

A DISCUSSION/BRIEFING PAPER:

GEM 04:02:02a; rev. & exec summary added 06:02:23b

Re-Visioning Caribbean Missions: The Caribbean Church and the Missionary/Discipling the Nations Mandate In the Emerging Global era of the Third Christian Millennium

SYNOPSIS: *Thoughts regarding renewing our missionary vision and action in light of the enduring mission of the church in the Caribbean, which also [Given Matt 28:18 – 20 and Ac 1:4 – 8] necessarily involves missions from the church in the Caribbean. In so doing, the three great contending global systems of the 21st Century – (1) secularism and associated apostasy and neopaganism, (2) radical Islam and (3) the rising tide of Christian reformation across the South of the planet -- are considered, in terms of how they affect the mission of the Caribbean church in the region and across the world. A framework for a sustained missions strategy in and beyond the region is then considered and an agenda of questions for discussion and action is attached. (The **MVAT Kit** and the **ISMS [One Stop Missions Shop] Awareness and Action Manuals** are complements to this reflection paper.¹)*

SECTIONS:

<i>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</i>	<i>ii</i>
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>A] BACKGROUND: Missions in a Global world</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>B] Re-scoping our Missions Philosophy and Agenda</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>C] Towards a Caribbean Church Missions Geo-Strategy</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION: 2004 – 2014</i>	<i>7</i>

¹ Cf. http://www.angelfire.com/pro/kairosfocus/resources/MVAT_Kit.pdf for the former. The latter is available on request for qualified groups, from the GLI, kairosfocus@yahoo.co.uk

A Kairosfocus Briefing Note:

GEM 06:02:24b

Re-Visioning Caribbean Missions: The Caribbean Church and the Missionary/Discipling the Nations Mandate In the Emerging Global era of the Third Christian Millennium

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As we launch out into the 21st Century, the Caribbean church faces both tremendous opportunities and challenges under the church's mandate to disciple the nations. For, ever since the end of the cold war era at the turn of the 1990's, the rippling effects of three major waves of change have mounted up and now dominate events in the emerging global era: (1) *the de-christianising tidal wave*² from the north, (2) the almost as threatening *tsunami of radical Islam* from the east, and (3) the growing, now more than century-long *surge of the southern Christian reformation*. By God's grace, this reformation is transforming the south of the planet through the blessing of Abraham; as, through the gospel, the Spirit and the church, Jesus works to fill all things with his grace and glory [Gal 3:14, Eph 4:9 – 24]. So, we face a decisive turning-point in the history of the church and wider region, a *kairos*. [Cf. Ac 17:24 – 27.]

In the midst of these awesome forces, Caribbean Christians are buffeted and/or distracted by threatening or beguiling events, thus we often fail to understand our times to know what to do [cf. 1 Chron 12:32 vs Matt 16:1 – 4 and Rom 13:11 - 14]; and yet, we have a tremendous potential! For, our lands were the *FIRST* victims of Western colonial aggression across the world [and of associated collaboration between Muslim, African and European slave traders] -- so we have come here from the lands of the North and the 10/40 window, some as slaves, some as indentured servants, some as masters or at least administrators; a very unpromising mix. But, largely through the gospel we have now found liberation, empowerment and a measure of peace and unity. That makes us an example to the wider world, and our resulting cultural links make us a major pool of potential missionaries, especially in the 10/40 window and the lands of the Caribbean diaspora [cf. Jn 4]. In particular, we do not carry the real or perceived colonialist taint that so dogs Western Missionaries. Hardly less important, we have great potential credibility in the North, as those who speak with the authenticity of former victims who seek to forgive and promote reconciliation. Such a unique status also helps us promote global reconciliation.

In short, over the next decade, we have a tremendous opportunity to carry forward the gospel-based transformation of the Caribbean through the fullness of Christ, serving as a demonstration to the World and a platform for the onward work of carrying out the church's mission in all lands. Major opportunities therefore exist for mobilising the regional church in gospel-based prophetic, transformational intellectual and cultural leadership that: (a) responds to the internal cultural challenges we face, (b) counters the islamist and de-Christianising surges, and (c) takes a lead role in the church's global mission.

