**(Please note: slides are currently numbered to match the Message Power Point that goes with this sermon from Murray Cornelius. If you add your own stories and are including a slide, please re-number the slides accordingly)**

**100 POINTS OF LIGHT - MESSAGE**

**WORKERS TOGETHER WITH GOD**

By Murray Cornelius

**(Slides 1 and 2)**

**Text: (Slides 3 and 4)**

**1 Corinthians 3: 5-9, NIV**

**“What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So, neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God’s field, God's building.”**

**Introduction:** **(Slide 5)**

In Zimbabwe there is a simple expression for working together: ***chabadza.***A *badza* is a garden hoe. When a person goes out to their field to plant seeds, water the crops or harvest their produce, they take more than one badza. They place the extra ones on the ground beside them while they work. When a neighbour passes by, they are expected to pick up the badza and work alongside their friend. No one should work alone. This is a great illustration of mission work. God is in His field. He is planting seeds, watering and harvesting lives for an eternal reward, and *He invites us to come alongside Him and work with Him*. *We are expected to pick up our badza and serve him in our generation. We must align our work with His work; when we do, we can rejoice in the planting, the watering, and the harvesting.*

* Find out what God is doing and do it.
* Find out what God is saying and say it.
* Find out where God is going and go there.
* Find out who God loves and love them.
* Find out what breaks the heart of God and let that break your heart.

This is good news for us for two important reasons.

First, it means that God is always at work before we get there. Before you visit your neighbour, God is there. Before you go to your workplace, God is there. He is working in your family, in the hearts of your neighbours, and in your work colleagues. And He invites us to work with Him. Long before we arrive in some distant land to bring good news, God has gone before us.

Second, it is good news because it assures us that our work will result in a great harvest. We will not labour in vain even if the work seems difficult and the ground hard. While we may not reap the harvest because we are called to plant seeds, God will ensure that the field, His field, where we have worked, is going to reap a harvest in due season.

*It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view.

The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying
that the kingdom always lies beyond us.
No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.

This is what we are about.
We plant the seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted,
knowing that they hold future promise.

We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation
in realizing that. This enables us to do something,
and to do it very well. It may be incomplete,
but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest.

We may never see the end results, but that is the difference
between the master builder and the worker.

We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.
Amen.*

Archbishop Oscar Romero

**The Principle of Alignment: (Slide 6)**

In writing to the church in Corinth, Paul reminds us that our mission ***must be aligned to God’s mission***. God told the church in Antioch to set apart Paul and Barnabas for “**the work to which [he had] called them”** (Acts 13:2). The work was **first God’s work** and **then Paul’s work.** Human tendency is to pray for great “outcomes” as we do our work and focus on the things we want accomplished. However, when Jesus prayed, His mind was focused on “alignment” to God’s work: *Not what I will, but what You will*. Alignment calls us to surrender our ambitions, dreams, plans and strategies to what God is doing, in contrast to what we think God should do and what we want to do.

**Insert Transformation Story of God at Work**

**100 Years of Faithful Witness:**

Our Fellowship, The PAOC, is entering its 100th year. We were officially founded in 1919. The primary motivating reason for the founding of our Fellowship, among others, was the desire to collaborate for the purpose of mission—to work together to send men and women to the ends of the earth in obedience to Jesus’ last command to His disciples. His last command has been our first priority! To be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.

**Acts 1:8, NIV**

**“But 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**.”

J. Roswell Flower, first editor of *The Pentecostal Evangel*, noted: **(Slide 7)**

*“When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, the missionary spirit comes in with it; they are inseparable, as the missionary spirit is but one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Carrying the gospel to hungry souls in this and other lands is but a natural result of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit.”*[[1]](#footnote-1)

**(Slide 8)**

* Our movement, the Pentecostal movement, has been marked by people with a passion and love for those who have never heard the good news.
* A deep-seated missionary impulse from the Holy Spirit has been the mark of our Fellowship.
* Pentecostalism and mission belong together and you cannot understand the DNA and history of our Fellowship without understanding its missionary vision and work.

