

Master Outline for Final Paper – Omar Niebles

Topic: paternalism in global missions

Question: how does the paternalism experienced by Samuel Ajayi Crowther's and his staff still affect global missions from the West today?

Thesis: In this paper, I will look at how Samuel Ajayi Crowther's legacy both compels and haunts global missions today.

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THE LEGACY AND HAUNTING OF SAMUEL AJAYI CROWTHER

Abstract

This paper will show how Samuel Ajayi Crowther's legacy both compels and haunts global missions today. His legacy compels global missions because it reveals what can happen when a genuinely indigenous movement of the Gospel takes root in a people or land. The injustice caused to him, and his succession plan, still haunts global missions today because of how paternalism put an end to the indigenous missionary efforts during his time. The conclusion I will draw is that paternalism in global missions is a product of the subtle paternalism within the American church.

Introduction

Samuel Ajayi Crowther, born Ajayi, was the first ordained African bishop of the Christian Mission Society (CMS) in West Africa.¹ Many within the Christian global missions sector know his story. Many do not. The impact Samuel Crowther left behind for global missions, and Christianity cannot be overstated. He left behind a tremendous legacy through language acquisition and translation, missionary activity among Muslims, and discipleship. Not only did God qualify Crowther as being more than competent in his missionary and pastoral efforts, but Crowther was able to leave behind many approved African co-laborers to succeed him. It is an injustice and a failure in leadership of the European leaders in CMS to overlook “outstanding African clergy” to replace Crowther.²

Crowther's History

¹. Andrew F. Walls, “The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 16, no. 1 (January 1992): 15-21, 19.

². Walls, “The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther,” 20.

Samuel Crowther was born in the town of Osogun in Yorubaland, what is formally known today as Western Nigeria.³ Around the age of thirteen, Fulani Muslims raided his hometown, and captured Crowther to eventually be sold as a slave in the Americas.⁴ In April 1822, the British naval squadron intercepted the Portuguese vessel that contained Crowther, and Crowther became one of the thousands of displaced Africans living in Sierra Leone.

In Sierra Leone, Samuel Crowther came to understand and receive the Gospel and became a follower of Jesus Christ. "He was baptized by the Reverend John Raban, of the (Anglican) Church Missionary Society," of whom later Crowther, as Andrew Walls notes, became "an informant."⁵ As Samuel Crowther grew in his studies and participation in the mission, he was given more responsibility by those who oversaw him. He published books about Yoruba, his home region, was selected a schoolmaster of the mission, served on the Niger Expedition of 1841, and was part of the Yoruba Mission. The Yoruba Mission was the expedition that led Crowther and other African ministers from Sierra Leone to bring the Gospel to Crowther's home territory. Crowther's service was invaluable to CMS. "The Niger Expedition had shown Crowther's qualities, and he was brought to England for study and ordination...Here then, in 1843, began Sierra Leone's indigenous ministry."⁶

Crowther's Ministry

Samuel Crowther had various transitions throughout his life. He went from a young boy living in his hometown and land to slave. From slave, he was freed but displaced from his home area and family. He later became a student, informant, schoolmaster, Bible translator, ordained minister, and bishop. He showed faithfulness to the Lord and the work placed before him by

³. Walls, "The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther," 15.

⁴. Ibid., 15.

⁵. Ibid., 16.

⁶. Ibid., 16.

those who served as an authority figure over him. What is more, Crowther displayed what a successful missionary story can be. Crowther did not just give his life in service to the Lord, but he was an example of proper contextualization, discipleship, and multiplication in West Africa during his time.

Samuel Crowther's ministry served as a first of many firsts. As noted, he was the first bishop of West Africa. In and of itself, the title would be enough to marvel at who Samuel Crowther was and what he meant to the indigenous missionary legacy of Africa. Nevertheless, Crowther was also one of the earliest ordained African Anglican ministers. He knew firsthand the meaning of such a position, and, though reluctant to be recognized as the first bishop, it allowed him to ordain other Africans. Crowther becoming bishop cannot be overstated. He, who early in life was a slave, grew up to become one who exercised equal authority as any other European bishop in the CMS.