Accordingly, let us consider *the three triangles strategy*: mobilising a critical mass of Christians in the (1) E and NW [Afro-] Caribbean and in the (2) SE [Asio-] Caribbean triangles to carry forward the enduring mission of the church in the Caribbean; whilst, rising to fulfill our potential in the global mission of the church, especially in (3) the triangle formed by the 10/40 window, North America and Europe. So, let us ask: *Why not now? Why not here? Why not us?*

² Best viewed as a composite force: evolutionary materialism-driven secularism, associated apostasy in the church since the days of the so-called Enlightenment, and now a rising neo-paganism aptly summed up in the ideas, attitudes, misrepresentations and impacts of Dan Brown's runaway bestseller, *The DaVinci Code*, to be released as a major movie May 19, 2006. [Cf a typical response: <http://www.probe.org/content/view/127/169> .

Re-Visioning Caribbean Missions:

The Caribbean Church and the Missionary/Discipling the Nations Mandate in the Emerging Global era of the Third Christian Millennium

INTRODUCTION: At the same time that North American and European missionaries are still coming to the Caribbean, Caribbean missionaries (formal and informal) are going out to the secularised and increasingly apostate or even pagan North. Similarly, while a few missionaries from our region continue to build on the heritage of the pioneers of the 1840s on -- who first went out from the Caribbean to the traditional fields of Africa, Asia and the Americas -- we see increasing signs of the Islamic *Dawah*³ in our own region. Informed observers on the local scene also see signs of a rising wave of secularisation and even resurgent paganism in our region as well; working in concert with media- and intelligentsia- carried influences from the secularised North. In short, as the world moves into a global age, our concept of missions needs to move beyond the traditional assumption that countries that have been evangelised become missions-sending countries that field and fund a missions force in other countries, the missions fields.

This paper therefore seeks to sketch out how we may identify a framework and strategy for Caribbean missions vision and action in the current, ever more global age: that the enduring mission of the church in the region embraces (a) the ongoing saving of souls and transformation of lives, communities and institutions through the power of the gospel, and equally (b) the full participation of the Caribbean church in the global missionary outreach of the church. The facts that (1) Caribbean peoples are ethnically close to those of the 10/40 window, and that (2) we are the first victims of European colonialisation then raises the question as to whether we have a particular responsibility to reach out to the lands of our ancestors and those of our former oppressors with the gospel. A series of questions/points for discussion and action will then be put, to help us focus our missions strategising and initiatives over the next decade.

A] BACKGROUND: Missions in a Global World

The Christian Faith is the world's first intentionally global movement, as we can easily see from our two thousand year old Missionary/Discipling Mandate:

Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [Mt 28:18 – 20, NIV.]

This, Paul put in a more operational form in Ephesians, also giving a key link to the redeeming work of Christ and the blessing of Abraham in Galatians:

(. . . [Jesus] who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work

[Y]ou must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. You, however, did not come to know Christ that way . . . You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the

³ A rough parallel to Christian Missions, reportedly sponsored by the Saudis (supporting the Wahhaba interpretations of Islamic theology and mission) to the tune of US\$ 100 Billion over the past 20 years.

attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. [Eph 4:9 – 24]

Christ redeemed us . . . in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit . . . You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. [Gal 3:13 – 14, 26 – 29; cf. Ac 17:24 – 28 & Gen. chs 12 - 22.]

So, the gospel is to go to the whole world through the witness of the church. In each community/culture, it is to effect Spirit-led wholesome cultural transformation/reformation; starting with the discipling of those who commit themselves to Christ. Thus, across time and space, the gospel works to transform the world with Christ's fulness and blessing.

In the first several generations of the Christian era, the early Christians set out to do just this, in the teeth of misunderstanding, hostility and even persecution to the death. However, in time, even as the Christians in the Roman Empire attained a critical mass that brought that culture to a tipping point in the 300s, the increasing degree of accommodation and compromise led far too much to "romanising" and "hellenising" of the church, rather than genuine "christianising" of the empire.

So, when Islam emerged as the second intentionally global movement in the 620's, in part it was based on protest at the sins of the christianised, Eastern Roman [i.e. Byzantine] Empire. Unfortunately, the situation soon deteriorated through the jihad wars of 635 – 732, and the resulting counter-wars through the crusades that were initially modelled on the jihads. This led to more than a thousand years of as yet unfinished mutual hostility and aggression. Here, the classical Islamic global vision, shaped by the concept of *dar al islam/dar al harb*: lands of submission/lands of war -- coupled to the use of jihad wars as a means of reducing non-islamic lands to muslim rule -- set the stage for an underlying military tension that even now threatens the whole world. [Cf. *Barbados Declaration*, July 2003, for details.]

