

Article Review

Student: Chase Barbe student email: barbec@allianceu.edu

Program: Masters of Divinity

Alliance Theological Seminary

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What is one concept that stood out to you in this article?

The importance in understanding that God himself is a missionary and the call for all believers in Christ to be a part of His mission. The author, Samuel Dali, attempts to answer the question on whether developing countries like Nigeria should now begin to send missionaries to Europe and America. Some theologians call this process “Reverse Mission,” since the sending churches of the West are now receiving missionaries from the very churches they planted. There are many barriers for this rhetoric to become a reality but when we look at the God of the Bible, nothing should deter us from being on mission. God’s mission from the beginning was to create the world so to reveal himself. “It was for mission that God sent Jesus Christ to reveal that the Father is redeeming humanity. The redemptive work has continued through the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church, the body of Christ (What If...Reverse Mission: Rhetoric or Reality?, 2018).” All believers in Jesus Christ are missionaries and are called to reach all people for the gospel, regardless of location.

What implications does this concept have for Missions?

The implications mean that Africans must hear the same God calling them back to Europe and America where Christianity is on the decline. The strategy will be quite different compared to the 19th and 20th century missionaries from the West to Africa because it will take a level of unlearning what being a Christian means. The American church has much to learn about God from Nigeria. For many Christians in Nigeria, God is a reality in their everyday activities which is drastically different than the typical Christian in America who reduces God to one or two hours at a Sunday service. Another benefit would be that “Nigerian Christians are very confident about the Gospel, and they interpret everyday events in the light of scripture. Therefore, western Christians can learn how to regain that confidence once again to proclaim the

Gospel in everyday life (What If...Reverse Mission: Rhetoric or Reality?, 2018).” The church in the West can be awakened with the boldness of faith-filled missionaries from countries like Nigeria and God knows we need their help. Understanding and seeing how others are living out their faith can ignite a flame. The current church paradigm in the West needs to adjust so that believers can be activated to witness to Christ in their everyday lives.

What needs to change in your life as a result?

I need to continue to expose myself to missionaries from different cultures to help me break out of my current perspective on missions. For the last couple years, I have had this holy discontent because I see a major gap between the Scriptures and my own life. I look to my brothers and sisters in Christ around me and rarely do I see them living on mission each day. I’m not here to judge but rather be aware of the current state of the church and realize that the church in America is not the norm. Learning from our Christian family in countries like Nigeria can help us move away from the comforts of America and towards God’s mission. If only we will humble ourselves and repent, and pray to God, then He will give us the grace to live a lifestyle of mission no matter where we are and who we are. It’s not a matter of if one is called to be a missionary. It’s a matter of obedience that we are all called to be missionaries according to the great commission.

References:

Samuel Dante Dali, 2018, ‘Brethren Life & Thought: What If...Reverse Mission: Rhetoric or Reality?’, Bethany Theological Seminary, Richmond, IN, USA.