Crowther's ministry also knew several other firsts. He was one of the first students at Fourah Bay College, one of the first universities in Africa. He was the first of native Africans to provide Bible translation "into an African language."⁷ "Crowther's Niger Mission also represents the first sustained missionary engagement with African Islam in modern times."⁸ What can be said of Samuel Crowther's ministry is that it was groundbreaking.

In Samuel Crowther's book, *A Charge Delivered on the Banks of the River Niger in West Africa*, he states, "The object of this meeting, which is the first gathering together of the Bishop and Clergy in this Mission, is, to take a retrospective view of our work in this country; to know what has been done, in what way it has been done; to detect our errors and to correct them."⁹

⁷. Walls, "The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther," 18.

⁸. Ibid., 19.

⁹. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, *A Charge Delivered on the Banks of the River Niger in West Africa*, (London: Seeley, Jackson, & Halliday, 1866), 5.

Crowther stated there are many other departments of labor that go through the same debriefing and introspective learning and it needed to be “more so with us missionaries, to whom are committed certain talents by the Great Householder, to occupy till He come.”¹⁰ Samuel Crowther's history details how he led those in his care and tutelage and how he lived his life.

Crowther's Succession

Henry Venn, “the general secretary of the CMS from 1841 to 1872,”¹¹ had a plan to see the work of CMS carried on solely by Africans. He desired that though the Gospel came from outside of West Africa, it would give way to the indigenous ministry.¹² Ultimately, Venn's goal was to euthanize the mission of CMS, but the spreading of the Gospel would continue through the local church.¹³ Venn believed this was all going to happen through the ministry of Samuel Crowther. “Venn wanted well-educated, well-trained African clergy; such people as Crowther's son Dandeson...and his son-in-law T. B. Macaulay were better educated than many of the homespun English missionaries.”¹⁴ Not only had Crowther proven his capabilities to grow and oversee the ministry, but he was also able to mentor and multiply leaders. Replication was what Venn had envisioned would happen in Sierra Leone. No longer would there be a need for European missionaries. Unfortunately, this was not how the work of the mission would continue.

Though Venn had oversight of CMS for 30 years, he was not without his naysayers. Not everyone agreed with his vision to see an indigenous ministry take root and become self-supporting, self-propagating, and self-governing.¹⁵ E.W. Blvden was urging for a European

¹⁰. Crowther, *A Charge Delivered on the Banks of the River Niger in West Africa*, 5.

¹¹. J. F. Ajayi, “From Mission to Church: The Heritage of the Church Mission Society,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 23, no. 2 (April 1999): 50-55, 52.

¹². Zablon Nthamburi, “Toward Indigenization of Christianity in Africa: A Missiological Task,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 13, no. 3 (July 1989): 112-118, 112.

¹³. Stephen Ney, “Samuel Ajayi Crowther and the Age of Literature,” *Research in African Literatures* 46, no. 1 (2015): 37-52, 47.

¹⁴. Walls, “The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther,” 19.

¹⁵. Ajayi, “From Mission to Church: The Heritage of the Church Mission Society,” 51.

national movement to take root in Africa.¹⁶ Henry Townsend would frustrate Venn's plans fearing that CMS would not control the settlers in the Yoruba mission.¹⁷ Sir George Goldie would bemoan that European missionaries should take over for Crowther and remove him from leading the Yoruba mission.¹⁸

In the appendix of Crowther's book, *A Charge Delivered on the Banks of the River Niger in West Africa*, he outlined the plan for his successor. The appendix did not name a successor, but the process was detailed. It detailed that while Crowther would continue being paid by CMS, he would work closely with the mission in setting up his future successor for success. A fund was planned to support the future bishop and help fund projects within the native church. Crowther even noted of the area having a "Theological School, and a Native Church Fund...For whatever is contributed through this channel will tend to foster the free action and self-support of the Native Church, instead of an unhealthy dependence upon, and subordination to, a foreign Missionary Society."¹⁹ Again, the aim was to euthanize the mission. Euthanizing the mission was Venn's plan; to have the national church in West Africa overseeing herself. However, this plan never came to fruition.

The reason that the plan powerfully began with Crowther and ultimately ended with him was due to paternalism. CMS leaders and missionaries, as noted above, were against Venn's plan from the beginning and desired to frustrate it.²⁰ For Townsend, to relinquish control and submit to a non-European was unimaginable.²¹ "European missionaries in the field...distrusted Venn's

¹⁶. Walls, "The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther," 20.