At the turn of the 1500s, Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama led the now long since christianised Europeans in breaking out by sea, pioneering global trade routes and patterns of Christian mission that have come to shape the past half-millennium. Unfortunately, the Christian message in the process was again too often entangled with commercial and colonialistic agendas, poisoning the atmosphere in which missions has had to operate ever after. (Equally, though, oppression and enslavement have long been universal plagues, and it is largely through the prophetic, liberating influence of the gospel that Western nations came to recognise the wrongs involved. In particular the dissenting Christians – such as Wilberforce and the Abolitionists in Britain and Liele, Baker, Burchell, Philippo, Knibb and Sharpe in Jamaica -- made a sterling and sometimes quite costly contribution to the emancipation and empowerment of the oppressed and enslaved peoples of the Caribbean.)

In parallel with these trends, and partly stimulated by them, the seventeenth century saw the rise of modern science to a dominant global force, and stimulated the enlightenment movement, which began the process of secularisation of the West and other areas across the world shaped by western influences. By the twentieth century, science and technology became the dominant forces in Western culture, and that century was marked by the ever broader and deeper secularisation of the formerly consciously Christian West.

As the third Christian millennium dawned, and with it an ever more global age dominated by information and communication technologies -- and roughly as Philip Jenkins summarises -- there are thus three major global movements contending for hearts and minds: the Christian Faith, Islam, and the secularised Western Culture.

B] Re-scoping our Missionary Philosophy and Agenda

The evolution of the three main global movements of the past several hundred years clearly explains why we see the peculiar pattern of mission and counter-mission highlighted above. This pattern in turn shapes how we should now pursue our missionary mandate in, and beyond the Caribbean. For, if it is to be even listened to in a global marketplace of ideas and world-agendas, the gospel must be: (1) winsomely presented, (2) intellectually credible, (3) personally and culturally relevant; and it must also (4) demonstrate its life- and community- transforming power on a consistent basis:

1. **Winsomeness:** Given the millennia-deep mutual hostility among the three Faiths that look to Abraham, the first challenge is to model “the truth in love,” so that there is a chance to break through the walls of suspicion, misunderstanding, misinformation and hostility that separate Jews, Christians and Muslims. Across time, this will lead to the global spreading of the blessing of Abraham through the redeeming work of the Seed of Abraham.
2. **Credibility:** Intellectually, the world is dominated by the post-/hyper- modern mood of Western Secularised thought. So, while there is a more open attitude to the possibility of the supernatural, those who stand in prophetic witness to truth or right [cf Ac 17:16 - 34] are immediately suspected of wishing to impose a narrow, intolerant agenda on the public in support of potentially violent so-called “fundamentalist” agendas. Consequently, the more welcome types of spiritual expression are neo- (or even paleo-) pagan, relativistic and welcoming of “diversity” – i.e. immoral, personally and socially destructive lifestyles. The inner inconsistencies (and even hypocrisies) of such post-/hyper- modern thinking need to be exposed,⁴ so that the evidence for the gospel can be heard on its own merits.
3. **Relevance:** From the beginning, the gospel mandate was about discipling nations, thus transforming lives, communities, institutions and cultures in light of the message, blessing and power of Christ. Thus, it is naturally relevant to core cultural issues, needs, pains, themes, experiences, activities, expressions and agendas. It is no surprise then, to see that it is when the first black missionaries came from Georgia in 1783, that a people movement towards the gospel was triggered in Jamaica, and that similarly, it was when Jamaican and other Caribbean missionaries began to go to west and central Africa from the 1840s on that similar vibrant movements were triggered there. Consequently, the current typical retreat of the evangelical church from core cultural issues faced by Caribbean peoples must be reversed. Also, we must appreciate the potential impact of missionaries who are “culturally close” but able to provide credible leadership to those they minister to – in our case, the peoples of the Caribbean are by and large descended from those of the 10/40 Window, the region that is currently perhaps the most resistant to the gospel and to church planting.
4. **Demonstration:** Most people are more moved by what they see working successfully than by what they hear about, especially when the message cuts across current views and expectations. This has long been implicit in the biblical focus on our being and bearing witness to the life-transforming power of Christ: (1) “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.” [Rev. 12:11.] and, (2) “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” [Ac 1:8.] In a mission context, this speaks to the need for us to consistently apply and demonstrate the relevance and power of the gospel in our own lives, institutions and communities, both here in the Caribbean and overseas. In particular, a cluster of strategic demonstration projects that show how the gospel transforms communities and provides sustainably successful answers to core cultural challenges would go a long way to enhancing the effectiveness of our ministry here and across the world.

