

Gustavus Adolphus College

African Christianity:
Helping or Hindering Basic Human Needs?

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Abstract

This paper identifies two models of Christian development present in East Africa. The first one is labeled the “service first model,” which approaches extreme poverty in East Africa as a crisis, and directly attempts to alleviate poverty through direct action on the problems. The second approach is labeled the “born again model,” where the main crisis in East Africa is seen as a lack of people having personal relationships with Jesus Christ. This model teaches that through belief in Jesus Christ one may come out of poverty. The foundations for these two models are laid out and compared by means of studying the scripture they use, how they view the crisis, and their relationship with people. With the foundations laid out in this paper, a case study is proposed for work in East Africa to analyze the most effective approach to sustainable poverty alleviation in East Africa.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I have spent the last three years living in Sub-Saharan Africa, or at least in spirit. I have traveled and lived in Zambia for one month, and in Uganda for four months and then again a year later for one month. I have fallen in love with the people, the children, the culture, and the seeming peace amidst the perpetual poverty. I have been most drawn in by how people are often on the verge of death due to hunger, disease, malnutrition or HIV, and yet some are so full of life, love, and somehow so rich.

The Crisis

East Africa can certainly be called a 'crisis area' of the world, due to a number of reasons. The average wage for someone living in this area is a dollar a day,¹ which is misleading because the majority of wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few elites, who are often corrupt. The largest cause of death is pregnancy,² which is more often a result of unhealthy and undernourished mothers giving birth while not having the resources to afford proper medical care. Over half of East Africans live in hunger, hunger that is persistent and lacking the nutrients to live a healthy life.³ A large part of the population in East African is orphans, children who have lost parents because of AIDS, hunger, disease or war. These children already live in areas of crisis and with the loss of their parents they live in exacerbated crisis. In an area where food is scarce and disease is prevalent, children are often forced to work to provide basic needs. Children with parents often cannot afford school, so a child with no parents to help with income

¹United Nations Human Development Index, Human Development Report, 2004
http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/pdf/hdr04_HDI.pdf Sub-Saharan Africa Statistics: Life Expectancy: 46 years, Adult Literacy Rate: 63%, Percent of children in primary or secondary school: 44%.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

rarely is privileged with school. This creates a society where few people have had basic education, let alone have completed high school, or beyond. Children instead are often forced to care for younger brothers and sisters and work in fields. This agricultural labor especially harms the children because they often do not have enough food to sustain even a non-active body. The common East African lives in a constant struggle just to maintain one's life, which is usually ended before the age of 50.⁴ The impact this has on the area is complex and affects most everything in some way. Compared to the life the common westerner knows, this situation is certainly a crisis. The international community should also view this as a world crisis. Because of the greater emphasis on globalization, the plight in Africa affects the entire world in some way, whether it is known or not. For this paper the 'crisis' in East Africa will be the extreme poverty that creates the described effects.

Justification of Research- Zambia

During my first experience in Zambia, I was amazed with one of my friends, Margaret.⁵ She was caring for 28 orphans, all living in her small mud house; her husband had cheated on her, given her AIDS, and then left her to care for the children without a steady income. Yet, Margaret would sing while cooking the small bits of food she could find "Lord, stir, stir, stir my burr-deens away." Every morning she greeted me, sharing her food, and praying with me, thanking God for her friends from America who brought her so much hope. Margaret would talk to me for hours while we prepared meals together, sharing how much God had given her. Through the month I stayed with Margaret she would take me to various church groups she attended, each one meeting in a

⁴ Human Development Index. Life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa is 46.

⁵ Story of Margaret is from the author's trip to Kaoma, Zambia, June 2002.

dilapidated church, under a mango tree, or in someone's kitchen. Each group was filled with an unbelievable amount of hope, love, and joy. At the end of each gathering the members would all return to face a life where maybe their child was dying of hunger, a brother was dying of malaria, and another daughter was selling herself on the street to pay for school fees. I returned from Africa amazed and enthralled with what Christianity had done for these people who lived in what America would equate to be horrendous conditions. I was captivated with how Christianity could provide so much hope and sustenance in one's life, and I wanted to learn more about the role Christianity could provide in the majority world.⁶

Justification of Research- Uganda

A year later I returned to Africa, this time to Uganda, where the poverty level was similar to Zambia.⁷ The average life expectancy in Zambia is 32, where it is 37 in Uganda, and in Zambia a child born has a fifty percent chance of dying of AIDS before his or her fifth birthday.⁸ I expected to see the same type of sustenance through Christianity as I had seen in Margaret for the one month I lived with her in Zambia. This time, living and traveling in Uganda for four months, I saw a very different and dominant form of Christianity than that which I had seen in the one village in Zambia.

In the capital city of Kampala, people would literally stand on a box crate on the corner of the street, a Bible in hand, preaching to walkers. They would yell about the wrath of God, and how God had the power to protect or destroy you, and people were to

⁶ In this paper the terms "developing nation" and "developed nation" will not be used. This implies that Western nations are at the point that the rest of nations strive to achieve. If all nations reached the point the West is at, the world would not be able to sustain itself. The terms "majority world" and "minority world" will instead be used in this paper. This is more accurate, as 2/3 of the world lives in constant struggle for daily life, and just a small portion of the world's population lives like the common America or European.

⁷ The portrayal of Uganda in this paper is from the author's studies in Uganda, September 1, 2003-December 24, 2003, and January 2005.

⁸ Human Development Index.

be prepared for the time when God brings fire and destruction to all the land. Ironically, these corners had large rates of crime surrounding them because of the commotion created by the preachers. Walkers would become distracted by the in-your-face preaching, and thieves would take this opportunity to rob those who appeared distracted. My friends and I often were victims to robberies in these areas.

When I moved in with a host family in the suburbs of Kampala, my family told me that they had chosen to host me “because you are the daughter of a pastor, and so you won’t drink, party, stay out late at night with boys, go to the disco, or other non-Christian things.” Unfortunately, this narrow view of Christianity drove me to want to rebel, and stay out late in the city. I saw this view as a very literal approach to reading the Bible, sometimes called fundamentalism in America, which I saw as dominant in this area.

In Uganda, when a thief is seen stealing, people rush to the thief to beat him, usually until he is dead. These thieves often steal to feed their families or purchase medicine. The first of many times that I watched a man get beaten to death on the street I came home somber and frustrated, sharing with my host parents what I had just seen. The response from my Christian mother who had a master’s degree in social-work was, “good, that is one less thief on the street. It is good he was killed before the police came, it saves the police work.” This comment made sense to me in light of the literal interpretation of the Bible by my family. It seemed that there was good and bad, and not much in between. Good deeds would be rewarded with salvation, and evils were to be destroyed and shut out of the community.

I would frequently ride mini-bus taxis around the country, and get into interesting conversations with people I sat next to. One conversation with a woman stands out in

my mind, but was more the norm than anything else. She asked me if I was saved. My response echoed my liberal Lutheran upbringings, “yes, God welcomes all people into heaven.”

“No.” She responded, “Are you *saved*?”

“Yes, God saves all people.”

“Well, were you baptized? Have you committed your life to Christ in front of the Church?”

“Yes, I was baptized, when I was a month old. And I believe that God calls us, this is a great gift, we do not choose God, he chooses us, that is the miracle of God.” She did not buy my theology. This woman wanted for me to be ‘saved,’ to stand up in front of church and announce that I have given my life over to Jesus and will live in accordance with his teachings, and be healed forever. She then gave me her cell phone number and invited me to her church where I could confess my faith.

Later on in my studies I moved to a rural village in western Uganda, and immersed myself in the community. I remember sitting under a mango tree one afternoon talking to the pastor of the Anglican Church in the village. This pastor, again, wanted to know if I was saved. I explained my understanding of Luther’s view of “Justification by faith, not deeds.” This pastor thought this was absurd, and told me that those that drink are going to hell. I told him I drink, and I believe I am going to heaven. He protested that I was just a “fake Christian,” and true Christians do not drink. Frustrated, I shared my discussion with a friend who managed a restaurant in a nearby town. She explained that in Uganda this was the outward belief that Christians cannot drink, have sex, smoke, or do other ‘non-Christian things.’ In reality, however, most

people who profess this, do drink, smoke, may have contracted HIV and some rape young girls. My friend warned me, "If your parents come to visit, do not let people see your father drink, for they know he is a pastor, and will then think he is a real fake." This comment came from an Anglican, surprising me greatly. I might have understood this comment had it come from a Pentecostal, because they often interpret the Bible very literally, but I was familiar with Anglicans interpreting the Bible more symbolically.

I left Uganda just before Christmas of 2003, and I left with a strange and greatly changed view of Christianity in Africa. In Zambia the previous year my faith had been strengthened by seeing how Christianity seemed to sustain the life of so many of the very poorest Africans. In Uganda I had felt dominated by a Christianity that seemed to offer more criticism and regulations than hope and comfort. Upon returning to America after four months in Uganda I wanted to understand what drove people to this type of Christianity. I had viewed Christianity as being so oppressive in Uganda, and considering the torrential conditions in East Africa, with high rates of HIV, death, disease, malnutrition and violence, I would expect more people seeking forms of Christianity like I had experienced in Zambia, which seemed to offer so much hope to the community. Why were so many people driven to this 'born-again' Christianity? The question in my mind was why were these 'hopeful' groups not growing, while these groups which were so oppressive in my eyes booming with growth?

A year later I returned to Uganda again for another month with these pondering questions. I made a special point of attending churches, both Anglican and Pentecostal, where I gained insight into the draw of African churches. I became even more intrigued, having more questions as to why there was a large draw to the "born again theology."

My experience in a Pentecostal church was quite frightening for me, only leading to more questions in my mind. Music drew the church community together, through song and dance. Then the majority of the service was spent asking for people to “give their lives to Christ and become saved, so they would be healed, not like the other unsaved sinners out there.” Some people came forward to commit their life to Christ, although this took a great amount of convincing from the leaders. I was an obvious target as the only white person in the church, so everyone knew I was new, and had never ‘given my life to Christ’ in this church before. I was brought in front of the congregation and asked if I was saved or not. Afraid to get into a theological debate in front of 300 people, I said I was. The congregation clapped, laid their hands on me and said prayers of thanksgiving for my saved soul. After the service I was brought into a room with a leader of the church, and asked to fill out a survey describing my spirituality, and my ‘saved’ status. I left this experience feeling especially sinful and terrified of potential visits from the outreach committee who would ask about my personal relationship with Christ, and how it has changed my life.