¹⁷. Ajayi, "From Mission to Church: The Heritage of the Church Mission Society," 53.

¹⁸. Ibid., 54

¹⁹. Crowther, *A Charge Delivered on the Banks of the River Niger in West Africa*, 41.

²⁰. Nthamburi, "Toward Indigenization of Christianity in Africa: A Missiological Task," 113.

²¹. Olayemi O.T. Fatusi, "The Retransmission of Evangelical Christianity in Nigeria: The Legacy and Lessons from Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther's Life and Ministry (1810-1891)," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 61, no. 2 (2019): 153-165, 159.

plan and proceeded to undermine it.”²² When Venn passed away in 1872, CMS and Crowther did not just lose a leader, but lost was a man “to whom Crowther was friend, protege, and a prime illustration of Christianity’s potential in Africa.”²³ Crowther lost the person who was his number one advocate against the opposition Crowther faced on the mission field. Venn was much more to Crowther than a boss. They were friends. “Crowther was virtually without any advocate to defend him against the libellous accusations levelled against him and his subordinates at the mission headquarters in London.”²⁴

Crowther would pass away in 1891 but not before making a tremendous impact toward the missionary work in West Africa that would reverberate to modern missions today. While Venn's vision for indigenous work was abandoned after Crowther's death, Crowther's legacy must remain in our minds and, in more ways than will be addressed in this paper, *not be abandoned* as it was in his day. Though he died a "desolate, broken man"²⁵ his legacy can inspire us toward proper unity and friendship within the global church. Woefully, the reason for the dismissal and rejection of Crowther’s leadership and his discipleship was due to paternalism.

Paternalism Against Crowther

Paternalism is when a person acts or takes on the role of a father or parent over another individual. The idea here is for one individual to remain in a place of authority and even control over another person. Paternalism refers to "the substitution of one actor’s judgment for another’s on the grounds that it is in the latter’s best interests.”²⁶ The Merriam-Webster Dictionary states that paternalism is "a system under which an authority undertakes to supply needs or regulate

²². Ayayi, “From Mission to Church: The Heritage of the Church Mission Society,” 55.

²³. Ney, “Samuel Ajayi Crowther and the Age of Literature,” 49.

²⁴. Ibid., 49.

²⁵. Walls, “The Legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther,” 19.

²⁶. Michael Barnett, “Hierarchy and Paternalism,” in *Hierarchies in World Politics*, ed. Ayşe Zarakol (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 66-94, 66.

conduct of those under its control.”²⁷ Paternalism does not seek autonomy toward the individual, entity, or community under its control. Paternalism requires a child to look after so that it can remain in power. Regarding missions, paternalism “delays, if it does not destroy, the emergence of a socially responsible national church.”²⁸

The foundation of paternalism is present in most, if not all, missionary work. Without constant attention, it can quickly overtake the work on the ground. “Paternalism in mission is like a virus...[it] nullifies and weakens mission partnership.”²⁹ While Henry Venn did not seek paternalism over Crowther and the clergy he oversaw, Venn could not keep his colleagues in London from being paternalistic to work done in West Africa. Venn could not convince his colleagues and other European missionaries that paternalism would be the downfall of the work they helped to begin and release into the hands of African clergy. Instead, Crowther’s staff was discredited, and Crowther humiliated, labeled as one who could not discipline those under his watch.³⁰ This was paternalism at its worst. What can today’s American church learn from this historical account?

The Call for Friendship

Rev. Vedanayagam S. Azariah was correct in stating, “The problem of race relationships is one of the most serious problems confronting the Church to-day.”³¹ This was the opening statement of his address on the evening of June 20, 1910, at the World Missionary Conference (WMC) in Edinburgh. Azariah's call was for unity, cooperation, and, most importantly,

²⁷. “Paternalism,” *Merriam-Webster* (Merriam-Webster, n.d.), accessed April 21, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/paternalism>.

²⁸. Ajayi, “From Mission to Church: The Heritage of the Church Mission Society,” 55.

²⁹. Charles Van Engen, “Toward a Theology of Mission Partnerships,” *Missiology: An International Review* 29, no. 1 (January 2001): 11-44, 25.

³⁰. Ajayi, “From Mission to Church: The Heritage of the Church Mission Society,” 54.

