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MESSAGE NO: 145

SPEAKER: Bishop Festo Kivengere

THEME: We Preach Christ - the Only Message of Hope

TEXT: Colossians 1:25-29

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Message No. 143  
"African Enterprise is a Ministry to  
the Whole Man"  
Bishop Festo Kiyengere

*Thank you very much!*

I am going to pick up a few salient points so that we may share and see what God is doing and how we are going, going about it. But I am going to base on the words of St. Paul. Actually this passage demonstrates beautifully the miracle and the secret which makes us members of the same body, and therefore I thought I would read this beautiful passage here, to put us in the framework of what we are talking about. I am going to start reading from verse 25 of Chapter one of the letter to the Colossians.

"And I have been made a servant of the church by God, a servant of the church by God, who gave me this task to perform for your good, it is a task of fully proclaiming His message, which is the secret he hid through all past ages from all man-kind but has now revealed to his people. God's plan is to make known his secret to his people. This rich and glorious secret which he has for all peoples, and the secret is that Christ in you which means that you will share in the glory of God. So we preach Christ to everyone. Now that can really tell you what African Enterprise is all about, so we preach to everyone, not because we choose to organize, not because we are excited in the multiplicity of christian groupings, no, not at all. We are compelled. There is a secret to share, there is a message to proclaim, God has made us servants for his church not competitors, "servants". Servants to the church, so that we preach Christ to everyone. We preach Christ, with all possible wisdom, we warn and teach them in order to bring each one into God's presence, as a mature individual in union with Christ. A fullness of human life. I

, to get this done, I toil and struggle using the mighty strength which Christ supplies and which is at work in me. You see you

can't preach the Gospel and get away with it. No r can you share the message detached. This tremendous secret which is Christ present in you, the radicance of the character of God, the God of love. In this ministry, St. Paul says, "I toil and I struggle."

In June I was preaching in our beautiful city but which has been terribly shattered. And we had a mission based on the Archdiocese of Kampala, the Archbishop's own diocese. June 21st, we were in the National Stadium with about 15,000 people of all ages and all persuasions. And we preached simply. We finished and we saw people flooding forward to come and accept Him who can put broken lives together again. This is the excitement of African Evangelistic Enterprise as we call it in Africa.

It is a servant of the church. So you can see that African Evangelistic Enterprise is the arm of the established churches of all deonominations. We go there simply to strengthen the body to preach with the ministers, to help evangelists, to do what we can so that the body of our Lord maybe beuilt up on the continent. That is what the African Evangeliclist Enterprise is about. We preach with all sorts.

A Mennonite in East Africa one day wanted a team to come and help in Tanzania, and he called from the Anglican church where God has wonderfully blessed people. o an Archdeacon put togehre a number of lay Anglican men and women and they went to the Mennonites and they conducted a week along series of meetings and God blessed. There were so many people who came to Jesus when they finished. Thsi dear bishop, a Mennonite brother came and embrace the Archdeacon saying "Up to this moment, if I shook your hand, I would have regarded it as sin. Now I embrace you you as my brother.                      laughter                      Things had taken place. Barriers had been broken. Brethren, African Evangelistic Enterprise is called into the hot spots of Africa for the purpose of sharing the only message of hope for a shattered continent. We see miracles taking place. And as I told you, in Uganda, my dear friends, a country which has become so embittered because of the horrible things which took place, during a period of eight years. And they have left a trail of misery of pains, of resentments, people who think if I kill those who killed my uncle, perhaps I will feel better. Which is a completely mistaken idea bec ause there is no way out there.

They need to recapture this kind of message. The secret for Africa -- the

secret for Soweto where I was last year. And where I stood with some South African whites and we visited Bishop Desmond Tutu during the time his passport had been taken away by the government. Now it has been taken away again.. We prayed with him, a sweet man, not bitter. One white Christian brother said to him, "Bishop Desmond do you have any hope for South Africa?" And Desmond look at him and he said, "Of course, I have hope. I am a member of the community of hop. I don't give up on South Africa because Christ rose from the dead."

Now we can preach in Soweto together, a team of whites, and blacks and some of those whites were South Africans. If you want to know when the message of Jesus ' love can be an embarrassment, you go and take a South African white man and stand in the black community to preach. Then you will see the meaning of an embarrassing situation. And yet Michael Cassidy, a South African white born and many others and Asians we come together. We were in Cape town, we were in Stellenbosch preaching to these Afrikaans people. And we saw things happening.'

the other day, I was in fact in England, when I was getting the people after one of the preaching in one of the Cathedrals, a young man came and put his hand in mine. And he said, I come from South Africa. I saw you at Stellenbosch University when you spoke to us at lunch hour. It was during that time that I became a Christian.

We had only about 45 minutes . Wehad 1,300 university sudents to communicate to the secret which can break human barriers and isolations and introduce men and women above their racial tensions and these terrible bitternesses I am referring to. That is the message which we believe firmly about which we are absolutely excited. We feel that his is the only message of hope and we do it in preaching the Word. But we have learned a lesson. Not just preaching the Word, you take your New Testament and you speak to people and then you run into the kitchen to make sure the porridge is okay. That makes omse sense you see. That is the incarnate part of the Good news. That the hungry get some food and then their hearts beat in tune with the love of God. And then the barriers which make us utterly dejected are broken so that other human beings discover other human beings in the love of Jesus Christ. That is down to earth ministry of African Evangelistic Enterprise.

We are caught up in hot areas. Uganda my own country as I was tol by the president

fighting for liberation went in for only one reason alone. 75% went in order to revenge. You see, you can see what happens if they get angry in a village and they attack people and they pour that anger on all sorts of people this kind of security hinders the reconstruction of the economy and then relationships remain tense, and sometimes in Africa when relationships are tense, they become tribal animosities are resurrected, you see.

And so you see, we are actually caught in a very exciting ministry. It is growing. We have invitations from areas of Zaire. Two Anglican bishops who have started a new diocese in Zaire have invited the team to go there and help in starting helping their young lay people to evangelize. Ah, we have had an invitation from Sudan. It is open country. People from Kartoum came and Omdurman and of course, it is a muslim country. The south is predominantly Christian. And they want teams to go and preach in 6 major towns of Southern Sudan next year. But of course when you hear this kind of thing, it takes financial support it takes your prayer. It takes yourself giving so that the teams may be able to reach those areas. Pray about that situation. Pray and then get ready to give what you can.

We believe there is hope in the world because Christ in you and in me is the only hope of glory. We have a reason to get excited. Because Jesus Christ is making our widows smile, He is giving hope to our orphans, is changing enemies into friends. If He can do that, we are absolutely excited. We have a reason So pray for us and then do support.

But I want to bring it closer you see, "I am toiling" Paul said, "struggling with everything that is in me, the power that is working in me. You here are no longer at a distance. Christians cannot be at a distance. Once you feel as if you are at a distance, there is something wrong somewhere. Christian love sensitizes your heart.

I believe that sensitivity is desperately needed in the Christian church then the material things which God has showered upon you can become redemptively used. St. Paul said, yes there is a secret, don't let that secret be covered by material things. Material things have a tendency to cover up most important things. And we gaze at the material things and we don't see God's world and we don't see God's people and we become less and less human.

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The hope that is sending these teams of African evangelistic Enterprise all over Africa now is the hope which is Christ Jesus in you healing, redeeming, forgiving, filling, breaking barriers introducing men to men, women to women, and color to color and racial tensions removed.

This is the only hope and you are caught in that. And if you participate with excitement there is no one could blame you.

thank you very much for what you have already done. We appreciate and praise God for that. So pray realistically and may the Lord continue to bless you.

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