The following week I wanted spiritual renewal and hope, so I attended an Anglican Church service with a friend. During the hour long sermon the sweating preacher shouted questions at the congregation of over 300 people. “Are you sick? Are you suffering? Do you find yourself poorer this year than last year? Are your friends dying of AIDS?” To each question the congregation shouted “Yes! Yes Jesus!” The Preacher gave instructions, “Then call out for mercy! Cry for mercy! Cry harder to Jesus your savior for mercy!” The entire congregation, excluding myself who tried to hide behind the pew, responded, “Lord, have mercy on me!” This type of command and

response continued for most of the hour long sermon. All the while, I wondered to myself, what if these people who are hungry, dying, and suffering, cry out for mercy, pray, and still find themselves hungry, in poverty, and continue to watch their children die? What then? The preacher told them to cry out for mercy more, and pray harder, but how hard do you pray? What happens if you are still in this state, despite your devotion to God in prayer? Does this mean God hates you? Have you been abandoned? Are you a bad Christian? Have you sinned too much to be helped?

I left Uganda more frustrated and bewildered about religion. I wanted so much for all my friends, the beautiful orphans, all people in the world to have basic needs met; food, safe water, medical care and shelter. Through my interpretation of scripture and my faith journey I have seen an obvious connection between Christianity and eliminating poverty. One of my favorite passages to explain how to live life is Acts 2:44-45; *All who believed were together and shared all things according to each one's needs.* The disciples had learned from Jesus that if people in their community were hungry, food should be distributed, and people should share all things so that all basic needs were met. If this situation of the early Church were created today, those in America who had food and medicine would share with those that did not, like those in East Africa. Why then, in a world so populated with Christians was there such a divide? Why specifically, where there large numbers of Christians in East Africa, yet with so much suffering? Some of these answers can be explained that my interpretation of scripture and how I view stewardship is not the only view of Christianity, so just because there are large amounts of Christians in East Africa, this does not mean that they are all acting under the same

premises that I am. For me to understand the paradox I saw, I thus needed to understand the Christianity that was occurring in East Africa.

Confusion

If Christians in East Africa are not operating under the same view of scripture that I am, what beliefs *are* they operating under? And why are so many people attracted to this? Specifically, why are people who are so poor, sick and suffering attracted to this type of Christianity? What kind of benefits are people getting from this? Do the benefits include basic needs of food, safe water, health care and shelter; alleviation of the main crisis?

Research Quest

As the basis of this paper, these questions will be addressed. East Africa is in crisis, and Christianity is prominent and growing in the region. The area where Christianity and attaining basic human needs overlap is in the work of Christian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which will be the focus of this paper. These groups are each driven by different means and their work may differ; their goals, successes, how they operate, and thus their outcomes which include attainment of basic human needs for these groups also varies. The methodology, practice, and plan all impact how basic human needs are affected. The understanding of these categories is essential to determining the most effective path to follow for achieving basic human needs for all people in the world. Three aspects within different Christian organizations in East Africa will be analyzed. These aspects are:

- *scripture,

- *response toward crisis,

*relationship with people

Much of the desired information cannot be gathered because of the limitations of not being in Africa and directly studying groups, but these aspects will be discussed and a basic foundation will be laid out. Ideally, in studying the Christian models of development one would come to the conclusion of which model is best suited to meet basic needs. However, given the limitations of not being in Africa to conduct first hand research, such a concrete conclusion is not possible. These categories will lay out the foundation and background for two types of models, for which further in country research is required to reach a concrete conclusion. With the information available, a general theory will be conceived as to which model is best, but this is only an information based theory. A concrete conclusion as to what type of model is most effective will be the result of taking the foundations that are laid out in this paper and putting them to the test in East Africa in several case studies.

By laying out foundations to two models of Christianity I noticed in East Africa, I am developing a scholarly aspect to much of the questions I have had about Christianity in East Africa. Understanding the foundations and reasoning as to why groups act as they do is essential for any involvement in different locations. As I hope to work on achieving basic human needs in Africa, understanding the reasons behind an organization's method is vital. Even if I do not agree with the approach, one should learn about that approach as to understand it in new light, work along side it, or change the approach. This paper, in laying out the basic foundations for two models, will allow me and the reader to understand and hopefully appreciate 'the other' in a new light, creating a more all-encompassing approach to meeting human needs.

Method of Analysis- Scripture

Christian groups working in East Africa build the reason for their work based on their interpretation of scripture. Scripture is the building block for the work. What are key scriptures each group uses, and how do they interpret them? What are other supporting passages they use? What key stories in the bible do groups focus on? The view of baptism for the group is also very important in the work they do, as their interpretation of baptism can become manifest in their work. What is the group's view of baptism? What does the group mean by "being saved"? How does this come about?

Groups also interpret prayer in different ways, and it may be used in different ways, which affects a group's methodology. How does the group view prayer, and what scripture is this based on? Are there expectations which come along with prayer? Is there a focus on prayer being used for healing?

How the group interprets scripture to view sin is also very important, as this is related to how they treat the people who have sinned. Along with what the scripture tells them what sin is, what does scripture tell them about overcoming sin? What about acts of repentance and forgiveness? Is there punishment for sin? Understanding how a group interprets scripture and what a groups sees as the most important aspects of the Bible create the foundation for their work. Having a firm understanding of how each group uses scripture is important to understand why a group justifies the work they do in East Africa. This scriptural understanding is the foundation for the work done, and all methodology and actions should follow in line with this interpretation of scripture.

Method of Analysis- Response To Crisis

The group's foundations in scripture should ideally be lived out where and how the group chooses to do work, but it might not be. Christian groups might have different goals, from clothing an entire village, to helping the village create sustainable income generating projects, to creating a strong Christian community. What does the group see as their mission in East Africa? How does this relate to the given crisis? What is the reason that this mission needs to be attended to, or why is there a crisis in the area in the first place? This may be that missionaries have never come to spread Christianity, or the reason for the crisis could be a drought, or a corrupt Islamic government. How they see the root cause of the problem they are addressing will determine how they address the issue. Why is this group responding to this crisis? Maybe they feel called from God to reach out, or they will gain access to heaven if they reach out, or maybe they feel their own culture has caused the crisis so it is their duty to respond.

With the given mission and goal of the group, what is seen as a success? Is this physical or spiritual? A success could be that now the target area has access to clean water, or a success could be that 80% of the area is now Christian, or maybe the group will work until 100% of the area proclaims Christ as their savior. What constitutes a success for an organization is very important, for this is what they keep in sight through all their work. This is also essential to determine for how long the organization remains in the area, and what happens once the 'mission is accomplished.' Does the group have specific measures as to what is seen a success? Is there follow through after the goal is achieved? What prevents the crisis in this area from not continuing on after 'mission accomplished?'

Method of Analysis- People

Along with how the organization approaches the crisis, how the organization approaches the people who are experiencing the crisis as well as the people outside the target area is important. A group may view the people as sinners having caused the problem they are in, or they may see them as helpless individuals incapable of helping themselves, or they may see them simply as human beings, or maybe as victims of a larger oppression. Does the group believe the Africans are suffering? What constitutes suffering for this group? Who, or what, is responsible for this suffering? Along with how the organization views Africans, it is necessary to understand how the organization views the culture in which the people live. Maybe the organization involves local people in the decision making process, or maybe they don't. If they do involve locals in decision making, how are the people chosen to make decisions? Is the organization's structure compatible to the prior structure of the community? How is community created or affected with the new group in the area? Is the sense of community exclusive to 'in members?' Or is it all encompassing?

The target group is not the only group of people with whom the organization must interact with in their work. Outside groups include neighboring areas to the target group as well as the host government. Relations between the group and the host country are a vital foundation for the work. How does the group feel about the government's relations to the crisis? Are the group and the government working together to combat the crisis? Is the government an obstacle for the group? What is the relationship of the group toward other people in the area? Sometimes media sources are used to make the crisis

known, is the group utilizing media outlets? Are these local, national or international media sources? What is the response?

These categories: scripture, the view of crisis, and interactions with people, will be how the different organizations will be described in this paper. It is vital to understand the group's methods, approaches and reasons for why and how they do their work. Getting a firm understanding of the groups will shed light on how the groups may affect the crisis of poverty in East Africa. Not all the questions will be answered, as the group may not directly address some aspects, and other aspects will be more important in one group than another. In addition, these questions will be most effective when working directly in East Africa, analyzing the different approaches directly. Because this is not possible for me currently, this paper will lay out the foundation and background for future long term research while in East Africa.

Two Models- service first model & born again model

I have chosen two general models to lay out and analyze in this paper, which I have labeled as the "service first model" and the "born again model." These groups are not specific denominations, but a broad generalization of two approaches of Christian based development in Africa. The service first model is chosen partly because of a personal bias. I have seen this model in action in Africa and believe in its strength. My belief in this model stems from my political science studies in development, and belief that problems of poverty are best solved from the people in poverty themselves, along with support from an outside source.

The service first model has been labeled this because of the broad characteristic that a group following this model uses: their foremost goal being to directly cater to the

basic subsistence needs of the target group. Specifically I will be studying the network including Bread for the World (BFW), Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Lutheran World Relief (LWR), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS), and other smaller groups. This network of organizations provides the most well spent money of any religious network to the majority world.⁹

The second model I have chosen to look at is what I have labeled the “born again model,” which I found to be the dominant form of religion in Africa. The born again model has several distinctive characteristics that differ from other Christian approaches. Individuals in this category say that they are “born again.” One calls themselves a born again because they feel they were called by the Holy Spirit to be in union with Jesus Christ. This moment where they feel they are called is the moment where one becomes born again, or born into the community of believers in Jesus.¹⁰ People who consider themselves to be born again feel a point in their life where they are “reborn,” or have publicly decided to commit their life to Jesus. Born again Christians represent the fastest growing group in East Africa and in the world. In the 1980s, 16,000 people in Africa alone become Christians each day, and of the 16,000, the majority of these people considered themselves to be born again.¹¹ Individuals involved in the born again method may identify as Pentecostal, Evangelical, Charismatic, Baptist and sometimes Anglican.¹²

⁹ Charity Watch www.charitywatch.org Charity Watch found Lutheran World Relief and Bread for the World, in 2004, to be most effective in raising large amounts of money with the least amount of funds spent to raise the money.

