The Concept of Teamwork

According to Paul's pattern

It's worth talking about the concept of teamwork, as it is a New Testament principle which provides a key to successful world evangelisation.

God's Word is without error and we, as humans, can only think and act faultlessly when keeping His Word. That's why I refer to the New Testament, to Paul, and to his apostolical pattern for world evangelisation.

A CORE GROUP

If a missionary was ever able to work "independently", it would have been the apostle Paul. He was blessed, anointed and used by God like nobody else. The gifts of the Holy Spirit were used by him in great number - powerful signs and miracles occurred. Yet, he never chose to work alone. Paul was surrounded by capable people who would share his vision, devotion and willingness to work. His epistles are full of instructions to the brethren with whom he fought the battle and gained the victories: Timothy, Titus, Silas, Erastus, Aquila, Priscilla, Aristarchus, Tychicus, Apollos, Sosthenes, Gaius, and many more.

It is, however, essential to point out that all these men were directly responsible to Paul. It was not a scattered effort, but a well-planned and organised evangelisation crusade with subsequent assembly foundations being laid. Paul, no doubt, was the leader as Luke describes in Acts 19:22:

"So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season."

The apostolical pattern for effective missionary work and evangelisation is, and always has been, the Team - a special troop of dedicated men and women, who synchronise and effectively aim for a pre-ordained goal.

The principle of responsible teamwork also has to be applied in modern missionary work, if we want to win the world for Jesus. Whether we want to or not, whether we like each other or not - if we want to turn this world into the Kingdom of God, we have to find one another and become closer.

The core has to be established first, and then more and more layers will follow. The initial ignition will cause a chain reaction, which will lead to a movement amongst God's children, spreading the Gospel SPONTANEOUSLY in all directions. Nobody can keep to the luxury of their own "empire" any longer, if they take God's Word, and in particular His command to preach the Gospel seriously. We have a higher aim: THE EVANGELISATION OF THE WHOLE WORLD, and the establishing of the eternal Kingdom of God.

TEAM-MENTALITY

We have to get rid of rivalry and competition amongst Christians. If one considers the huge number of people who have not yet been reached with the Gospel, the bare thought of "assembly competition" and "mission competition" proves nothing else than to be the foolish games of immature Christians. The biggest enemy of church or mission growth has never been another similar assembly in the same town, but the low level of joy in the Lord and the Gospel, combined with insufficient methods of evangelisation.

The sinner that has fallen down the well, does want to come out and get saved, but he cannot reach the life-line if it is TOO SHORT. Whoever throws the life-line of God's love CLOSE ENOUGH, will also experience them grabbing and holding on to it, holding on to the peace and joy of the Holy Spirit.

SOLITARY WALKS within the missionary work or in God's Kingdom, in general, are not the right answer to the Lord Jesus' call to the mission field. Although great individual efforts are required, they have to be seen in a wider context, brought together with the work of other devoted missionaries and workers in God's Kingdom. If this is not the case, the main goal has been missed completely.

Team-spirit, and team-mentality cannot be forced, but will be developed and cultivated; normally over many years. This truth should be taught as an important teaching point in all our Bible Colleges: There is a GENERAL PLAN, a total strategy which everyone has to submit themselves to.

Paul achieved such great efficiency in his work because he knew how to involve thousands of witnesses of Jesus in his apostolical work.
He was a man with incredible spiritual sense and diligence, who could inspire other people and bring the same zeal for God's work in them: This is exactly the meaning and purpose of team-mentality, as it will finally lead to spontaneously RISING MISSIONS of the Church of Jesus Christ, as in Paul's time.

LIMITATION
Assembly leaders should consider creating a SERVICE-TEAM, as an assembly hardly ever reaches a higher spiritual capacity than the leader who is in charge.

Men with complementary services should get together and work together. After all, it's all for the Kingdom of God. Therefore, if two men of God with their assemblies of approximately 100 members each got together, they would suddenly discover that 100 plus 100 does not make two hundred, but five hundred. Their talents harmonize and complement each other so successfully that they will find themselves in a GREATER DIMENSION. I've personally seen this happening several times before.

Servants of God under Jesus' guidance are no danger to one another. We have a certain divine calling. **We need one another and have to complement each other.** Therefore, God did not give us all the same talents, but different ones. These men, joined together with their different talents, make a whole, a team, and give all glory to the LORD.

TESTIMONY
I myself was able to experience many times what real teamwork in the Holy Spirit can achieve. Since the foundation of our AFRICA MISSION, which is known down here in South Africa under the name 'CHRIST FOR ALL NATIONS', we could - through God's grace - move from strength to strength.

The Lord has put the best and most faithful workers by my side, as a completion to my own limitations. Some of my staff - we are 80 full-time workers now - only came at the beginning for a certain period of time and then left again. The Core group, however, remains the same. We shared our early years and want to grow old together. As a whole team we aim for the fulfillment of our joint VISION which the Lord has burnt into our very hearts: AFRICA SHALL GET SAVED, FROM CAPE TOWN TO CAIRO. We want to plunder hell and populate Heaven, for Golgotha's sake.

Yet, the greatest miracle is that we here, in these South African countries, fit fully into the spiritual landscape. We are in harmony with all Pentecostal movements and charismatic assemblies. We see ourselves as a small part of a GREAT, DIVINE PLAN OF SALVATION FOR AFRICA, and we are standing, shoulder to shoulder, with our dear brothers and sisters. This will allow us to see the fulfillment of our mission from God.

I appeal to God's servants in the German-speaking parts of Europe to find one another and to close the gaps. We belong together and need each other. **Let us build God's glorious Kingdom on earth in this manner.**

by Reinhard Bonnke

Translated from the original German: 'Das Team - Konzept (nach dem Muster von Paulus)'

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