies the world has ever seen. What were the principles that brought such national transformation? The same principles offer hope for nations trapped in poverty today.

The facilitator builds on the biblical worldview foundation by introducing some of the curriculum developed by the Harvest Foundation (in LDTP I and II and Basics) for the

conveying of vision and practical equipping of church leaders for wholistic ministry. Typical content:

- ◆ The Role of the Church in Society – Presents historical examples of when and how the Church was used by God to transform society. Compares this historical reality with the seeming inability of today's evangelical church to impact its society and looks at the reasons why.
- ◆ The Irreducible Minimum – Establishes the Scriptural truth that the principle way we demonstrate our love for God is by loving the "neighbors" God has placed in our lives.
- ◆ Luke 2:52 and Development (including The Three Relationships of Man) – Examines Jesus' personal development – physically, spiritually, socially and in wisdom. Provides a model for a biblical balance in our personal lives and in the community.
- ◆ God's Intentions for the Future, for the Present, and for the Church – Examines the biblical evidence for man's brokenness and God's intentions for responding to that brokenness in the future as well as in the present. Examines God's intentions for the role of the Church as it serves as a "window" through which broken humanity can see God's intentions for healing.
- ◆ Kingdom Math – Uses biblical examples to illustrate the mandate for and power of giving the little that we may have to God. Shows how to maximize the use of known resources, discover and use new resources found within the community, and be set free from dependency on outside resources for development.
- ◆ Seed Projects – Introduces practical planning strategy and methods for doing development with local resources.