¹⁰ Richard Shaull and Waldo Cesar, Pentecostalism: And the future of the Christian Churches. (Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company: 2000), 26.

¹¹ David Maxwell, “African Gifts of the Spirit: Fundamentalism and the Born Again Movement in Africa.” Fundamentalism, Church and Society, ed. Martyn Percy and Ian Jones. (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2002), 160.

¹² Maxwell, 160.

A great deal of emphasis in this study will be placed on the Assembly of God Mission's Program, as they have the largest amount of global missions of any Pentecostal denomination.¹³

These two types of Christian relief models in East Africa will be described in terms of their scriptural grounding, response to crisis, and interaction with the people. A framework will be laid out to show that these two broad groups are an effective way to analyze Christian organizations in East Africa. With this foundation, possible concrete research case studies will be drawn out. Fulfillment of this direct research will help determine what type of Christianity is most effective in combating poverty in East Africa. Overall, two models of development in East Africa will be laid out and analyzed. Out of this analysis case studies will be developed for future research while in Africa to determine what the most effective Christian approach is to attaining basic human needs.

¹³ Gary McGee, "Saving Souls or Saving Lives: The Tension between Ministries of Word and Deed," *Assembly of God Missiology*, Fall (1994), 1.
http://www.agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/articles/savingsouls_mcgee.pdf

CHAPTER 2

Service First Model

Overview of work

The service first model, mainly through Lutheran World Relief (LWR), works directly to alleviate suffering in areas with large concentrations of orphans, or where clean water is lacking, among others things. A target area is chosen based on the identification of the crisis, and their specific problems are resolved by working with an established, local non-governmental organization (NGO). Once the area's basic needs are met—a well is dug, a school or clinic is established, and so forth—the service first model will slowly withdraw, thereby enabling the target area to become self-sufficient.

A large amount of material in this section is from, *Together in Hope: 50 years of Lutheran World Relief* by John Bachman. This is a book which was written to explain and analyze LWR's involvement through the world in their 50 year history. Bachman researched archives of LWR, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Bread for the World (BFW) as well as letters to and from officials to write this book. This is a thorough account of the service first model's approach and involvement in East Africa, and given my time constraints it was impossible to do the intense research Bachman did in writing this book. Although I have relied heavily on his book, it includes a great number of accounts from other resources that are included in the footnotes.

Call to Service

The scriptural basis for the service first model is founded in Jesus' teachings about the poor and oppressed. Jesus talks many times about how to treat the poor:

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. ...For just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.

Matthew 25:35-36

Jesus tells the people that when one helps someone who is poor, they are then serving Jesus, so the service first model feels Christians have the obligation to serve the needs of the poor, just as they would serve the needs of Jesus if he were with them.¹⁴ The service first model is a direct result of this command from Jesus to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Jesus also explains to his followers who they should feed, cloth and help. Jesus illustrates this in the parable of the good Samaritan.

But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' Jesus told them, 'Go and do likewise.'
Luke 10: 30-35, 37

The service first model feels that Jesus' parable of the good Samaritan shows that Christians are to help all people, no matter who they are. The service first model seeks to emulate the Good Samaritan who stopped to assist another human being who was suffering regardless of the latter's - religion, nationality, ethnicity, or beliefs. The Samaritan befriended the man simply because someone was in need, and the Samaritan had the resources to assist.¹⁵ The service first model seeks to reach out to all those in need, particularly the neediest, as a way to live out one's faith, a faith rooted in love for one's fellow humans. This includes people in East Africa, whether they are black, white, Christian, Muslim, or atheists, whether they embrace democracy, socialism, or communism. Indeed, the mission of LRW states "those will get the first help who are in

¹⁴ John Bachman, Together in Hope: 50 years of Lutheran World Relief (Minneapolis: Kirk House, 1995), 45.

¹⁵ Bachman, 6.

the greatest need without considering their confession of religion, race, party membership or political past.”¹⁶

This commitment to help any stranger in need, regardless of identity, was evident in Yugoslavia in 1950 during the Cold War. All aid to communist nations was severed by the United States, but LWR was able to petition the U.S. government to let food into the starving people of Yugoslavia.¹⁷ After receiving this aid, a Yugoslavian government leader told LWR, “We’re not Christians but we have always respected you because you have always practiced what you preached. You said you were there to help people in the name of Jesus, and that’s what you did.”¹⁸ This demonstration of LWR’s commitment to help a communist nation of non-Christian strangers is a clear sign of its commitment to help all in the name of Jesus.¹⁹

The commitment to help all people throughout the entire world, without relevance to what beliefs they have is shown in the Lord’s Prayer, which many Christians memorize and recite every day.

This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. *Give us today our daily bread*’ (italics added).
Matthew 6: 9-11

According to the service first model, the petition, “Give us this day” can be taken to mean that each and every day people are suffering and dying from starvation, poverty, persecution, and unjust working conditions even though God has provided a world that does not lack the resources to prevent all these conditions. “Our” encompasses all of

¹⁶ Bill Hennings, LWR Staff member to Frank Brown, army Chaplain in the British Zone of Germany; Letter, December 13, 1946, ELCA Archives. Found in Bachman, 30.

¹⁷ Bachman, 43.

¹⁸ Edwin Neger, Pastor and LWR board member and secretary for 30 years, interviewed by John Bachman, September 1, 1993, found in Bachman, 44.

¹⁹ Bachman, 6.

humanity's brothers and sisters in Christ. When those of the service first model recite the Lord's Prayer they feel they are reciting a commitment to help all brothers and sisters around the world attain basic needs. This is played out in how the service first model reaches out to all people, not just other Christians, but people of all beliefs.

Jesus has called Christians to help all human beings, regardless of their situation. The service first model interprets the death of Jesus as a sign that of how God loves and embraces all people on earth, despite human sinfulness, that God sent God's only son to die for all people. Jesus' sacrifice is a model to Christians as to how the poor should be treated.

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
Romans 5:6-8

The passion story is another story where the service first model finds its call to action. Jesus died for the entire world, not just for Christians or Americans, but for every single human being.²⁰ Because all are welcome into the Kingdom of God, all are thus brothers and sisters. In this way, each member is equally valued and cares for the other members, just as brothers and sisters. This also requires meeting the basic needs of each member for food, water, clothing and shelter. Part of having brothers and sisters in Christ is to value each member of this community, and help create dignity for all people. Part of having dignity is having basic human needs such as food, water, clothing and shelter. If these needs are not met, their human dignity is being denied and thus they cannot fully live out their God given life.²¹

²⁰ Aurthor Simon, Bread for the World (New York : Paulist Press, 1975), 7.

²¹ Simon, 69.

The service first model believes that reaching out to the poor and oppressed is a part of everyday life, not something to do only on occasion. The service first model gathers this belief from the gospel of Mark:

For you always have the poor with you, and you can show kindness to them whenever you wish.
Mark14:7

The service first model interprets this saying of Jesus to mean that humans must not ignore the poor and oppressed. This is a call to change the situation of these people, and not ignore the plight so many humans live in. The service first model feels that this passage is often misinterpreted as acceptance of the poor in the world. If there will always be poor in the world, as Jesus says, why attempt to change the situation? Instead, this is a call to action rather than an acceptance of the situation. Jesus' ministry, as previously described, is dedicated to serving and embracing the poor rather than accepting the plight of the poor.²² The service first model enacts this in their mission being simply to help the poor achieve basic needs. They say they do not preach to groups, because their form of "preaching" is to minister to the poor.

The Bible not only calls for direct service for the oppressed, according to the service first belief, but it calls for an end to the institutions that cause the injustices in the first place. This is demonstrated in several places in the Old Testament:

God has made you king to execute justice and righteousness
1Kings 10:9
Give the King your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son. May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice. May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.
Psalms 72:1-2,4

While helping the poor through direct assistance is a central activity in this model, the service first model also seeks to change the institutions creating the injustice.

²² Craig Nesson, Give us this Day: A Lutheran Proposal for Ending World Hunger (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 11.

Throughout the Old Testament, God continuously urges people to change oppressing circumstances and rewards them for doing so. Those who have been blessed with positions of power are to use that power to assist the poor; indeed, it is just for that purpose that they have been so blessed. This method calls leaders to use their positions of power to create just policies to end oppression. The service first method also calls for individuals in America and other Western nations that wield economic, political, and military might, to use that power to decrease and alleviate the oppressive conditions that are found in the majority of the nations of the world.²³

Every time Christians partake in communion, the service first model feels they should be reminded of the blessings of basic needs. Partaking in the bread and wine ceremony with the words Jesus taught:

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.

Mark 14:22-24

The service first model feels that every time Christians take communion they are reminded that Jesus Christ died and rose for all people: for Jews, Muslims, Christians, agnostics, Asians, Africans, poor and rich alike. Communion is a reminder that God sent God's only son for all people, and yet many people do not have the opportunity to live to fulfill their life calling. Some people literally do not have the blessing to break bread: for they are starving. Every time Christians partake in communion this should be a sign of the blessings they have been given, as well as a call to insure that all of God's children have enough to eat.²⁴

²³ Nesson 22-23.

²⁴ Simon, 140.

In *Corinthians* Paul discusses the early Church's Lord's Supper, and the problems that existed even then in terms of poverty, hunger and equality. The service first model feels that Paul's writings about Corinth have great implications for the Lord's Supper in Christian Churches today. In Paul's day, the rich Corinthians ate while their poor sat/remained hungry. Paul scolded the people for coming to the Lord's Table without the commitment to feed all their brothers and sisters in Christ. So too, the service first model believes, that Paul would scold Christians today for coming to eat at the Lord's table without genuine concern and action for others who hunger for bread.²⁵

The situation which Paul discusses in his letter to Corinth is thought of by the service first model as a micro-cosmism of the world. Two-thirds of the world lives on less than two dollars a day, while half of the world lives on less than a dollar a day. This is in contrast to the average American who makes \$52 a day. The gap between the materially rich and poor in the world is enormous, and still growing.²⁶ I stayed at a house in Zambia where we would dump the leftover food scraps in a heap in the back yard. What was thrown in this heap had already been picked over by 12 hungry Americans, then picked over by the poor house cook, and then was discarded in the heap. Every morning a small child would scavenge through the leftovers in hopes of an uneaten banana peel or orange rind which he could gain some nutrition from. Living in this situation, it was impossible for me to ignore these hungry orphaned children, but the challenge is that once this hungry boy is out of sight, to never forget that much of the world lives like this, uncertain of where their next meal will come.

