

## OPTIONS FOR TRAINING PASTORS WHEN THE CHURCH DOES NOT HAVE A BIBLE COLLEGE

Many missionary organizations, Global Partners of the Wesleyan church included, believe that a better way of evangelizing a mission field is to identify, train and equip nationals to do the work of evangelizing their own people and the reasoning for this is quite obvious.

They know the people and speak their language; they are familiar with the food, the culture and the traditions of the people. They are most likely to understand the social dynamics that are at work within the community. They can adapt quickly to changing situations that may overwhelm someone else and these are some of the reasons that informed our decision to train and prepare qualified people for ministry.

### **The Ghana Experience:**

When we started evangelizing and planting churches in Ghana, it became quite obvious that we did not have the trained leadership to shepherd the new flocks. We could not even put some of our older members in charge of these churches because they were all first generation Wesleyans who themselves needed to be taught the doctrines of their new tradition. Even the first pastors that were engaged were all from different denominations and had to learn the discipline and history of the Wesleyan church. The need for a Bible College or some formalized training program was something desired by all.

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cost factor can be a major challenge and for a new and fledging work the feeling of helplessness can be overwhelming. These were some of the realities that confronted us and for which we needed to find solutions. We needed to come up with innovative ways of addressing the issue and so we started consulting with the Africa Area Office and our friends in the Central Canada District. Fortunately for us, we have a Ghana Partnership Team that meets annually to address issues of ministry so we brought our concerns before them.

### **The Six-Pack Training:**

What we needed to do was to train more people in the shortest possible time to the level of district license holders and send them out to man the new churches. It was decided therefore to teach six basic courses which were recommended by the Africa Area Office. The six-pack consisted of Old and New Testament, Basic Christian Belief, The Discipline and the

Role of the Pastor, The Doctrine of Holiness and Bible Study Methods.

At the time Ghana did not have the personnel qualified to teach this program so it was arranged for facilitators to come from North America to help us, this way we were able to train many people for the work.

As good as the six-pack program is, it can only produce district license holders but the church also needed to train people to be ordained. Without our own Bible College, we had to look around for schools that met the academic requirement demanded by the Wesleyan Church. In Ghana there are several colleges that come highly recommended and fully accredited by the proper authorities. So far we have trained four pastors who have graduated with B.Th degrees while two others are candidates for Master of Theology degrees. As the church grows numerically, a proportional growth in trained leadership is expected. If the church

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fails to prepare adequately in anticipation of the expected growth then a situation develops where there are several churches without pastors. This situation of having more churches than we have pastors is a serious challenge and a disincentive for evangelism.

Another way of addressing the training of pastors is that our zonal leaders are charged with the responsibility of bringing all their pastors together at least quarterly for the purpose of helping them with sermon preparation on the Wesleyan position on a topical social issue. They also discuss issues regarding their welfare and that of their churches. Both the Ghana North and South District superintendents are mandated to

supervise their zones to ensure compliance with this all-important exercise.

#### **Future Plans:**

In the past we have used instructors from outside Ghana to teach the six-pack courses, and though it has been helpful the expense has been prohibitive. This has not allowed us to organize sessions at regular intervals. To address this issue of cost, we compelled our leadership to put in place a program where some of our seminary graduates are going to teach the courses. This was part of our initial plan to have a couple of our men practice teaching alongside our facilitators. By the middle of 2015, the first group of students from the Ghana South district is going to start the six-pack course. Our hope and prayer is that this process will eventually lead to the establishment of a permanent Bible College in the not too distant future.

#### **Challenges:**

The fact that there have been successes with our training program cannot be denied. The pastors who came to teach have all become supporters of Ghana in one way or the other. Friendships have developed between our visitors and our people to our mutual benefit.

Our biggest challenge however has been raising enough funds to cover the cost. The pastors from North America who volunteered to teach in Ghana had to raise money on their own to cover not only their own travel expense but also to help us with the organizing and hosting of our students. We have also considered whether the whole process was cost effective. The thousands of dollars spent in travel cost alone for one trip could be used to offset the cost of running the program for a whole year locally.

At the time when Ghana did not have the qualified personnel to teach the program, the justification in bringing people from elsewhere existed. Now that situation is reversed, we have

the opportunity to think of new ways of accomplishing our training objectives.

Language is also another obstacle in effective teaching and learning. At the level of the six-pack program some of our students are not high school graduates and therefore their comprehension of the English language is limited. It becomes a real challenge sometimes when explaining some points to them. Hopefully teachers who speak the local language will be better equipped to overcome this situation.

Also the pastors from North America have limited time when they travel here. The maximum period most have stayed has been two weeks. We have therefore had to do the program in less time than may be needed. This situation would be solved when teachers are not under pressure to finish the six courses in a week.

#### **Burkina Faso:**

In September of 2014, three young missionaries from Haiti came on a short-term trip to Burkina Faso. Due to the fact that both countries are French speaking, we tasked the missionaries to



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teach the six-pack program. They did it over a period of about six weeks and that was reported to have gone very well with both students and teachers.