**(Slide 9)**

We must take a moment to thank God for the incredible expansion of the good news and to honour those who aligned themselves to God’s mission. Canadian Pentecostals were early and enthusiastic adopters of His call, obeying His command to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. As early as 1908, 11 years before The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) became a Fellowship of affiliated self-governing churches, two families and one single lady left Toronto for the mission field: Charles and Emma Chawner to South Africa, Arthur and Jessie Atter to China, and Barbara Johnston to India. These pioneers were soon followed by workers to Liberia (1908), Egypt and India (1911), Argentina (1913), Tanganyika (1914), and Kenya and the West Indies (1918). Over the next 108 years, more than 3,000 full-time Canadian Pentecostals have served as messengers of the gospel in more than 80 countries.

Today we are 340 global workers serving in 75 countries.

***The missionaries from the floating box.* (Slide 10)**

*In 1908, on Christmas Day, a young African man named Jasper Toe stood on the beach at Garraway Bay, Liberia, looking out at the mighty Atlantic Ocean. He had walked seven days from his inland village to get there. Back in his home village, Jasper would stand outside his hut and look at the stars and think,* There must be a creator; how can I know him? *One night, as Jasper looked at the sky, he cried out, “If there is a Creator God, help me find You.” God responded and gave clear direction to go to Garraway Beach, where he would see a big box on the water with smoke coming out of it. “Out of the big box, a little box will bring people who will tell you who I am.” God had already prepared the answer to Jasper’s prayer. John and Jessie Perkins, Methodist missionaries, attended a Pentecostal meeting in Toronto, Canada, and were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Returning to Liberia, sent by their new Pentecostal family and accompanied by others called to mission, the group spent time in prayer seeking God’s guidance. John Perkins felt they should disembark at the coastal town of Garraway. The captain argued that disembarking there was too dangerous. However, the Holy Spirit’s direction to John was urgent:* You must get off the ship here. This is where I want you to go. *Finally, the captain relented. The large ship could not get close to shore, so he put the missionaries and all their belongings in a small boat and sent them ashore. On Christmas Day 1908, Jasper waited to greet them with great joy. Jasper led them back to his village, where the missionaries learned his language and shared the gospel. Jasper was their first convert and later became the first general superintendent of the Liberia Assemblies of God.* **(Slide 11)** *In 2008, the Liberia Assemblies of God celebrated their 100th anniversary. They date the founding of their church to the day Jasper Toe waited on Garraway Beach to welcome missionaries from the floating box.*[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Impact Report:**

The greatest gift we can give to the world is the gospel. Nothing can transform for good with greater impact than the good news about Jesus Christ. When people find their way back to God through Jesus Christ, it changes everything. The destiny of families and communities and sometimes entire nations are transformed by the good news we have. If you want to bring real transformation, you must first begin with the human heart.

Change a life, change a family

Change a family, change a community

Change a community, change a nation.

* ***Together with God,*** we have witnessed God at work **(Slide 12)**
	+ Over 50,000 churches planted.
	+ Over 40,000 workers trained and released into the harvest field.
	+ More than 12 million people have decided to follow Jesus.
	+ For the PAOC, the mission of God has always been a central focus and a priority that has shaped the agenda of our international engagement.

**(Slide 13)**

**Colossians 1:6, NIV**

* **“All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God’s grace in all its truth.”**

**(Slide 14)**

* We are currently engaged significantly in 20 international/urban church plants and have planted over 100 Great Commission churches in urban centres around the world.
* We partner with four universities and 51 pastoral training centres with over 12,500 students and thousands of extension program students.
* PAOC was instrumental in the founding of 27 of these partner training centres.

**(Slide 15)**

* 8,000+ sponsored children.
* Many ministries to vulnerable and orphaned children.
* Engaged significantly in disaster relief and food security in places such as Bangladesh, Somalia, South Sudan and Zimbabwe.
* We have responded to disasters such as the earthquakes in Haiti and Nepal.
* We have also responded to hurricanes and cyclones in the Philippines and the Caribbean.

**(Slide 16)**

**3.1 billion**

However, we must not be satisfied!

According to the Joshua Project, 3.1 billion men, women and children are part of people groups where there is little or no access to the gospel. They are living in nations where less than 2% of the population are followers of Christ. And many live among people groups where there is not one believer in a population of 100,000. You can shake the hands of 100,000 people and not meet a single follower of Christ. **(Slide 17)**

God pursues all people—every language group, every tribe, and every nation—with His love. This is not just a doctrine. It is the mission of a very personal God who “so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16, NIV).