²⁵ Nesson, 61

²⁶ Bread for the World, www.bread.org

Guilt of Inaction

In addition to having the Christian duty to serve the poor, the service first model can imagine the Day of Judgment arriving, and Jesus asking humanity, 'why did you let my children in Africa starve to death?'²⁷ Phil Hefner, a Christian Ethics Theologian writes: "In Germany, under Hitler, the churches brought disgrace upon themselves for the failure to recognize that anti-Jewish policies of the society and make efforts to counter them."²⁸ This is frighteningly similar to today's world where 860 million people are malnourished and living in poverty, which has become somehow 'normal' and 'acceptable' in the policies of the minority nations.²⁹ People involved in this service movement feel that the plight of the poor today is just as bad if not worse than the killing of millions during the Holocaust. The mode of death is certainly very different, but many make the comparison because in both cases the world knew of the deaths. Every day 50,000 people die from the effects of poverty, and yet little is being done about this in the world. In a single year over 18 million human beings die from preventable causes, 270 million since the end of the Cold War.³⁰ The Holocaust created a trivial amount of deaths compared to the amount that are killed by poverty every year. Today, 60 years later, the world looks back on the Holocaust and wonders why more was not done to prevent this loss of life. The service first model believes that this metaphor drives many today to change the plight of the millions suffering from poverty, so in a hundred years people

²⁷ Simon, 121

²⁸ Phil Hefner, "The Church as a Community of Belonging in a Society Divided by Economic and Social Class," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 24, (June 97): 220.

²⁹ Nesson, 48

³⁰ Thomas Pogge, "World Poverty and Human Rights." *Ethics and International Affairs*. 19, no. 1 2005. http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/media/5109_eia19-1_pogge01.pdf

will not look back and wonder why humans in the 21st century were so heartless, letting thousands die of hunger every day.

Martin Luther wrote about how Christians are free from guilt. The service first model relates this to the guilt one may experience from horrible events such as the Holocaust or poverty in Africa. Along with the freedom from guilt comes the responsibility to change these situations, and improve the world. Luther gathers this view from scripture;

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.
Galations 5:1

Martin Luther in 1520 wrote in 'Freedom of a Christian,'—"A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all, and a perfectly free Lord of all, subject to none."³¹ Luther wrote that a Christian is free, and guilt from sin should not hold one back in life. If one lives with feelings of constant guilt, he or she will wallow in pity their entire life, miserable and unable to make positive change in society. Instead, the service first model says that Christians are called to acknowledge and reflect on one's individual sins as a means to move beyond them.³² This means that Christians in America should not become so overwhelmed with the suffering and death in Africa and paralyzed from the enormous task at hand of changing the structures which create this crisis. Instead, as Christians, we are to live out Jesus' command to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and change the institutions which cause these injustices. Luther says humans are free of our sin, but are also called to prevent and alleviate suffering.

³¹ Martin Luther, "The Freedom of a Christian" In Martin Luther's Basic Theological Writings, edited by Timothy Lull. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989.

³² Nesson, 19-23

Government Involvement

The service first model has consistently seen one of its key tasks as working with governments to change policies which oppress those groups they are trying to assist. In 1968, LWR began to focus on changing the policies of governments, who bear primary responsibility for the aspects of poverty that are caused by the government's structures. They feel this relationship with governments is key, as they view the government as the key provider for people's well being, and it should not be the responsibility of private relief agencies.³³ To keep the governments accountable, LWR formed a separate office to keep track of governmental policies directed at involving oppressed groups in the world. LWR has identified larger infrastructural problems causing poverty that can be changed to provide large scale relief. These changes can make a greater impact than private groups. To do this, LWR notifies members to "urge our governmental officials to reassess our national values and priorities in order to deal more effectively with this serious and heartless problem of world hunger."³⁴ Letter campaigns, calling senators, and meeting directly with policy makers have been a successful means that the ELCA model uses to alter governmental policies.

People

The service first model regards the recipients they are working with as "accompaniments."³⁵ The term "accompaniment" is used because LWR works in close partnership with the target area residents. The need and method for assistance comes from the target people, and LWR's key method is to let the target people direct LWR's level of participation. This view stems from the duty they feel to serve fellow human

³³ Policy Statement attached to LWR Annual Report, 1961, found in Bachman, 60.

³⁴ Minutes, LWR, November 24, 1969, Exhibit H. Found in Bachman, 68

³⁵ Bachman, 88

beings as brothers and sisters, and by working with the people directly, it can be considered a “bottom-up” method. According to the LWR Strategy Guidelines, projects must originate with the target group, it must serve the poorest group, must use indigenous human and material resources whenever possible, and it must be self-sustaining.³⁶ By the target group both designing and conducting the relief, people feel ownership, hope, and the projects are sustainability.

One example of a project which exhibits this sense of ownership and dedication was the building of a dam in a rural area of Brazil. The rainy season had destroyed all dams in the area that had been built by overseas development groups. The only dam that survived the heavy rains of the monsoon season was the dam built by LWR and the target group. A member of the group responded to this strange occurrence, “Of course! This was the people’s dam. They stood guard over it 24 hours a day, calling out a work force to do sluicing whenever the water rose above the dam structure. These people built the dam, they claimed ownership, and they weren’t going to lose all they had.”³⁷ This strategy of working directly with the people—with their ideas, their work, and their leadership—has proved over and over again to be successful, sustainable, and cost effective.

One American working for LWR expressed his uneasiness of the “top-down” approach used by other groups/organizations. He felt that “in order to understand and empathize with the plight of the poor, it was necessary to constantly visit projects and community leaders, talk with peasants, community leaders, urban dwellers, and try to

³⁶ Minutes, LWR, November 10, 1975, Exhibit K, pp.3-5. Found in Bachman, 112.

³⁷ LCUSA Interchange, Vol.10 #5, December, 1977. Found in Bachman, 88.

listen to their needs and ideas.”³⁸ The role of the LWR staff is to encourage, listen, and help stimulate ideas from the target group, as well as monitor the progress they are making in their endeavor. Leaders from of the target group are encouraged to be both male and female, as LWR seeks to promote the rights of women and leadership skills as a natural part of these projects. LWR does not have many staff working directly on the development projects, but it works through established in-country agencies so that nationals work directly with the target group. LWR provides the funding and the follow-up.

Conclusion- Scripture

The service first model believes the Bible calls them to do the work that they do, taking the form of service in East Africa. Scripture is the building block for the work as well as pointing to the method of work they use. Much of the foundation for the service first work is found in two teachings of Jesus, the good Samaritan story in the way Jesus tells people how they can serve him. Both of these stories urge followers of Jesus to actively reach out to assist the poor and oppressed, no matter who they are, and this is how one is to serve Jesus. The service first model actively lives this out by reaching out to the poor in Africa.

Conclusion- Response to Crisis

Several Bible passages urge the service first model to change situations of oppression and actively reach out to create justice. The service first model does this by not only coming to the relief of the target area, but in working with them to create long lasting sustainable projects to help alleviate poverty.

³⁸ Jerry Aaker, LWR staff, stationed in Vietnam, interviewed by Bachman, 102.

Conclusion- People Interaction

The service first model sees in scripture that they are called to reach out to all of God's children, Christian or not, black or white. With this belief the interaction between the target group, people neighboring the target group, or people of organization's own country are all equal. The service first group sees all people as being equal and working together to create a greater good for all. The service first staff acts as accompanists, sharing skills with the target group as well as learning new skills from them.

The service first model immerses staff into target villages and works directly with the people to learn with them. The goal is to work together to attain basic human needs that are sustained. There is no direct verbal sharing of religious beliefs through this method, but people are sometimes drawn into Christianity because of the organization's work. Christianity is shared by actions of service, thus people who might not otherwise come to understand Christianity are introduced indirectly.

CHAPTER 3

Born Again Model

Call to Mission

The service first model consists of people who consider themselves “born again.” When one is called, or born again, he or she commits one’s life to following Jesus, and publicly proclaims this. This sets one apart from the non-believers and into a community of believers that are all born again.³⁹ Once one is born again, this model believes, he or she turns away from the evil in his or her life, and turns to God with new behaviors.⁴⁰ These individuals use Paul’s letters to the Corinthians as one of several scriptural passages to come to this understanding;

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.
1 Corinthians 12:1-3

According to the born again model, Paul is telling his readers that when they did not believe in Jesus as Christ they had inappropriate behaviors, but once they believed in Christ, their behavior changed for the better. Those that are born again believe that God calls each individual into God’s community through the Holy Spirit, where the individual seeks true repentance and God responds with forgiveness.⁴¹ The born again model uses this belief to change the levels of basic human needs. According to this model, belief in Christ changes behaviors and thus makes things better, so people in poverty need to believe in Christ, which will change their behaviors, and then they will rise out of poverty. This is an indirect path to combating poverty, but the born again model feels this is the most effective means.

³⁹ Maxwell, 174.

⁴⁰ Shaull and Cesar, 23.

⁴¹ Shaull and Cesar, 23.

When God calls each individual, according to the born again model, they are blessed by God spiritually as well as materially, where health and prosperity are signs of God's love.⁴² The opposite of this blessing from God is what happens to those who do not believe in Jesus. Regarding the involvement in East Africa, this is especially appealing to a large percent of the population that is poor, sick, hungry, and in the midst of crisis. These blessings from God or curses come in many forms which will be talked about later on in the paper.