We believe that stretching the course period to three to four weeks will be very beneficial to everyone involved. We will also keep evaluating until we find the best schedule for the program.

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#### **Conclusion:**

Ghana has been blessed to have partners and supporters who have stood with us in our search for a lasting solution to train our pastors. As we look forward into the future, we are happy to report that a missionary family has been assigned to Ghana and we anticipate that we will be able to plan with them to address the training challenge in Ghana and Burkina Faso. In the absence of a Bible College, I believe that Ghana has improvised quite well to meet the challenge with the hope of working towards finding a permanent solution in the near future.

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# COLLEGE ON WHEELS – A MOZAMBIKAN CASE STUDY

## **Brief History:**

In the early nineties (1994) the Mozambican church leaders had a vision to take the gospel of Jesus from the south to the northern provinces of Mozambique. This is in line with the great commission where Jesus said to His disciples: “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...” Mt. 28:19-20. To accomplish the vision, the national leaders with the help of Wesleyan World Missions department established the Xai-Xai Wesleyan Bible College in 2002. This has the main goal of training and equipping men and women called by God for His ministry, that is, to cover all the Mozambique territory as well as to take the gospel of Jesus across the borders. The College has trained over 170 pastors and most of them are in leadership positions in their respective Districts. Some of them are serving on the National Board of Administration.

## **College on Wheels:**

The Wesleyan Church in Mozambique is growing beyond our imagination. As an example, the church in Zambezia was founded in 1994 and two years back the church has grown to 75 local congregations. It is also a missionary sending center. This District has sent missionaries to Nampula, Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces. The Church in Nampula is 10 years old but the statistics tell that two years back it had planted 55 Churches (This includes Cabo Delgado and Niassa Provinces). We had 40 Churches in Nampula. In total we had 115 Churches in Nampula and Zambezia districts with only 30 trained pastors. It is against this background that College on Wheels was born. College on Wheels (COW) is meant to help meet the demand of the national church. Through this project, Xai-Xai Wesleyan Bible College will maximize its

resources and potential and hopefully give quality to the lay pastors in these Districts primarily then extending to other Districts.

Note: College on Wheels is a term that is borrowed from Emmanuel Wesleyan Bible College in Swaziland. When I was student at EWBC the professors used to travel to Mozambique to train lay pastors. Our National Superintendent is one of those who benefited from this teaching program.

## **COW Objectives:**

College On Wheels (COW) is designed to:

- Take the college to “where the people are”, and thereby make its presence and contribution felt.
- Reach out to people called to serve God in their respective Districts.
- Minimize the costs of residence training being offered at the moment at Xai-Xai Wesleyan Bible College.
- Minimize the deficit and issues of untrained ministers being felt.
- Utilize this opportunity to train as many students as possible in a short period of time.
- Follow the trail of revivals and church planting and thereby training and making disciples capable of responding to the challenges that the church, nation and the world at large are facing.

## **Initial Targets:**

**Nampula** (excluding Cabo Delgado and Niassa) has 40 Wesleyan Churches within its borders. It has only six (6) trained pastors who were trained at XXWBC including Abel Nove the Nampula DS, and twenty-three (23) lay pastors and most of them will not have an opportunity to study at

XXWBC because of other demands beyond their control. The remaining 11 churches were newly planted churches and they had no pastors. We expect to train thirty-five (35) in Nampula alone (these figures are from 2012).

**Zambezia** has been the mother of our missions outreach center more especially to all the northern provinces in Mozambique. Two years back it had planted 75 churches and managed to train just over 25 students. This is to say that we have more or less than fifty (50) untrained lay pastors who are willing to be trained but it has proved to be difficult due to other family responsibilities.

“...The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” - Mat. 9:37, 38. These words of our Lord Jesus to His disciples are being fulfilled in Mozambique particularly in Zambezia and Nampula provinces. People are ready to receive the Word of God. Through various programs of evangelism many are receiving Jesus as their Saviour. The Jesus Film Project is playing a major role in bringing people to Jesus. Note that we have 6 teams: two in the south and 4 in the northern provinces of Mozambique. This is the reason for choosing these two districts they are experiencing fast growth. Thus, there is an urgent need to train pastors to take care of the newly planted churches. We are concerned about untrained pastors as they can teach anything, including heresy and false doctrine. In fact, it happened in one of these districts (Nampula) a local untrained pastor used to teach Watch Tower’s material in Sunday School. The Scriptures tell us to teach sound doctrine (Tit.2:1). We want our members to know sound doctrine – The Wesleyan doctrine. We want them to live transformed lives through knowing salvation and holiness by living it out.

**COW Implementation:**

The local pastors and district superintendents will recruit the students.

Twenty-four (24) courses will be taught through College on Wheels under the auspices of Xai-Xai Wesleyan Bible College.

The mode of delivery: Modular (2 weeks intensive courses – 3 hrs. per day and per course – 30 hours in total). 2 courses will be delivered in 2 weeks.