⁴ For instance, how can one *know* that there is no objective – i.e. testable and knowable -- truth? Similarly, does not the demand that one not be “imposed upon” with traditional canons of morality not appeal to the underlying foundation-stone of traditional moral thought: the principle of fairness that finds classic expression in the Golden Rule of Lev 19:15 – 18 and Matt 7:12?

Taken together, these four factors naturally and logically lead to a *re-scoping of our missionary vision and philosophy*:

- Overseas missions are not a discrete, perhaps optional extra in the work of the church. Instead, the enduring mission of the church in the Caribbean entails both:
 - (1) Ongoing biblically faithful evangelism, discipleship and godly community transformation here in the Caribbean, and
 - (2) Missionary outreach from the region that builds on that demonstrable success; especially in those parts of the world for which we are well suited by cultural and ethnic proximity: the 10/40 Window and the wider 2/3rds world.
- Operationally, we start with our “Judea” and “Samaria” – reaching out to our Caribbean and diaspora neighbours who are religiously and spatially close, though perhaps alienated through a history of hostility and unresolved issues – but we must also look to “the ends of the earth.”
- In so doing, we should seek to plant works that engage core cultural challenges, leading to a consistent, easily observable agenda:
 - (1) Souls are saved by responding to Christ through the proclamation of the gospel and *repentance*,
 - (2) Lives, families and churches are *renewed, revived* and *transformed* through systematic, balanced, biblical discipleship in the power of the Spirit, and
 - (3) Communities and their institutions – soulless entities – are *reformed* as the influence and godly prophetic intellectual and cultural leadership of the church and the disciples gradually shapes the community’s collective life and its agenda.
- In a global world with at least three major contenders for the global mindset and agenda, we dare not neglect the intellectual challenges to the credibility of our Faith, neither here in the Caribbean nor globally. This requires that we study, assess and respond to: (a) post-/hyper- modern secularist thought, (b) neo-pagan trends, and (c) the Islamic Dawah; recognising valid concerns but also highlighting key fallacies that demonstrate the fundamental intellectual and spiritual failure of these systems, and calling for appropriate action in response to the truth and the right. For, in spiritual warfare, we are to “demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and . . . take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” [2 Cor. 10:5.]
- Similarly, as we listen to and then address local, regional and international issues, we must discern the underlying agendas, assumptions and worldviews that are the root of the persuasiveness of proposals for action. For, secularists, neo-pagans and islamists alike seek to promote their goals through exploiting current issues to advance and institutionalise their agendas.⁵
- Two key biblical themes, then, should drive our work on the enduring mission of the church in the Caribbean and in the ongoing development of missions from the church in the Caribbean. First, that in Christ, the Seed of Abraham, the blessing of Abraham is come to all nations [Gal 3:13 – 14, 26 – 29⁶]; and, second, that Jesus has come, descending and ascending in order to fill – thus transform and bless – all things [Eph 4:9 – 24]. Thus, we have a framework of blessing -- rather than oppressing -- the nations through Christ, and we see that the Christian message speaks into all aspects of life and culture, in all nations, as Christ works to fill, bless and transform all things.

⁵ E.g.: in the case of the gay advocates -- who typically are secularist and/or neo-pagan -- currently, they seek to redefine marriage and the family out of existence, through unelected courts and their judicial decisions. The islamists consistently seek to establish a legally and socially privileged, dominant status for Islam in the community. Secularists typically exploit dominant positions in the academy and the media to suppress alternative views and supporting evidence [Cf. Jn 3:19 – 21, Ac 17:16 - 34 and Rom 1:16 – 19], thus creating the false perception that their view of the world is the only sensible one, and so gain support for proposals and schemes that as a rule turn out to be personally and socially destructive.

⁶ Here, we note that the blessing of Abraham overwhelms the so-called “hamitic curse” on black peoples.