The Assembly of God Mission Program utilizes a four tier approach to their global work: Reaching, Planting, Training and Touching. The first aspect, reaching involves individual missionaries traveling throughout the world and telling people about Jesus. This is done through verbal communication, booklets, brochures, videos and sometimes taking care of basic needs. The second aspect, planting is done through the establishment of churches, both in the building material as well as the formation of the community. The third aspect is training, involves identifying key community members and training them to be leaders in the church. The fourth aspect of missions is the touching of lives by demonstrating Christ's love to the target group. These four aspects of mission together form the strategy of the Assembly of God missions department, which they feel are mandates from God.⁴³

Spreading the Word

The born again model can almost literally say that they reach "all the world," as Jesus says. The Assembly of God Global Missions department, which is the largest

⁴² Shaul and Cesar, 26

⁴³ Hurst.

Pentecostal mission group, has over 4,000 missionaries in 204 countries, where they “tell the lost world that Christ loves them and came to redeem them from their sins.”⁴⁴

The scriptural foundation of the mission for those who are born again is found after Jesus rose from the tomb and met his disciples, giving them the following command:

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.
Matthew 28:19-20

Once Jesus left the earth he passed on the command to the disciples to spread the gospel throughout the land, so that many people would know of the resurrection of Jesus and God’s love. This was not just a command, but a divine influence, for God would be working through them to spread the message. The born again model takes this message from Jesus literally, that they are to spread Jesus’ love all across the world. This results in Churches from America sending missionaries into all parts of the world, including East Africa with the purpose of telling people about Jesus.⁴⁵

In 1931 the Assembly of God (AoG), composed primarily of those that are born again, released their first Missionary Manual. The purpose of the mission department reads as follows,

The winning of souls to Christ and establishing of assemblies in all places where converts are won should be regarded as the primary objective of all missions. All other branches of ministry should be subordinate to this.⁴⁶

As stated, the AoG’s main purpose is to teach people all over the world about Jesus, and get them to confess Jesus as their savior, which they see as “winning people’s souls.”

This mission is derived directly from the literal interpretation of the gospels.

⁴⁴ Assemblies of God Mission Program

⁴⁵ Randy Hurst, “A Spirit-Led Mission,” *Assembly of God World Missions*.
http://ag.org/enrichmentjournal/199904/074_mission.cfm

⁴⁶ Assemblies of God Mission Program, Executive Director, L. John <http://worldmissions.ag.org/>

Believe and be Blessed

This message of reaching out to the entire world is also depicted in Mark's gospel, and Mark also emphasizes the spiritual component of what will occur when people are taught to believe in Jesus.

Jesus said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.'
Mark 16:15-16

Again, this passage is interpreted very literally for those of the born again model. Not only are the disciples to tell the whole world about Jesus' resurrection, but if people do not believe in this miracle they will "be condemned."⁴⁷ This win or lose mentality that is read literally makes it essential for people to understand and believe in Jesus, making the born again model especially urgent for all people. Those that are born again feel that the second coming of Jesus is quickly arriving, so the world must be prepared for this. It is their command from Jesus to help all those who do not believe in Jesus as Christ come to know him, and save their souls.⁴⁸ Mark continuing in his gospel writes about what will occur when people make the commitment to believe in Jesus as their savior:

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;⁴⁸ they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.
Mark 16:17-18

When people are taught Jesus' message and believe that it is the truth they will become changed. They will possess spiritual powers that are not only noticeable to others, but will be beneficial to the world they live in, for they will be able to heal the sick. The belief in this passage is the foundation for the born again model.⁴⁹ Missionaries travel all

⁴⁷ Hurst

⁴⁸ McGee, 1.

⁴⁹ Hurst

through the world proclaiming and teaching about Jesus. Those who receive God's message and believe will have blessings from the spirit to help heal the sick, and be blessed. In East Africa, the born again model uses this literal interpretation to carry out their work. Upon teaching the gospel, target groups are told that if they believe in Jesus Christ as savior, God will take away their burdens, including feeding the hungry, where there are many in Africa, and heal the sick, also in abundance.⁵⁰

The born again model finds its strength in bringing the word of God to all people from the Holy Spirit, as recorded in the book of Acts, where the disciples recount what Jesus told them about how they would share his message after he died:

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.
Acts 1:8

The born again model interprets this passage in Acts that the disciples were not to go blindly out through the world and proclaim Jesus as Christ on their own, but they were to be guided by the Holy Spirit. When those of the born again model proclaim their message they feel they are not truly doing the work, but are the vessels through which the Holy Spirit is speaking to teach the gospel. This creates a sense of infallibility for those doing the proclaiming, that their work is not their own, but is from God.⁵¹

Roots of the Crisis

An example of the born again model at work in East Africa is found in Ansokia, Ethiopia in 1984, conducted by World Vision Ethiopia (WVE). Ansokia, as well as most of Ethiopia was in the midst of a large-scale drought, causing great suffering, breakdown

⁵⁰ P.J. Grabe. The Pentecostal Discovery of the New Testament Themes of God's Power and Its Relevance to the African Context. *The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, Vol 24, no. 2, Fall 2002.

⁵¹ Hurst

of infrastructure and widespread death. World Vision Ethiopia reached out to Ansokia as a target area. The project manager of WVE said of Ansokia,

Due to the prevalence of malnutrition, an average of 15-20 people were dying daily. Potable Water, inter-village communication and education facilities were uncommon in the area. Community members remained ignorant of the Word of God.⁵²

WVE realized that Ansokia was indeed suffering from food, water and healthcare, but this was because they were “ignorant of the word of God.”

Alleviating the Crisis

To meet basic needs of food and water WVE took several approaches. The first approach was to alleviate the immediate suffering by setting up two feeding camps in the area.⁵³ This was a direct service to put a limit on the enormous death rates. The second and more long-term approach was to train the community members in a variety of Community Based Technical Programs (CBTP). These programs were designed to teach the community alternative or improved approaches to daily activities, including income generating projects, health care, sanitation and family development. Projects included teaching community members about keeping beehives, growing woodlots, and a flour mill was constructed, all for additional income. Wells were also dug with community members, health trainings were provided, and vegetable growing was encouraged, all creating a healthier lifestyle.⁵⁴

The actual development work was done much in the same style that other development agencies would conduct themselves, secular or religious. However, this attainment of basic needs was not the main goal for WVE. While the community and WVE staffs were working together the staff was encouraged to talk about their belief in

⁵² Mulugeta Abebe, “From relief to development in Ethiopia,” in Serving with the poor in Africa, ed. Tetsunao Yamamori, (Monrovia, Calif.: MARC), 1996.

⁵³ Abebe, 18

⁵⁴ Abebe, 22

Jesus. The staff shared their experiences with Jesus and the power that the spirit can have, and encouraged the target group to also become Christians.⁵⁵ The main purpose of WVE was to convert people to Christianity, as they feel they are called to do through scripture previously mentioned. This born again model incorporates the service aspect along with the teachings of Jesus. The area development program manager said of this method, "This special commitment and Christian love has helped to draw many Muslims and Non-believers to the Kingdom of God."⁵⁶ When the target individuals came to receive benefits as well as work with the WVE staff they were also told about the gifts of Jesus, thus in the minds of the receivers, Christianity and the aid received were mutual. When others saw that the newly converted Christians were receiving aid, others would come to receive the assistance, and thus were taught about Christianity as well. This system multiplied until there were many new believers, or many who became born again.⁵⁷

The World Vision Ethiopia staff not only talked about their faith, but they also used more direct methods of converting people to Christianity, telling the community that faith in Jesus will cure their ailments. Keteme Bekele, a 30 year old member of the Ansokia community spoke positively of his experience with WVE after suffering from severe migraines:

I went to the WVE health staff to ask for medication. One of the medical staff said, 'Get up, for how long are you going to be depressed and without hope? If you believe in Him, Jesus can heal you.' I allowed him to pray for me and finally the evil spirit was cast out of me and all my sickness was gone for good. Since then I have been a follower of Jesus. I am bringing many people to Christ too.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Abede, 24

⁵⁶ Abebe, 24

⁵⁷ Abede, 24

⁵⁸ Abebe, 25

This belief that faith in Jesus will cure illness is directly from Mark 16, where Jesus tells the followers that if they believe in Jesus, he will bring about powers to heal. This is a common belief for those that are born again, that once they commit their lives to Christ they will have spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues, prophecy and healing.⁵⁹

Behavioral Change

When individuals become born again by declaring Christ as their savior and changing their attitudes and behavior, they must announce to the church and their fellow community that they are a changed person. This act of coming forward before the community serves several purposes. It sets the group members that are born again apart from the rest of the group, creating a tight knit community. This also is public grounds for renouncing previous behavior that may have been inappropriate or destructive.⁶⁰ People are encouraged to know and frequently share their story of how they became born again. The sharing of the personal transformation stories remind the sharer that they are publicly held accountable for their actions, as well as encourages others to join the call to become born again. With this public sharing of repentance, God's response is forgiveness.⁶¹

Community

One of the largest impacts the born again model says they have on the target areas is the sense of community that is developed. Individuals are called into the community of believers in Jesus as Christ, which is an enormous group spanning across the world as well as to those who have already died. This sense of belonging is different from being a part of a denomination, because this transcends all denominations, to all those who have

⁵⁹ Maxwell, 160.

⁶⁰ Maxwell, 174.

⁶¹ Shaul and Cesar, 23.

proclaimed themselves to be born again.⁶² When one is born again they join this international community and feel a sense of inclusion and belonging to a much larger, greater group.⁶³ This sense of community and belonging is rooted in scripture:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.
1 Peter 2:9-10

This is in contrast to the scripture prior to this which is the consequence for those who have chosen not to become born again:

For those who do not believe: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,' and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall,' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to.
1 Peter 2:1-8

This great blessing into the "Priesthood of All Believers" is quite an honor and this sense of inclusion is magnified into the everyday life of the community. All people who believe in Jesus as Christ can be a part of this community of believers, which breaks boundaries of traditional roles in East African society.⁶⁴ Women do not have to be seen in the traditional role as producers of children but women can now be valued for things like their ability to speak in tongues, heal and other spiritual gifts.⁶⁵ Men in the common East African village today can more often than not be found drinking alcohol under a tree during the day, or having promiscuous sex while the women and children work in the fields making a living.⁶⁶ Men that have become born again have committed to changing

⁶² Kingsley Larbi, "African Pentecostalism in the Context of Global Pentecostal Ecumenical Fraternity: Challenges and Opportunities," *The Journal of Society for Pentecostal Studies* 24, (2002) Fall, 161.