³¹. Rev. V. S. Azariah, *World Missionary Conference, 1910: to Consider Missionary Problems in Relation to the Non-Christian World* (New York, NY: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 306.

friendship among foreign missionaries and, in his experience, the Indian-born worker. His address at the WMC was because he noticed and heard directly from national Indian leaders that friendship was not their experience with European missionaries they served alongside. "Azariah identified racism and missionary paternalism as chief barriers to Christian life."³²

From personal experience, Azariah had observed that he had made numerous friends along the way with foreign workers. Yet, "a certain aloofness, a lack of mutual understanding and openness, a great lack of frank intercourse and friendliness, exists throughout the country"³³ of India. He noticed that foreign missionaries were content in being the fathers, the parents, of those they ministered to in India. He did not see this as being initially incorrect, "[b]ut the difficulty in older missions now is that we have a new generation of younger missionaries who would like to be looked upon as fathers, and we have a new generation of Christians who do not wish to be treated like children."³⁴ The continued paternalistic pattern of foreign missionaries was now getting in the way of seeing a genuinely indigenous movement take place.

He believed following in the footsteps of Jesus Christ would address this issue. Azariah referenced John 15:14-15 where Jesus called the disciples his friends.³⁵ The disciples moved from being servants, who would have no idea of the dealings of their master, to friends. The relationship of master and servant is what foreign missionaries were holding onto during Azariah's time. "As long as this relationship exists, we must admit that no sense of self-respect and individuality can grow in the Indian Church."³⁶ Azariah's charge to the WMC of 1910 was also a message of hope. The inspiration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was enough to see a move

³². Dana L. Robert, "Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 35, no. 2 (April 2011): 100-107, 100.

³³. Azariah, *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 307.

³⁴. Azariah, *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 309.

³⁵. *Ibid.*, 307-308.

³⁶. *Ibid.*, 311.

away from paternalism and toward a proper indigenous movement within India. Friendship was at the heart of Crowther's relationship with Venn. It feel short due to the resistance from CMS's other leadership.

Friendship's Slow Progression Amid Stalling

Did anyone heed Azariah's charge? Yes. "One key that unlocks the history of missions from the 1910 World Missionary Conference to the mid-twentieth century is that of cross-cultural friendships."³⁷ Friendship was a term that gathered momentum before World War I, but the term partnership eventually took its place.³⁸ Still, global Christian youth movements, like the World's Student Christian Federation and the Young Men's Christian Association, began the groundbreaking work of "interracialism."³⁹

Though World War I caused a stalling of this work, there was an increase in emphasis again in cross-cultural friendships after the war. Now, other global voices were present affirming the need and call for friends in world missions. Among them were C.Y. Cheng of the National Christian Council for China and former Japanese social leader, Toyohiko Kagawa. Kagawa was known to state "that the main purpose of missions was to make friends."⁴⁰

After World War II, friendship again suffered a setback, this time due to the no longer advantageous nature of being known as friends with foreign missionaries in non-western countries in East Asia.⁴¹ The lack of an advantageous nature was one of the main reasons to move from friendship to partnership. The change in terms was also one of the main reasons there was a tight hold on paternalism. "As initially practiced, the idea of partnership was more

³⁷. Robert, "Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity," 100.

³⁸. Ibid., 101.

³⁹. Ibid., 101.

⁴⁰. Robert, "Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity," 104.

⁴¹. Ibid., 105.

corporate and structured and less intimate than that of friendship.”⁴² This brought about a lack of listening, understanding, and properly working together—the kind of working together at the heart of Azariah's charge. Though the Whitby Conference of the IMC in Canada of 1947, in rhetoric, spoke of equality in missions and relationships, “it was largely ineffective in changing the ongoing practices and situations in missionary friendships.”⁴³ “During the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s, Azariah’s cry ‘give us friends!’ was replaced by “missionary, go home!”⁴⁴ Even still, we see the powerful friendship and testimony of Lesslie Newbiggin and, Sri Lankan, D.T. Niles during those years.⁴⁵ Dana L. Robert notes that while there were many issues and stumbling blocks along the century, “without friendships as clear witness to Christlike love, the inequities and racism of the colonial era might have prevented the spread of Christianity across cultures.”⁴⁶

Is Friendship Still Necessary Today?