C] Towards a Caribbean Church Missions Geo-Strategy

The most effective way to think about the global strategic opportunity and challenges facing the Caribbean church is to think in terms of the “three triangles” below:

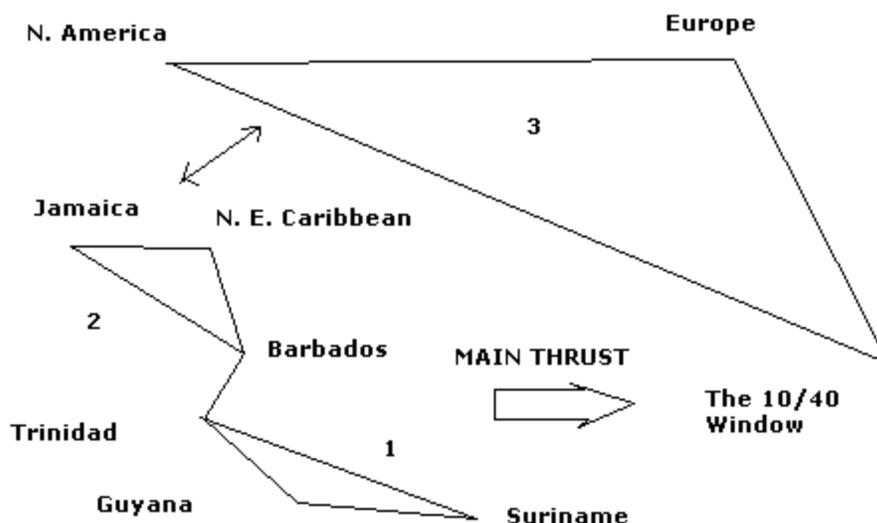


Fig. 1: The Three Triangles Framework and Strategy

1. The Caribbean naturally breaks into two main cultural triangles⁷: (1) The South-East, which has a relatively high proportion of ethnic Indians (and in Suriname, Javanese); (2) The Eastern and North-Western Caribbean, which is dominated by Afro-Caribbean peoples. This naturally supports missionary emphases on Asia and Indonesia on the one hand and Africa and the African and Caribbean Diaspora in the New World and Europe on the other.
2. However, since the peoples of the Caribbean inhabit the region that was first colonised by the Europeans, we also have a credibility in the North of the planet that native evangelicals do not. This means that in combination with the diaspora communities in the North, we are in a strong position to carry the gospel back to the lands that have become secularised and even re-paganised in the aftermath of the enlightenment era in Western Culture, as in effect it is “the one *really* good thing” we received from the West!
3. Against this backdrop, we must reckon with the current global clash of the three great world systems, in light of an adapted form of Philip Jenkins’ analysis in his *The New Christendom*: (1) Secularised, rapidly re-paganising Western Culture, (2) Militant Islam, (3) the Southern Christian Reformation that has been sweeping Latin America, Africa and Asia for over a Century now. That is, there is an opportunity for the Caribbean church to take its part in a global movement of the gospel.
4. Before we can begin to mobilise overseas missionary thrusts, however, we must reckon with the implications of the three-way global clash in our region. For, as the Cold war era faded into history with the end of the 1980's, a pause opened up in history as the world groped for a post-Cold War agenda. Unfortunately, despite significant opportunities to have prepared, the church in the Caribbean was in the main caught napping, and did not put forward a clear agenda for the region in the 21st

⁷ We could also analyse the importance of the numerically dominant [~ 3/5] Spanish-speaking subregion and the large francophone population in Haiti, but this is not currently relevant to our purposes, as Hispaniola and Puerto Rico more or less fit in with the pattern in triangle # 2. Cuba, which is ethnically similar to Latin America and has an afro-caribbean minority [~ 25%], is best thought of in Latin American terms. Across time, as the political situation there liberalises, it will fit in with Triangle # 2, due to cultural and historical affinities.

Century, one backed up with a cluster of demonstration projects that would lend it credibility in the regional marketplace of ideas, ideals and models for development. Into the resulting vacuum of vision and leadership, there rushed several agendas, from the secularised, post-modern, neo-pagan West, and also from the Islamic Dawah. Thus, awareness and apologetics have to come high on our agenda for action, towards mobilising a critical strategic mass of the church over the next decade.