⁶³ David Maxwell, "African Gifts of the Spirit: Fundamentalism and the Born Again Movement in Africa," in *Fundamentalism, Church and Society* ed. Martyn Percy and Ian Jones (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2002) 166.

⁶⁴ Maxwell, 176.

⁶⁵ Maxwell, 171.

⁶⁶ Although this comment seems prejudice and judgmental, this is commonly believed by both African women and men, and one saying this to an African man would not be seen as being rude, but stating a widely known fact. In my experience working with a wide variety of groups in rural Uganda and Zambia,

their life to abstain from alcohol, tobacco, abusive behavior, and toward a life that is faithful to one's wife and family.⁶⁷ This change in behaviors stems from the emphasis on rejecting the past and looking forward to the future which Jesus will be apart of.⁶⁸

According to the born again model, the dynamics of the community changes after the organization or missionaries have done their work in the target area. Once the goal of increasing the number of believers of Jesus is achieved, the missionaries will leave to reach a different area. The method of the missionaries has created leaders all along because people are constantly encouraged to share their faith and transformation story. This process creates constant teachers in the community, and leaders emerge and receive additional training so the community of believers is sustained.⁶⁹ Traditional East African culture varies greatly from one tribe and village to the next, but witchcraft and homemade beer celebrations are common in many areas. With the rise of born again communities, these traditions are eliminated and instead free time is spent on church activities.⁷⁰

Members create choirs, providing both free entertainment as well as spiritual guidance.

This change in values and dedication to family creates harder working healthier individuals who become more employable and productive. The rise of church activities

the major problem women's groups talk about overcoming is how their husbands sit around and drink all day rather than helping with the family. Men who are working on community based projects also say that most men in Africa have this same problem as well. While living in Rubona, Uganda, a small village in the west, I was personally asked to come into a house where men were gathered drinking alcohol, asking me to give them money and drink with them. I asked them why they were not working the fields with their wives and children, and instead using valuable money on alcohol. The response from these men was laughter, realizing that I had called them out on their behavior. We then discussed how many men in Africa become frustrated that it is so hard to overcome the poverty that their family lives in, so instead of trying, they resort to alcohol.

⁶⁷ Maxwell, 173.

⁶⁸ Andrew Walsh, "Preserving Bodies, Saving Souls: Religious Incongruity in a Northern Madagascar Mining Town," *Journal of Religion in Africa* 32, no. 3 (2001): 369.

⁶⁹ Hurst

⁷⁰ Maxwell, 173.

creates different jobs, making more people employable. New jobs may include preachers, builders of the churches, secretaries, and outreach individuals.⁷¹

This sense of community which is created within a born again community is exclusive to those who have taken the step to proclaim their status of being born again. In one village in Ghana the born again individuals were asked to publicly denounce traditional village practices in front of their families. The individuals were encouraged to become attached to their new found family of believers instead of their blood family. The newly formed communities of believers were their new family, and because their blood relatives were not going to announce their belief in Christ, the missionaries told the new believers to abandon their old family. The born again model places a large emphasis on changing past behaviors and starting afresh with new Christian behaviors.⁷² In one village in Madagascar people were so moved by the power they felt with the new born again community that they were breaking traditional African taboo's. The actions of these people split the community in two, those that were believers, and those that were not.⁷³

Much of the emphasis of this model is placed on taking scripture literally, so reading the Bible for oneself would be a great asset for one to have. One reading the Bible can become a better teacher, but the main drive to want to read the Bible is for one to learn how to gain more spiritual gifts so they may have more power. This drive to read and understand the Bible leads to a dedication in education so that one may learn how to read on their own. This is within an area where class numbers in high school are

⁷¹ Maxwell, 175.

⁷² Walsh, 369.

⁷³ Walsh, 367.

extremely low and even to have a primary school education is a blessing.⁷⁴ The born again model also has a great emphasis on forgiveness when one dedicates his or her life to Jesus. This has been helpful for healing and reconciliation where much of East Africa is torn up by war within tribes or nations.⁷⁵

Success

The method of approach that the born again groups use is first to target an area in 'crisis,' providing basic relief as well as sometimes sustainable relief. Through this work, the story of Jesus as savior is shared and success is seen if the target group has a high percentage of conversion to the born again community.⁷⁶ This alternative mission in target areas is not a secret, as the project manager of WVE said of the Ansokia project:

The establishment and strengthening of an Evangelical church in Ansokia is the product of the consolidation of Christian witness that dates back to the period of famine relief and rehabilitation. WVE staff members *exploited the opportunity to teach the word of God in the feeding centers*⁷⁷ (italics added).

People involved in the born again model see famines, natural disasters and other situations where people are especially vulnerable as "windows of opportunity" to spread God's message.⁷⁸ When people are vulnerable and in a distressed state they will reach out and cling to things which give them hope. If people can introduce Christianity at this point in their lives they will often become more involved than they might normally.

This dual emphasis on basic needs and calling others to Christianity has been debated through the years. In the 1920s there was a rise in people wanting to create projects of orphanages and schools. The response to this effort by the Assembly of God

⁷⁴ Maxwell, 173.

⁷⁵ Maxwell, 173.

⁷⁶ Hurst.

⁷⁷ Abede, 24

⁷⁸ Assemblies of God Global Missions

Mission Director, Roswell Flower, was that although these charitable projects are good work in itself, it is not in accord with the Pentecostal standard of mission as witness.⁷⁹

These projects were good because they would provide a service in hopes that the spiritual conversion would follow, but this tactic in general was too expensive.⁸⁰ Today the born again model has a combined approach, but the ultimate goal is to save as many people as possible. The current philosophy is that ministering to the poor is important, but establishing “churches that will mature, last and multiply, by following root of the Bible in Acts is the key priority that the born again model aims for.”⁸¹

View of Government

The relationship between the born again groups and the government varies from area to area, to the point of exact opposite views. A professor at Kenyatta University of Nairobi, Zacharia Samita, studied various born again churches in the area. Some of the groups emphasized the community of the born again group, not wanting to involve themselves with those who were not born again, so they were encouraged to participate in elections only through prayer. Church leaders encouraged members to pray at home or gather at the church during voting and pray for safe and fare elections.⁸² This alternative to direct involvement in elections was found to create a greater unity in the community, that there was a shared collective conscious, and that a higher power was working

⁷⁹ McGee, Gary. “Saving Souls or Saving Lives: The Tension between Ministries of Word and Deed” in *Assembly of God Missiology*, Fall (1994), 3.

http://www.agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/articles/savingsouls_mcgee.pdf

⁸⁰ McGee, 6

⁸¹ Hurst

⁸² Zacharia Samita, “Involvement in Development Within African Evangelical and Pentecostal Churches,” *Quests for Integrity in Africa*, Nairobi: Action Publishers, (2003), 115.

through the elections. This resulted in less violence during voting, more acceptance of the leadership, thus creating a more cohesive nation.⁸³

Alternatively, other born again groups were encouraged to not only vote in the elections, but to run for a position if they wished. Some born again groups have looked at Genesis to come to this understanding:

God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.' Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground-everything that has the breath of life in it-I give every green plant for food.' And it was so.
Genesis 1:28-30

This passage is interpreted by some people of the born again group that God is saying that humans have control over the land, and they should use the earth to develop it and prosper economically off the land. If people from the born again communities are in positions of authority in the government, they will be in positions to financially develop the world to the glory of those who are born again.⁸⁴ This is a very important aspect of the born again groups, as this gives them more power in the nation. Positions of authority and power are sought by born again groups because they want the economic means of production to be in the hands of those who are blessed by God, or born again. This also goes along with the belief that those who are born again will be blessed by God with health and fortune.⁸⁵

Outreach

The rapid growth of the born again movement has flourished in part because of the use of media. In areas where there is television it is common for a large percent of

⁸³ Samita, 117.

⁸⁴ Samita, 117.

⁸⁵ Shaul and Cesar, 26.

the stations to broadcast preachers both from Africa and from America.⁸⁶ Once individuals have been identified as leaders in the church communities they may choose to get further training in religion. Between the Assembly of God USA and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada there are three large training centers on the African continent. One is in Togo, in western Africa, and the other two are in Nairobi, all offering a B.A. and a M.A. Each of these institutions is poorly staffed and there are few library resources. There are numerous other born again training centers in Africa, but these only offer certificates, and are in even worse shape financially than those offering degrees.⁸⁷

Conclusion- Scripture

The born again group focuses on certain passages of scripture and interprets them literally, and this literal interpretation is shown through the actions taken in Africa. Paul's teachings to the Corinthians are a key scriptural basis that the born again model follows. Paul, for example, according to this model, teaches that people who believe in Christ will be blessed and their problems reduced. Those that do not believe in Christ will suffer. The born again model uses this interpretation to fuel their work in East Africa. It is taught that people in poverty are in that state because they do not believe in Christ, but once they choose to believe in Christ, they will come out of poverty. This is extremely enticing in the region, because so many people suffer from poverty.

The foundation for the goal of the born again model is to tell East Africans about Christ's powers are found in the post resurrection narratives. When Jesus appeared to the disciples he told them to spread the news of Christ's miraculous resurrection. Those that are born again take this literally.

⁸⁶ Authors experience.

⁸⁷ Larbi, 162.

Conclusion- Response to Crisis

The born again group does not see the main crisis in East Africa to be extreme poverty. The main crisis they see is lack of belief in Christ. This lack of Christianity creates high rates of poverty. To solve poverty, one must spread Christianity. This is an indirect approach to alleviation of the crisis, but this group believes it is the most effective and sustainable approach. The born again group realizes that relief of poverty is often the main goal of people in East Africa, so sometimes born again groups will approach target areas proclaiming this goal, but the real reason for involvement with the target group is to convert people to Christianity.