In order to minimize transportation costs, the teacher will sacrifice a month out of home. He will spend 2 weeks in Nampula and the other 2 weeks in Zambezia.

TEE and other useful materials will be used in the process

Human resources: Teachers will be sent from Xai-Xai Wesleyan Bible College on 3 different occasions yearly. However, we are open to receiving other partners to team up with us at any given time.

Seventy (70) students are ready to start as from March the 3rd this year (40 students in Zambezia and at least 30 students in Nampula).

Materials for teaching available: We have minimum materials for teaching at our disposal at the moment. These are teachers’ notes.

**Project Costs:**

|                    | Description                    | Costs          |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Lecturers          | Lodging, Food and Allowance    | \$1,500        |
| Lecturers          | Transportation                 | \$500          |
| Student costs      | Food & Accommodation           | \$2,000        |
| Teaching materials | Prepared notes and photocopies | \$2,000        |
|                    | Total per course               | <b>\$6,000</b> |

3 Trips per year in Northern Provinces = \$18,000

**Budget Narrative:**

This suggested budget covers the expenditures for two places which we have designated as our

target as from this year going through 2018. This training is divided into 3 parts that will culminate in three graduations. We look to graduate more than 140 students in 5 yrs.

It takes \$1,850.00 to train one student from Nampula each year at XXWBC and with College on Wheels (COW) it will take \$18,000 to train 70 students per year. This \$18,000 only covers tuition fee for approximately 10 students at XXWBC per year.

Additional Financial requirements (internal supply)

- Each student will be required to pay 100.00Mt.
- The hosts (districts) will also aid with food stuffs.



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### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion we thank the Lord for answering prayer. As for now we have the funds to launch the COW project. We would like to appreciate all the donors and our prayer partners. It is clear that College on Wheels will answer the demands of the Wesleyan Church, once the project is fully implemented. It has the potential within a short period of time to train more than 140 lay ministers and those called to serve God. It has become clear that it has the capacity to minimize costs and also train students within the harvest field parameters without leaving any holes in the local church. We ask you to continue praying for the COW project so that we together will continue to see lives being transformed in Mozambique and beyond the borders.

## **DEALING WITH CRITICISM**

Young leaders are often surprised when they first encounter criticism, but the reality is that criticism is inevitable - for great leaders as well as for poor ones. Even when we know that criticism is to be expected, we are often surprised by the source, focus, and/or intensity of the criticism that comes our way.

Criticism hurts - even when it is deserved. Our natural tendency when criticized is first to defend ourselves and then look for an opportunity to attack back. However, when we as leaders do what comes natural, more often than not it makes things worse rather than better. An important skill for us to develop is the ability to control our instinctive reactions and

respond to criticism constructively. Here are a few suggestions.

### **1. Take time to think and pray about it before responding.**

Although the Bible tells us we shouldn't let the sun go down on our wrath (Eph.4:26), when responding to criticism it is usually best to avoid responding to criticism immediately if possible. This helps us avoid the instinctive responses of defensiveness and counter-attack.

### **2. Look for the truth in the criticism.**

Frequently when we are criticized, the critics don't have the whole picture and may even have false information. While we will want to correct

any misunderstandings that underlie the criticism, it is also very important that we acknowledge and take responsibility for any failures on our part that contribute to the criticism. An apology on our part for anything we've done or said, even if it's a small thing in the bigger picture, goes a long way to defusing the situation and turning a critic into an ally.

**3. Seek to understand the main concern behind the criticism.**

In order to "strengthen" their criticism, critics will often raise multiple issues and complaints. To deal with the criticism constructively, one needs to work to discern the real reason behind the critic's unhappiness. If that concern can be effectively addressed, the remaining complaints usually will simply disappear. This calls for both a spirit of discernment as well as investigation, since the real concern may not be what it seems to be on the surface.

**4. Be careful about judging the motives behind criticism.**

Some of the most painful criticism we hear as leaders is when people attribute evil motives to us which are far from the truth. When criticized it seems easy for us to assume that the critics have bad reasons for attacking us - doing the same thing to them that they did to us when

they questioned our motives. It takes deliberate effort to withhold judgment and assume the best of our critics. They may very well be expressing concerns that come from a sincere desire to see what is best accomplished.

**5. Remember the "golden rule" when criticizing others.**

Leaders who know the pain of dealing with criticism should be extra careful when criticizing others, whether those over them or those under them. The golden rule of criticism should be, "Criticize others as you would want others to criticize you." Leaders who are known to be harsh and hurtful when correcting others should not be surprised when others criticize them in like manner.

**6. Don't allow criticism to cause you to lose focus.**

Keep your eyes on the mission and refuse to get bogged down trying endlessly to appease every critic. Romans 12:18 tells us that we should do all we can to live at peace with everyone, but the passage implies that it's not always possible, and in those cases we need to just move on with the mission at hand. When we lose focus the critics have won!



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