This paper argues that paternalism has existed explicitly for almost two hundred years in global missions. That has been made clear to this point. However, even more so, the argument is that paternalism is still implicitly present today, and the subtleness of the paternalism that Crowther experienced is still haunting our missionary efforts. This paper now turns toward how paternalism and racism within American Christianity will continue to appear in our missionary efforts overseas if not dealt with internally.

One area of focus will be on the lack of ethnic diversity present among missionaries within U.S. denominations and sending missions organizations. In the Christian and Missionary

⁴². Ibid., 105.

⁴³. Kang-Hee Han, “‘Still We Need Friends!’: ‘Partnership in Mission’ in the History of the World Council of Churches, 1948-2018,” *The Ecumenical Review* 70, no. 3 (October 2018): 484-498, 490.

⁴⁴. Robert, “Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity,” 105.

⁴⁵. Ibid., 105.

⁴⁶. Robert, “Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity,” 106.

Alliance (C&MA), there are just over 700 international workers, of which 3.3% are of Hispanic or Latin American descent, 12% are Asian, .3% are Black/African American, and .7% other. These percentages show that 84% of the missionaries within the U.S. C&MA are of Anglo descent. This is a stark contrast to the diversity that is present among C&MA churches. In the U.S., the C&MA is 46% in non-Anglo representation, but that diversity does not see representation on the mission field among the missionaries serving cross-culturally.

The Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) International Mission Board (IMB), as of 2020, had about 3,700 missionaries serving internationally. "At the end of 2019, there were 222 Asian Americans, 13 African Americans, 45 Hispanic Americans, and 192 people from other ethnic backgrounds serving as IMB field personnel."⁴⁷ These numbers represent 6% for Asian Americans, .3% for African Americans, 1.2% for Hispanic Americans, and 5% for other ethnic backgrounds. These percentages are very close to the SBC's racial and ethnic composition of 85% Anglo. The problem is that the SBC has more than 3,400 Hispanic American churches and is 6% Black/African American, yet not seeing proper representation on the mission field.⁴⁸

One other area of focus will be to look at the rise and treatment of immigrant Christian communities in Western societies. "In Europe and the U.S., the public discourse on immigration focused almost exclusively on Muslim immigrants... Yet, in both contexts, Christians form a sizeable proportion of the new immigrant population."⁴⁹ About 70% of those immigrating into the U.S. are of Christian background and beliefs.⁵⁰ With the percentage of Christians

⁴⁷. "2020 Ministry Inquiries," *SBC.net*, last modified 2021, accessed April 21, 2021, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/ministry-reports/2020-ministry-report/>, 5.

⁴⁸. <https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-denomination/southern-baptist-convention/#racial-and-ethnic-composition>

⁴⁹. Jehu J. Hanciles, "Migrants as Missionaries, Missionaries as Outsiders: Reflections on African Christian Presence in Western Societies," *Mission Studies* 30, no. 1 (2013): 64-85, 71.

⁵⁰. Stanley John, "North America," *Theology in a Global Context*, (New York, April 21, 2021).

immigrating to the U.S., one can expect that among migrants, pastors and missionaries will be present. Jehu J. Hanciles notes that "In Europe and North America, African Christians have formed Christian congregations...at an astonishing rate and inserted themselves forcefully into the complex narrative of a post-Christendom Western Christianity."⁵¹ While this is positive for the church in America, immigrant revitalization is ignored when addressing the decline of the church in the West.⁵² Further, though a benefit to the church in America, Hanciles notes that paternalism still exists toward immigrant Africans in the U.S. today. In a study Hanciles conducted in 2008, he found, "in the U.S. many African pastors who founded immigrant churches sited condescending treatment and lack of respect from other leaders in the homegrown church."⁵³ If the American church cannot welcome fellow brothers and sisters in Christ from other parts of the world on American soil, this will directly reflect the subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, paternalism still present among global missions today. If the American church cannot be friends with itself, how will it ever indeed be friends with followers of Christ around the globe?

Yes, cross-cultural friendship is still necessary today. More than ever, the American church must contend and address the paternalism that exists within the borders of its churches, denominations, and organizations. Perhaps, if it can begin within the American church, then it can flow into overseas work. Kang-Hee Han stated that while the World Council of Churches has done its fair share in promoting friendship and standing against paternalism, "[h]owever, even the burgeoning Christianity of the global South has inherited a legacy of missionary paternalism and superiority from the global North or from itself."⁵⁴ Concerning world missions, the legacy of the West is linked to present paternalism that has passed on to global brothers and sisters.