Conclusion- Interaction with People

How the born again group views people inside and outside the target area is a reflection of how they interpret scripture and how they respond to the crisis. They feel their mission is to spread Christianity to East Africa so people will come out of poverty, but if they do not believe in Christ they will remain in poverty. This approach results in a limited approach of the crisis, where those that do not believe in Christ will not succeed in overcoming poverty. Those that do believe in Christ will be rewarded, but those who do not chose to join the group of believers will be punished and may create damage. This results in a very tight group that believes in Christ, while those who refuse to believe in Christ are excluded from the group and shunned. Inside the community of believers a very strong community is developed, and this then creates poverty relief because of changed values and a supportive sense of community that will work together to alleviate poverty.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis

Before making any generalizations as to what the two types of models tell us about the meeting of basic needs in East Africa, each category will be analyzed according to the three categories previously laid out: scripture, response to crisis and interaction with people. Analyzing these will help lay out the foundation for future research that will be proposed. The research proposal that comes out of this will help determine which path of Christian development is appropriate for different goals, and maybe aspects of each model can be combined for the best achievements in basic human needs.

Scripture

Both the born again model and the service first model use scripture as the foundation of their approach to their work in East Africa. Both have foundations in scripture, but the scripture they value most is different, and how they interpret it is quite different. The service first model focuses on scripture that urges the creation of justice for the poor and oppressed. It sees both the Old Testament and New Testament as proclamations to reach out and help the poor, which is implemented by assisting all who are poor in East Africa. This interpretation of scripture focuses on the present time, and changing the structures that are presently in effect. This is in contrast to the born again model which focuses on future situations. The born again model focuses on scripture that talks about the terms of heaven, and how one can get there. This is a very futuristic aspect, but yet has implications for present times. Because people are concerned with the future, and how to get there, this affects how they live in current times. This scripture regarding salvation is interpreted extremely literally. The Bible makes reference to

specific things which will gain or prevent salvation, and this is taken very literally, and implemented in work in East Africa.

By interpreting the scripture literally, several dangers arise. For example, this literal interpretation of scripture says that those who believe in Jesus, or are born again, will be able to pick up snakes, drink deadly poison, and heal sick people (according to a literal interpretation of Mark 16:17-18). When this scripture is interpreted literally, people may do these things thinking they will live. A literal interpretation does not account for people who may die, and yet were born again. This is an essential belief to clarify in East Africa where children and adults are dying constantly, even those that are born again.

This literal approach to interpreting the Bible and doing things for the purpose of salvation has the potential to soon fail in East Africa. What happens to the person who has contracted HIV, then becomes born again? The literal interpretation of scripture model says that this person will now be healed by the Holy Spirit. What if this person is not cured? Literal interpretation of scripture lacks an explanation for when life does not live up to what the Bible says. This could cause problems for areas that do not resemble what the Bible says. When life fails to live up to these Biblical interpretations there leaves several options. Either the people were not living according to the commands set forth, so they need to try harder, or the Bible is faulty. Either of these options may result in extreme frustration for the group trying to survive amid a crisis. One option faults the basic foundations of scripture, possibly causing a backlash, and the other one faults people themselves, creating discouragement. Possibly, people who are born again really do have spiritual powers to overcome HIV/AIDS. Research has not been documented to

prove this, and further in-country research is needed to truly see if people that are born again really believe that they have spiritual powers, as well as if these powers are effective.

The service first approach, in opposition, does not place this emphasis on the infallibility of scripture. Their work is motivated by scripture, but because they do not preach to the target group there is no reliance on scripture by the target people. This approach is much more effective when dealing with the crisis, where people are frequently dying and more often than not are sick. By interpreting the gospel the way they do, all people in need can be helped by the service first group. People who are not Christian have witnessed this, and become more open and appreciative to Christianity because of this. This is extremely important in places where religion is a cause of conflict, such as in Sudan where Muslims are fighting Christians. This act of love to all people overcomes the hate many people are fighting over, and can be a positive tool for reconciliation.

Response to Crisis

The born again approach and the service first model have very different approaches to the crisis, where the service first groups address the crisis directly, and the born again model addresses the crisis indirectly, through the belief of Jesus as savior. The born again model does not address the crisis directly, because they do not see the pre-defined crisis as being the main crisis in East Africa. The perceived crisis in East Africa according to the born again model is the lack of those that are born again in the area. This discrepancy of what the crisis is has enormous effects on how the crisis is addressed.

In regard to time, the service first approach will work to improve the crisis situation much faster. The born again groups believe that sustainable change will come from giving one's life to Christ, which may take some time. The target area is an area that is unfamiliar with Christianity so the target group must first be introduced to the religion, and then make a decision to commit their life. Once one becomes born again, the spiritual gifts may not manifest right away, so one may not have the means to heal the sick immediately. This indirect method of changing the crisis situation takes a great deal of time, and the results are not guaranteed. Again, further in-country research is necessary to fully understand and analyze the impact becoming born again has on the achievement of basic needs.

Where the service first model makes it clear to the target area that they are present to alleviate the suffering caused by the crisis, the born again model does not always make it clear that they are present to assist in the crisis of poverty. This can appear to be deceiving for target groups whose main concern may be the alleviation of poverty. Communities may not be attracted to a born again program that advertises salvation, when the communities main concern is poverty relief. Other born again groups do indeed intentionally advertise to come to the relief of the crisis of poverty, when their real motivation for involvement is gaining born again members. This may be deceiving for communities, and they may feel betrayed and lied to. On the other hand, if communities do find relief in the born again salvation approach they would be extremely grateful to this method, but how people view the born again approach should be investigated directly.

People

Both groups begin by seeking out the same groups of people- those who are in greatest need. The service first model seeks out these people because they are the most vulnerable to death and suffering. The born again model seeks out these groups because they are the most likely to respond positively to messages of hope in times of great distress. The born again model will also seek out other people not in the greatest need, but they find it especially effective to approach the areas in greatest crisis.

Once the target groups are found, the way the two groups view the people differs greatly. The service first model views the target people as accompaniments that do the majority of the work on the crisis for themselves. The service first staff is more of a support system for the target area, and the target group is given full responsibility to change their situation on their own. This is a very empowering method, and is sustainable even after the service first staff leave. A successful project in their view has trained people to care for themselves on their own, and sustains this success. The born again group views the target people as “ignorant” to the message of Jesus, and needing to be saved from this ignorance. Just as in the service first model, once the mission is accomplished the leadership changes from the born again staff into the hands of the community.

In the born again model the community of believers, or those who are born again consist of a very tight and strong group, and many benefits come out of this community. Unhealthy behaviors of the born again individuals are changed to more healthy lifestyles, and this has a positive effect on basic human needs. People within the community are more willing to help each other out because of the sense of unity they now have with

being born again. This strong sense of community is not formed in the service first model. The main sense of community is built during work to achieve basic human needs. Certainly a strong community is developed while working on this project, but it is not a strong emphasis of the service first model.

The way the born again group views the target people may be seen as very demeaning and punitive, insuring the target group that the only path to follow is the born again path. This contrasts with the service first model, which uplifts individuals to make positive changes for themselves. The stems from the first impression the different groups have of the target people, which are extremely different. The born again group views the group as needing to be taught about Christ, while the service first method views all people as equals to themselves. These drastically different views of the target groups certainly change the success rates of acquiring basic human needs. If people are being told that they are following the wrong path they are more likely to not want to join the group because of feeling attacked. If they do choose to join the group, they may be joining the born again group out of the fear of being an outcast. This guilt and exclusion that is pressured on the target group from the born again group can have negative effects for both those joining or those not joining the group. People may join the group for the wrong reasons, feeling pressured or coerced into joining, or they may not join and feel excluded and attacked. This effect is not seen in the service first model because of the creation of justice and equality that is instilled upon all people.

More research is needed to see the actual effects the born again method has on basic human needs, but the sense of community which is created is a strong aspect. A stronger community can work together to achieve needs collectively, which is a good

indicator of success in the born again communities. This success, however is limited to the people inside the community, and people who are not born again are not only not included from the community, but they are shunned. This may include family members who are separated by beliefs. Within the community human needs are increased, but outside the community this does not occur.

Just in how the two models view the people they work with very differently from each other, they also view outside groups in a very different light. The service first model views all people as being equally valued, the community they operate within is the global community which includes all people, so the target group is no different from any outside groups that may be involved. The born again model, on the other hand, views the community as all the people in the world that are born again. This community is thought of very highly, and an attempt is made to bring those outside the group into the community. The people who do not want to be born again are not included in the community, and are looked down upon. This creates areas of exclusive groups that may have offended other groups around them. This stems from the emphasis of the one path of success, and the requirement of being saved to be successful, while poverty is caused by not being born again.

The sense of community that is built in the born again model can be harmful to the greater cause of East Africa. In a region that is already torn apart by tribal conflict, nations that were created randomly by colonialists, and amidst the great crisis, more division is not needed. To overcome the crisis East Africa needs to unite and focus on poverty relief, not create more divides. Villages and even families have been torn apart by the great divide that stems from the born again groups looking down on those that are

not born again. The association between being impoverished and not being born again is perpetuated by the born again model, so people of this view would want to avoid interactions with those that are not born again. This is not at all the case in the service first model because of the equality that the service first staff creates in their work.

In overcoming poverty in any region the government is always involved at some level because of the structure the government creates that can help or harm poverty levels. The service first model actively involves the government, lobbying them to enact policies that help the relief of poverty. The work of the lobbying groups has proven effective in several cases. The born again model involves itself with government mostly through prayer. Studies have not been done to see if this is an effective tool in changing policies that alleviate poverty. This concentration on prayer has been shown to create community and unity within the groups that pray, but this does not include the outside groups.

CONCLUSION

According to the forms of analysis I chose to use and the general models I picked, the service first model is a much more effective method to increase basic human needs in East Africa. This is of course simply an introductory approach to further studies which must be done while in East Africa. The service first approach has succeeded in creating basic human needs for all kinds of people, without regard to religion, race, political affiliation or belief. This approach is much more encompassing than the born again model approach that focuses on people's view of salvation while using the crisis to gain access to people. The largest factor as to why the born again model is not greatly effective in increasing basic needs is that the born again model does not view the largest

crisis as being poverty. This may seem like an unfair comparison, given that the two groups have different primary goals, yet this comparison is still valid. The born again group approaches the crisis in a means that uses the crisis to achieve their goal. Given the pending crisis in East Africa, groups should work to stabilize this, and not use the crisis as a means of exploitation. The people directly and indirectly involved in the models are more included and valued in the service first model, creating a more sustainable poverty alleviation program. The initial draw to the born again model is clear, as for people to receive assistance they are told that they must dedicate their lives to Christ, and then are welcomed into a community that transcends borders. The results of this approach may seem enormous given the input, which is alluring, but the validity of the promised results must be analyzed. This research is not currently available, and should be done within the East African borders.