As Pentecostals, we fully expect demonstrations of God’s supernatural power to accompany the proclamation of the gospel and our expressions of love in action. Miraculous answers to prayer, divine protection, healing of the sick, deliverance, the resolution of difficult circumstances, the opening of closed doors, and financial provision fill the testimonies of missionaries, national leaders, and millions of redeemed people. The distinct hand of God in every situation is our heritage.

***Insert Stories of God at work through your ministry.***

***Illustrate how God brings the lost to faith.***

**(Slide 18)**

**John 4:34-35, NIV**

**“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more and *then* the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.”**

**Four slides of the harvest. (Slides 19, 20, 21, 22, 23)**

We often think in our minds that everything looks ready and easy. But Mission work is often hard.

Some need to break up the hard ground and plant the seed.

When Jesus said four more months, the ground probably looked completely barren and dry. Our fields of work can look rocky and hard. But God is at work and God can make things grow.

The barren and hard ground must not discourage us.

**(Slide 24)**

**Romans 10: 14-15, NIV**

**How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”**

**(Slide 25)**

**Call - 100 Points of Light**

This is our corporate prayer. That God will raise up 100 new workers to send in the next five years.

That we will serve the Lord in our generation and that the next chapter of our Fellowship will be shaped by a sending DNA.

We need people from every walk of life to consider aligning their lives with God’s call to take the gospel to the 3.1 billion people who have not heard it.

We need pastors.

We need professionals.

We need entrepreneurs, teachers, and tradespersons.

We need people willing to surrender their will to God’s will and go where God is at work.

**Billy Graham (Slide 26)

“I believe that one of the next great moves of God is going to be through believers in the workplace.”**

**Leslie Newbigin (Slide 27)

“The primary action of the church in the world is the action of its members in their daily work.”**

**Luke 10:2-3, NIV (Slide 28)**

 **“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”**

**Conclusion:**

**(Slide 29)**

**Matthew 7:12, NIV**

**For in everything, do to others as you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.**

* This concludes the section on “righteousness” in the Sermon on the Mount.
* In Luke the additional encouragement to “love your enemies” is included.
* Jesus is speaking about the “greater righteousness” required from His disciples.
* It is an expression of the life we are to live in the age of salvation.

This teaching is most often adjusted and stated from the angle of “avoidance”:

**“Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you.”**

The idea is to discourage revenge—to avoid having a bad experience—to address the fear that if you hurt someone they are going to come back and hurt you.

* Do not slap someone if you do want to be slapped.
* Do not steal if you do not want to be stolen from.

But this approach is easy. You can simply decide, “I am just going to mind my own business. I am not going to bother anyone, and that way, no one has cause to bother me.

Sometimes the teaching is written in “revenge” form:

**Do to others what they have done to you.**

* “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.”
* If someone has hurt you, make sure you get them back. Make sure that you take your revenge.
* Never let anyone get away with abusing you.
* You show them how tough you are.
* This has led to much of the fighting that we have experienced in the world today.

And sometimes the teaching is adopted in its “pre-emptive” form:

**Do to others before they do to you!**

But that is not what Jesus says!!! He says,

**Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.**

* We are to care for those who have no one else to care for them.
* If you were an orphan who had lost their parents to HIV/AIDS, how would you like to be treated? Would you like to be left in the streets of some of the overcrowded and dirty megacities of this world?
* If you were a child in one of the poor countries of the world today, would you like your need for education to be ignored?
* If you were born into one of those people groups and were part of the 3.1 billion who have never heard the gospel, would you not want those who know it to make every effort to bring that good news to you and your family?
* If you were on your way to an eternity without Christ, would you like it if no one told you the good news of Jesus?
* If you needed hope, would you be happy if no one gave you any, even if they had something offer?

**DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE THEM DO UNTO YOU**

**What can we do?**

Pray

Give

Go

 To our neighbours

 To the world

**What is God asking YOU to do? (Slide 30)**

**(Slide 31)**

1. J. Roswell Flower (untitled editorial), *The Pentecost,* August 1908, 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Joyce Booze, “Miracle on Christmas Day,” *Out of Church Tales*, November 14, 2015, Information taken from sources in Assemblies of God World Missions archives. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)