⁵¹. Hanciles, "Migrants as Missionaries, Missionaries as Outsiders," 72.

⁵². Ibid., 73.

⁵³. Hanciles, "Migrants as Missionaries, Missionaries as Outsiders," 76.

⁵⁴. Han, "Still We Need Friends!," 486.

“Without deep sharing of life between partners, authentic partnership is impossible and false friendship of dominance and dependence is predominant.”⁵⁵

What Is Needed – True Friendship

As already stated, friendship is still needed today. Several components will inform these friendships. We will look at only three.

One, friendship will need a proper understanding of relationship. "Christian community depends upon personal relationship, and missionary failures can be traced to their lack."⁵⁶ Without a relationship, there can never be listening, love, mutuality, understanding, and disagreement with forgiveness without proximity to one another.⁵⁷ Martin Luther King, Jr. stated that 11 o'clock is the most segregated hour in America on a Sunday morning. This statement is still true today.⁵⁸ The adage where one will play as one decides to practice is critical here. The American church does not engage well across racial and ethnic lines currently. This posture will continue to hinder how well we engage across racial and ethnic lines globally as well.

Two, friendship will necessitate a posture of being empty-handed in these relationships. “When people approach one another with their hands full of gifts for each other, they cannot even shake hands or embrace in greeting, much less exchange their gifts, so long as their hands are full.”⁵⁹ Han is communicating that people must approach this level of friendship without an agenda, without a bargaining chip. Whatever one is carrying into the relationship must

⁵⁵. Ibid., 493.

⁵⁶. Robert, “Cross-Cultural Friendship in the Creation of Twentieth-Century World Christianity,” 100-101.

⁵⁷. Cathy Ross, “The Theology of Partnership,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 3 (July 2010): 145-148, 145.

⁵⁸. Bob Smietana, “Sunday Morning in America Still Segregated – and That's OK With Worshipers,” *Lifeway Research*, last modified December 22, 2020, accessed April 21, 2021, <https://lifewayresearch.com/2015/01/15/sunday-morning-in-america-still-segregated-and-thats-ok-with-worshippers/>.

⁵⁹. Han, ““Still We Need Friends!,”” 496.

consciously be put down to embrace another person in mutual friendship. What is it that the American church has to put down to embrace brothers and sisters of different ethnicities?

Finally, repent for ways in which paternalism is still implicitly entangled within America's Christianity and its effects on how America engages in global missions. While the population in America is just under 62% White (non-Hispanic), White (non-Hispanic) make up 74% of clergy while Black (non-Hispanic) make up only 10.8 percent of clergy.⁶⁰ There is still a desire for the white American church to control and lean toward its own cultural biases. Psalm 67 states that God rules the peoples of the world with equity. In Acts 10, Peter realizes that God does not show favoritism in his encounter with Cornelius. This is more than just a call to diversify for the American church. This is a call to treat fellow brothers and sisters in the faith as equals and the need to advocate for more non-Anglos in levels of leadership across the board.

Conclusion

The legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther still compels global missions today. Though unknown to many, no one would deny that God used his life as an example of what would happen when the Gospel takes root and ignites an indigenous movement. What Crowther was able to accomplish within the kingdom of God, alongside his *friend*, Henry Venn, should still exhort the American church to release the mission's ministry as quickly as possible to local leadership.

The legacy of Samuel Ajayi Crowther still haunts global missions today. Pause is necessary as the West is engaged in global missions, so the sins and errors of the past do not continue to inform its missiology today. However, the life of Samuel Ajayi Crowther should challenge the American church to look at how paternalism still rules the day before someone

⁶⁰. "Clergy," *Data USA*, accessed April 21, 2021, <https://datausa.io/profile/soc/clergy#demographics>.

leaves American soil. Rev. Azariah stated it best, “the attainment of a greater unity and common ground in Christ as the great Unifier of mankind, is one of the deepest needs of our time.”⁶¹ This is no longer just a call between East and West, but a call within the church of the West.

⁶¹. Azariah, *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 306.

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