5. To develop such a critical mass of aware, mobilised and organised people, a logical approach is to develop and implement one or more regional series of seminars, designed to promote awareness and vision, and to help pull together, organise and equip concerned Christian agencies, organisations, churches and individuals for onward action in the region and across the world. In particular, one such series is a touring regional seminar on *Islam, the Gospel and the Caribbean*, growing out of the *First Caribbean Conference on Islam, the Gospel and the Caribbean*, held in Barbados in July 2003. Thus, we would use such seminars to develop a regional **Missionary Vision and Action Network** [MVAN], centred around local **Missionary Vision and Action Teams** in the various communities/territories [MVATs].
6. These MVATs would then be linked to Missions Agencies, Seminaries, churches and support groups that would promote local action in support of projects designed to foster the ongoing mission of the church in the region, and missions from the church in the region. In each community, one or more Christian enterprises, such as a bookstore, would serve as a local “**one stop missions shop**” through having a missions representative who has up to date information, promotional materials, contacts and links to the local MVAT and the broader MVAN.
7. One particular initiative would be a regional project to create and develop the MVAN network, fostering an identified cluster of key regional and international missions-related projects that focus on core cultural challenges as a gateway for relevance and effectiveness of the gospel. For the moment, this is the George Liele Initiative [GLI], named after a key early missionary to the Caribbean, and out of whose work the first regional missionaries went to Africa five years after “full free” in 1838.
8. Thus, after initial organisation and development over the next several years, over the remainder of the decade to 2014, a programme of missions initiatives would be undertaken towards deploying a well-supported missions force across the 10/40 window and secondarily, in the lands of the North; in parallel with renewal of the church in the region through a more relevant and informed approach to ministry. We will also need to focus on a well thought through regional and global intellectual and cultural response to other global agendas, most notably the Islamist and the post-modern secularist-neopagan..

AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION: 2004 – 2014

The above notes develop a rationale and outline programme of action for missions in and from the Caribbean over the period to 2014, with a development period over the next few years. However, for such to become reality, it has to be seriously thought through and carried out on a sustained, sacrificial basis by individuals, groups and organisations in the developing regional Missionary Vision and Action Network.

Read Esther Chs 3 – 4, esp. 4:12 – 16, and prayerfully consider and discuss the following:

1. Why is it that the church in the Caribbean, generally speaking, tends to think of the region as more of a “missions field becoming a national church” than as a region that was one of the first to be evangelised in modern times, and one that in turn has fielded missionaries in its own right, starting in the 1840s?
2. Is it a fair summary to state that there is now a global marketplace of ideas and agendas for the future, specifically the secularist-neopagan west, the Islamists based in the Middle East and the rising Southern Christian reformation? Why/why not?
3. How can the Caribbean church set about systematically identifying and assessing such worldview alternatives and agendas, and how should we respond regionally and globally?
4. Is the systematic mobilising of a critical mass of Caribbean Christians through awareness and action initiatives under a broad understanding of the mission of the church the best way to respond to the rising influences of the Islamists, secularists, neo-pagans and other similar movements in our region? What alternatives might be better, why? Is there a “both-and” at work?
5. The paper discusses the broader need to focus on the enduring mission of the church in and from the Caribbean, as a context in which both local and international action can be mobilised. In so doing, it stresses select strategic demonstration projects that respond to key challenges to the credibility of the Faith and show that the gospel works in practice by scratching where our cultures itch. Is there a better alternative? Why/why not?
6. Is it reasonable to think that the suggested biblically rooted, reformation focus that emphasises liberation, empowerment and godly cultural transformation resolves the irrelevance/cultural captivity challenge highlighted by several incidents in the church’s history?
7. Are the NT references to the Great Commission [Mt 28:18 – 20], the Fulness theme [Eph 4:9 – 24] and the Abrahamic blessing to all nations through the seed of Abraham [Gal 3:13 – 29] appropriate texts to use in addressing the Islamic and secularist-neopagan challenges and missions opportunities we face?
8. In light of such texts, and the question of relevance to core cultural issues as a basis for effective ministry, should we be concerned to consistently engage local, national, regional and international issues? If so, why? If not, what alternatives are better, and why so?
9. Is the sketched out triangles strategy feasible and desirable as a means to engage the regional and global missions challenges and opportunities facing the Caribbean church? If not, what would be a better alternative, why?
10. Who in your community are prepared and/or can be prepared to make the commitment, effort and ongoing sacrifices required to make such a vision work: (1) locally, (2) regionally, (3) in the Caribbean diaspora and (4) in the 10/40 window?
11. In light of these factors, can a cluster of present or potential projects for action over the next one to three years be developed in your own community or country? Should this be organised on the suggested basis of a MVAT and “one-stop missions shop” accessible to the community, and also linked to the regional MVAN in the context of the GLI and other Missions-related initiatives? Why/why not?
12. Should the efforts and projects over the next several years include Islamic and secularist agenda awareness and response seminars? The creation of a missions awareness and action group tied to the GLI initiative? Onward local, regional and international projects under the mission of the church? Why/why not?
13. Finally, let us reflect on the Mordecai challenge: “If not now, when? If not here, where? If not us, who?”

-END-