

Aug 1, 2014

Dearest Prayer Partners,

It is our prayer that you may rejoice in the Lord always . . . that you and your loved ones may make the joy of the Lord your refuge and your dwelling!

Did you know that the United States, shortly after becoming a republic, started another country? In Africa? Which still exists more than 200 years later?

It's true. After the war for independence from Britain, America was home to many African-Americans. Whether free or enslaved, they faced real hardships. Assimilation into the mainstream was out of the question.

Some felt the best solution would be to give them their freedom . . . help them to return to Africa, and start new lives in an American colony on their old continent.

This is how the nation of "Liberia" was born!

On July 26, 1847, the "Americo-Liberians" stated that they had had enough of American patronage. They wrote a declaration of independence from the United States of America charging the U.S. with injustices.

But the sins of the fathers many times show up in the sons. The Americo-Liberians would not allow the integration of regular Africans into their elite society. They perpetuated a two-tiered society. Local Africans could not have full participation in the new nation's social, civic, and political life.

Ironically, the Americo-Liberians were replicating many of the exclusions and social differentiations that had limited their lives in the United States! They had been mistreated—now they mistreated others.

Oh yes, Liberia, this "Land of Freedom," was founded as a Christian nation. The eleven men who signed the Liberian declaration of independence were born-again believers. The document was signed at a Baptist Church.

To this day, Liberians have an annual day of fasting and prayer. Their national anthem appeals to God as their power, and the giver of their rights. Their pledge of allegiance is identical to ours except for the name of the country. All 22 of their presidents have claimed to be Christians—most of them have been church leaders!

On paper, Liberia should thrive. They shouldn't need evangelization; they should be a missionary-sending country; they should be capable of planting churches that can self-govern, self-support, and self-propagate.

But the reality below Liberia's surface is grim:

- **The majority of the country is yet to be reached with the Gospel.**
- **Islam is growing much faster than Christianity.**
- **There are no indigenous missionary efforts.**
- **There is no effort at translation of God's Word into native languages, though 95% of the population is native.**
- **There is no relevance in the presentation of Christianity to the native people.**

Sadly, Christianity had a bad relationship with the peoples of the region from the start. The new settlers from America kept their distance from the natives. There were no social, political, economic, or religious ties. There was no proclamation of Christianity to the natives.

The natives came to realize what the name "Americo-Liberian" really meant: Africans with the prejudices, preferences, biases, and aspirations of a white society . . . people who would want nothing to do with native Africans.

So Christianity became a distinguishing mark of an elite society—instead of God's answer for the most profound ailments of mankind.

The only attempt of the Americo-Liberians at "relating" to the native Africans was to exploit them—and even enslave them!

It was a sad beginning . . .

- There were wars between the "pagan tribes" and the "Christian settlers."
- The tribesmen could not think of being Christian, for Christianity was an elite culture, and to their view, unachievable. The settlers, on the other hand, thought it impossible for an illiterate, pagan tribesman to become a Christian.
- The settlers' harsh treatment of the natives—indeed the settlers' entire approach to life in Africa—did not commend itself to the natives . . . to put it mildly.

Their Christianity had no foundational doctrine of repentance from sin and salvation through God's provision in Jesus Christ. It was socio-political. It was exclusionary. Soon they mixed in "Freemasonry" and other secret societies.

Before long, paganism crept in to distort Liberia's brand of Christianity.

Today, Liberia is counted among the poorest countries of the world—not just economically, but spiritually. This is a nation essentially “inoculated” against true Christianity—because of all it has suffered at the hands of a “Christian elite.”

**What I have just shared with you is
not simply a “history class.” It is an
urgent call to action.**

We have seen the tragedy of Liberia recur in other places, time and time again. When we began our ministry in Spain, we heard every type of complaint against Christianity. The Inquisition . . . abuses of the papacy . . . promiscuous priests . . . the list went on. The Spaniards were “throwing out the baby with the bath water.” They had hardened hearts: “If we have already rejected the ‘true church,’ why should we listen to you?”

In the silence of my heart, I could only reply: “What you call ‘true’ doesn’t square up with the Truth of God’s Word! When they told you it was ‘true,’ you didn’t look it up in the Bible to see if it was really true!”

The bottom line is, this is all about the adversary having a field day—distorting the Word of God—exploiting Christians’ inconsistencies—and holding Africa in a stranglehold of sin.

But there is hope . . . because Jesus Himself worked in an environment *every bit as doctrinally perverse as Liberia. And He succeeded!*

Today, I cannot escape the fact that Liberia has needs that the heart of God longs for us to address. They need someone to show them how and why God’s Word, God’s heart, is trustworthy . . . just as Jesus showed the people among whom He lived and worked 2,000 years ago! *Israel then is Liberia today.*

- They need accountable, God-fearing leaders whom they can trust.
- They need to know obedience to God will bring a positive impact to the country at every level.
- They need to know that God has used true Christians to bring education and medicine to many regions of the world—they have no education system, and they are ravaged by disease.
- They need sound theological education so they can multiply true, well-trained leaders



for the nation.

- They need churches in the U.S. to adopt sister churches in their country, to introduce effective programs for various age levels. (This will be a joy for American churches! The Liberians speak English!)
- They need the mainline Evangelical denominations in the U.S. to adopt this daughter nation and reach out to every corner of it.
- They need a Bible-based program to lead them to Christian maturity—and organizational maturity—as the answer to their spiritual and social needs.
- They need you and me to do *what God shows us* to do—not what *we think* we can do!

I guess you can tell that this is heavy on my heart.

I have been in Liberia for a few days, I am here to set up a program—the Great Commission *unleashed!*

I need you to pray for us. But I also need you to give generously—to help us start training and deploying a first wave of workers-in-training.

We believe that we can launch this nationwide effort with just \$50 per month per worker. We will test and adjust as needed. We will sign up teachers to go to all regions on a monthly basis—they will teach all books of the Bible. They'll teach doctrine. They'll teach ministry skills.

We are on the Lord's side!

Please be a part of this. This is one of the most profoundly important endeavors we have ever undertaken. In the natural, some might ask, *Why? Why now? Why, when you already have so much work going on around the world?*

But I cannot look “in the natural” at the crying need of Africa. I can only look in the supernatural. The need is enormous. And God has blessed us with the awesome privilege of sharing transformational truth with people in desperate need.

How can we say no? We must say yes. Please let me hear from you quickly, and please send your most generous possible gift.



Thank you. God bless you!

Enthusiastically in the Harvest,

Dr. Manny Fernandez

P.S. Liberia. More than 4 million people. An urgent need for an honest faith. We can help them. We must. I urge you to give as generously as possible. Thank you again, my friend.