The seemingly winning approach that the service first model has implications for other groups involvement in relief work. The U.S. government, for example, has consistently picked target groups to assist based on the group's political and religious affiliation. During the Cold War it was U.S. policy to only give food aid to non-communist areas.⁸⁸ Currently, the U.S. primarily gives aid to nations of economic interest to the U.S., mainly to nations with high oil reserves. This is similar to the born again model, which gives aid to nations based on their beliefs. This system causes non-favored groups to dislike the donors, creating further conflict. The service first model does not play favorites, and thus is accepted all over the world, creating a more inclusive image. Governments and other donors should take note of this, as a way to be more liked throughout the world.

⁸⁸ Graham Hancock. Lords of Poverty (London: Macmillan, 1989), 71.

With the foundations of the born again and service first models, concrete research should be done first hand while in East Africa. The most effective approach would be to establish oneself within communities for an extended period of time. Groups to study should include the beginnings of a group's work by the born again model as well as a group starting out with the service first model. The approach, as well as the reactions to the group from the target population should be surveyed, as well as the perception of surrounding areas not directly involved with the target group. The changes of views, beliefs, and levels of basic human needs that are met should be monitored. This comparison will show how sustainable the approach was and this will be an instrumental factor in how effective the approach was.

Claims & Future Research

As shows in the information provided about both the service first model and the born again model, each group makes claims. These claims are founded upon scripture and they attempt to be lived out in East Africa. The service first model claims that they do not verbally preach the gospel to the target groups, but the gospel is spread simply by their actions. Through this method, the service first groups claim that some people are drawn into Christianity because of how service is provided in the name of Jesus, thus people come to appreciate Christianity. The service first model claims that what they are not trying to do (i.e., spread Christianity) actually occurs because of the way they live out their mission of meeting basic human needs. The born again model, on the other hand has the opposite approach, they claim that basic human needs are met by means of mission- encouraging people to become born again. The born again model does not see

meeting basic human needs as the primary mission, but yet this is done through accomplishing their mission of spreading Christianity.

These claims which both groups make are extremely intriguing because of their different approach to mission. Through the research currently available the claims to success of each group cannot be confirmed or denied. This would require concrete research with target groups in East Africa. For research to be conducted to see if these approaches are indeed effective, one needs to establish a relationship in a target area prior to the involvement of the Christian organization.

Both models claim to be successful in the opposite group's mission by way of indirect action. The service first model claims to influence people in appreciation of Christianity because they are a Christian group actively helping others. The born again group claims that when people become born again, their basic needs will be met. Both of these claims can be proved or disproved by analyzing the area's level of Christianity and level of basic needs through several periods of time. If an area is found to have increased levels or increased positive views of Christianity, then the service first model will have been successful in improving attitudes toward Christianity. If a target area of the born again group is found to have increased human needs, then the method used of increasing levels of Christianity to increase basic needs will have proven to be successful.

To correctly analyze a group's successfulness in an area, one must first determine what success is. What one considers to be a success may not be seen as a success to the organization, so the aimed success is important to determine. As discussed, the born again group sees success as an increase in those that are born again, so if one is aiming for an increase in basic needs this may not be seen as the best model to work through.

This, however, may not be accurate if the born again group actually succeeds in increasing levels of attaining basic needs indirectly through Christianity. When one wishes to implement a change in a group, one must keep in mind the desired success as well as the organization's view of success.

The born again group seeks to increase levels of Christianity as their mission, and the service first group may improve attitudes of Christianity as a result of their work. These claims call for the levels of Christianity in the target area to be measured and followed over the period when the organization is involved. "Level of Christianity" can be defined in a variety of ways, and this must be established. To determine the change in level of Christianity of a community, many things should be studied. Both Christians and non-Christians should be surveyed and asked similar questions, and monitored through the organization's involvement. Questions to consider asking individuals in the community include: What is your view of a higher power? Is this God? Are you familiar with Jesus Christ? If yes, what is your feeling toward Jesus? What is the percent of the population that considers him or herself to be Christian? What does being Christian mean to you? Do you attend church? How often do you pray? What do you get out of being Christian? Do you believe that those that believe in Jesus as Christ are better off than those that do not believe? What do you think about those that do not believe in Jesus? What about those that do believe in Jesus as Christ? How has being a Christian/not being a Christian changed people's perceptions of you? Do you consider yourself to be born again? What does being born again mean to you? What do you think of others who are/are not born again? What kind of behaviors do people that are born again have? Is it ok for Christians to drink? Does your partner cheat on you? Does your

partner help in taking care of the children and providing food for the family? For those who are not born again, how are you treated by those that are born again? What do you think of those that are born again? What type of rituals are carried out by the area to celebrate Christianity or being born again? These questions of “level of Christianity” should be asked before the Christian organization becomes involved with the target group, as well as during the interaction with the group, once the group leaves, and several years after the organization leaves the target area. The change in these answers will determine the level of Christianity a target area has experienced, or people’s change in attitudes toward Christianity.

In addition to determining the level of Christianity in the target area, the level of basic human needs that are being met should be evaluated in the target area. Research should be conducted in a like manner to the research that was done to determine levels of Christianity, including: What is the availability of water in the target area? Is this water safe for drinking? How far must the average person travel to access this water? How many calories does the average person in the area eat per day? What nutrients are in these calories? What is the death rate of the area? What are the major causes of death? How many homes used mosquito nets? What are people’s understandings of HIV/AIDS? What preventative methods are used to prevent contracting HIV? What is the infant mortality rate? What type of health care is in the area? Do people access this health care? What percent of the population has adequate shelter? What is the percent of children attending primary school? What is the percent of children attending secondary school? How far must children walk to reach school? What other needs do people see in the village that are not being met? Just as the level of Christianity should be determined

before, during, at the end, and several years later to the Christian organization's involvement, these basic human needs should be assessed at the same time intervals.

The analysis of levels of Christianity and basic needs at several points in time for target areas is essential for several reasons. The service first model's aim is to increase basic human needs, so if basic human needs are increased over the time period that the organization is involved, they will have been successful in their mission. The born again group's mission is to increase the amount of people that consider themselves to be born again, so if the number of people who consider themselves to be born again increases, then the born again model will have been successful in their view. This research which is laid out will determine if the groups are successful in what they set out to do.

The questions one asks to the target group in this proposed research may seem superficial at first, and indeed, they may be. For example, just because the number of times a person prays per day increases over the time the organization is involved does not necessarily mean that they have more faith than they previously had. The questions one asks are not so much the key factor, but the impression one gets while living and interacting with the people is far more important. One living and interacting with a community has a much greater ability of determining a group's level of Christianity than another researcher who may simply go into the community and ask the given questions. For example, a friend named Hakib who I lived with in Fort Portal, said he was a very devout Muslim, and indeed, every Friday Hakib went to the Mosque down the hill from where we stayed. As I got to know Hakib, his sense of being a "devout Muslim" was very different from what I would consider a devout Muslim. Hakib, he later told me, had a child with another classmate when they were 14 years old. When I would be eating

dinner and drinking a beer, Hakib would ask to share the beer with me, yet alcohol is forbidden by Muslims. Sometimes I would spend most of the day with Hakib, and I knew he never prayed five times a day as the Prophet Muhammad had prescribed. At a first conversation, Hakib might tell a researcher that he was a very devout Muslim, but only once a personal relationship was developed with Hakib, did I find out his true practices. This example shows the extreme importance of a rural immersion of a community required by a researcher in order to understand a realistic level of change in Christianity of a community.

Another example of the importance of immersion I experienced first hand while living in Rubona. When I first arrived to the village, most of the children ran away from me, terrified of seeing a white person, sometimes the first white person they had ever seen. After two weeks I had a group of older children following me around day and night, taking care of me and assuring I was safe day and night. After six weeks I had developed close relationships with a number of the small children, and I would carry two particular children around on my back all day. After six weeks I was trusted much greater in the village, and I could ask much deeper questions, as well as people felt much more comfortable asking me deeper questions, as one 20 year old asked me, "is AIDS really a made up disease by the white man to kill off black Africans?" I was also invited to more people's homes and ceremonies as they became comfortable with letting me into their lives. After living in Rubona for ten weeks, an even deeper relationship was formed between the villagers and me. On one of the last days I was there, one of my 8 year old friends, Grace, confided in me that she had just been raped by her uncle. This type of relationship that allowed the sharing of this information was only formed by immersing

myself in the community through daily activities- both the joyful as well as the painful tasks. The ten weeks of living in that village, however, had not given me enough of a rapport in the village to allow me to speak out on behalf of Grace's behalf. Because of the cultural barrier this may not have ever been possible, but certainly ten weeks was not enough. This incident with Grace is another example of how long term immersion into an area is necessary if one really wants to perform true research.

When analyzing the levels of Christianity and basic human needs that are met in an area, one must truly become immersed in a community for minimum of a year. This is required for the community to become comfortable with the researcher so that they share accurate information, as well as so the researcher can learn how the community truly operates.

Until this in-country research is conducted, one wishing to instigate change in levels of Christianity or level to which basic human needs are met, one may not know the most effective method. If the desired outcome is increase in Christianity, the direct born approach may be most successful, or the indirect approach through the service first method may be most successful. If, however, one is looking to improve access to basic human needs, one may choose the direct approach through the service first group, or one may choose the indirect approach through the born again approach. Setting up this in-country research to analyze the various successes of different Christian groups is vital in order to match desired results to method of work.

This research is especially important because of the increase of intensity of the crisis in recent years as well as the rise in the born again model. Studies on how to best achieve poverty relief are essential to the 800 million people of Africa, as well as to the

entire world with African relations. Both the service first model and the born again model present potential methods of combating this crisis, making research on these approaches vital. As all research regarding people's lives, the best, and most accurate informative research is done at the root of the issue, making in-country based research essential for this topic.

Through this research I was able to develop a much clearer understanding of the foundations of both the service first and the born again models. This is important because the understanding of other people's culture and background is vital before one can effectively assist an area in achieving basic human needs.

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