

TAPE NO. 82

SPEAKER: Bishop Festo Kivengere

PLACE: St. Christopher's

DATE: February 18, 1982

THEME: Prayer and Mission

TEXT: Mt. 28:16

R121 (AE129) "A Living Order"

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Blessed Lord, we have heard the beauty of your wonderful commissioning as you spoke to those who had no authority, to move forward in your name and your banner to proclaim the amazing message of life, to humanity. Blessed Holy Spirit be with us as we share, this evening in Jesus precious name. Amen.

It is a great joy for me to be here and to bring you greetings from your christian brothers and sisters in Uganda. Sometimes brethren, when we come and we, we know you have been reading about our country since the days of the dictator Amin, the havoc, the murderers, the exiles, and all that, you have read about our country, and yet sometimes it is very difficult to share with you the excitement we who are involved in the Gospel find in that country because of the fact that in western understanding, many times people think, it is only when things are moving in the normal direction when the economy is reasonably good and when roads are repaired and educational schemes are going ahead, and medical services are there, and plenty of security, with established police, and all that. And then perhaps it makes sense if people get excited about their faith and meetings.

Let me just tell you that back home in Uganda, all those things I mentioned are not there. In other words, we have been struggling since we returned to our country when Amin was overthrown to build, reconstruct, put the broken pieces together, but I want to tell you, deterioration is easy, reconstruction is very hard. Particularly when the reconstruction means rehabilitating the hearts, the minds of the people, it is very tough, just as it took God in Jesus Christ to restore and even if that was done by God Himself, in the power of the blessed Holy Spirit 2000 years ago, it still

converted by missionaries who bring the Good News they become so precious to you that sometimes you even copy bad things from them. Because of the fact that they helped you to get out of the darkness, you don't realize what that means, I know what it means, you see, I am a first generation Christian, my father and mother were not Christians, and I didn't hear about Jesus, until I was about nine. And the man who communicated this first little teaching about was a Ugandan whose education was about perhaps, elementary 2. Had two years of education in those early days, but missionaries trained him in reading so he came and started a little church and did what we read here. "Go and teach them all about me and baptize them." That lovely Ugandan evangelist started a little church in the village, and little boys and girls all illiterate, we flooded into the little church grass thatched, and he taught us how to read first, that was his primary duty, he taught us how to read and then when we some us who were little youngsters could read in three months, then who ever succeeded in reading he gave a Gospel in the mother tongue. He gave me a little book called the Gospel according to St. Luke, in my mother tongue, which is Rukyarabou western Uganda, that was my first reader. So I started badly reading the little book in my mother tongue, and he introduced me into the teaching about Jesus Christ, and who Jesus was. Well, this is how these things were communicated. But what I wanted to pass on to you is that in Uganda of today not far back as when I moved from the traditional worship of my parents into the Christian faith, but because this man taught me that, and I began to see light from darkness, you know everything he did was good and everything I did before I was converted was bad, so the tendency of throwing out as you say, the baby with bath water, is very common among converts. But we thank God now we have recovered the culture, we have recovered the dream, the drums, the the instruments and in my cathedral if you come on Sunday, it is not, it is no longer a traditional Anglican way of singing, people in my cathedral are free to

immobility. We can't move, you dear not move just in case God is scared out of the sanctuary instead of knowing that actually God is not like that, everything run, and things which we see, and things which excite us, life itself, things are moving. His order is the order of move--in life, excitement, and so I wanted just to say, there are plenty of chaos in Africa, there are areas which would threaten and frighten you, we change by the week, we make history every month, we are a continent of excitement, politically, even in our breakdowns, there is excitement. And yet you stand in any city in those African cities, Nairobi, Kampala, and you see people flooding in the churches and standing or sitting for hours to listen to the message, and singing it when they respond. I am not suggesting that everybody responds, no no, there is always a balance. Response is not cheap, but there is a thirst, there is hunger, and therefore there is a tremendous job to preach the Good News.