

Wheels for God's Word



PO Box 6, Parow 7500

1st EDITION

Pygmies receive the Gospel in Zaïre (Democratic Republic of Congo)

RING-A-DING-DING. Some 109 years ago, the bicycle won its right to the road in Britain. In 1888 Parliament passed an Act whereby every bicycle had to be fitted with a bell. According to this law, the bell had to be rung at all times while the bike was in motion.

Of course, this reasoning behind the law was to warn pedestrians of possible oncoming danger in the form of a two-wheeled contraption.

Today, in large parts of Africa, some 700 bicycles are out there sounding their bells... for Jesus.

Who are these "bell evangelists"? Where do they come from? What inspired them to preach the Gospel by bicycle?

It all started in September 1995 when Pastor Raymond Lombard from Cape Town was moved by the Holy Spirit to initiate a project that would ultimately reach every home, family, tribe, clan and village throughout Africa with the Gospel of Christ.

From then on, there was no stopping this project. "Wheels for God's Word" was born and determined to carry out its special commission.

The project was introduced to the public through radio stations and newspapers to solicit public support for this project. The response was overwhelming with many Christians pledging money and bicycles.

Soon the first batch of bicycles left for a Pygmy tribe in northern Zaïre in December 1995. From then on the Gospel simply exploded in these parts.



WALK FOR CHRIST. Pastor Langa, who initially walked 2 000 km from the south east of Zaïre to Kinshasa for his bike. It was only on his second trip that he was able to receive a bicycle as an aid to spreading the gospel.

As the word spread, requests began to pour in for more bikes to carry out the Great Commission of making disciples of all nations, as commanded by Christ in Matthew 28:19.

Upon hearing of the project Pastor Langa set out walking from the south east of Zaïre to Kinshasa - a 2 000 km walk - to collect his prized possession, a bicycle to do God's work in his local village.

Sadly, at his arrival in Kinshasa, all the bikes had been allocated!

However, some months later, he again undertook the journey - this time to be blessed with a brand new bicycle with which to spread the good news of the Gospel of Christ.

The need for the Word to be preached in Africa is great. This is specially true of former communist countries where a tremendous hunger exists for the Gospel.

Currently there are about 700 bicycles in Africa, but Wheel's for God's Word's vision is to have at least 7 000 bicycles all over Africa by the year 2 000, to enable men of God to move 10 times faster with the Gospel. Recently five motorbikes were added to the "fleet", and today the bells are ringing with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

BY S. SWANEPOEL

Zaire; a fact-finding mission

Pastor Raymond Lombard, Director of "Wheels for God's Word", Christo Horn, cameraman and Pastor Ferdie Warwick, author of "Growing in Grace - Discipleship Course" went to Zaire on invitation of Rev Diafwila-dia-Mbwangi.

Dr Dia, as he is known, is "National Evangelist" for ECZ; Professor of Protestant faculties; Regional Director of Every Home for Christ International for Franco-Africa; Regional Director for Central Africa AD 2000.

Zaire is one of the poorest and most poverty stricken countries in Africa, yet it has the agricultural potential to be the bread basket of Africa and still export food. It is rich in minerals, forestry, virtually untapped and virgin. The hunger for God is indescribable and heart rending. There are approximately 15 million Protestant Christians and 17 million Roman Catholics out of a population of 40 million. All protestant churches work closely together under the name of "Eglise du Christ au Zaire" - ECZ (The Church of Christ in Zaire). This is a unique situation and is truly a fulfilment of the Lord Jesus Christ's prayer in John 17 "That they may be one as We are One".

French is the official language and Swahili, Lingala, Kigongo and Tsiluba are among the other nine national languages.

Dr Dia organized an ECZ Crusade in Beni in the North Eastern part of Zaire, some 80 kilometres from the Ugandan border, to coincide with our visit there. The largest recorded single gathering of Pygmies came out of the rain forest to attend the crusade, some 2500. At present there is a mighty move of God amongst the indigenous forest people.

In the past 18 months, over 400 churches have begun and the number is growing daily. The pygmies arrived in their "forest attire" and the local Christians rallied around and clothed them with garments small enough to fit 10-year-olds. The Christians welcomed them into their homes and cared for them. We all clubbed in and contributed towards food for the



PYGMIES in front of their home in Zaire.

Pygmies. During the four day crusade the town's people lined the street as 2500 Pygmies and thousands of Christians marched to the open air venue. Pastor Raymond was the main speaker along with Dr Dia.

Our main aim was the fact-finding mission to assess the need for bicycles and follow-up literature. Every bicycle speeds up the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus at least 10 times, as many

more villages are reached in terrain that is inaccessible to any form of 4-wheel driven vehicles.

War damage and devastation has left many rivers uncrossable by car because the bridges have been blown up; local people cross by log, bicycles, etc. or carry their bicycles across. We were amazed to find the high standard of control and filing system regarding bicycles already received. Every recipient has to sign for his bicycle and provide full details with an accompanying photograph. He has to submit a monthly report and a log is kept of every bicycle. We witnessed a paraplegic Pastor being given a wheelchair that was donated by a widow from the Cape. The glow of joy on his face and the expression of gratitude was an emotional moment for us.

The need for bicycles for preachers in Zaire is enormous. There are 30 000 ECZ Churches of which most of the Pastors shepherd their flock on foot. Pastor Lombard and "Wheels for God's Word" provide bicycles accord-



PEOPLE OF BENI AND PYGMIES streaming in their thousands to listen to the Gospel preached in a "Wheels for God's Word" evangelical crusade. Approximately 12 000 people attended the meetings.

ing to the need and terrain. The pygmies receive BMXs, those in rocky or sandy country receive rugged bicycles with broad tyres, those in town ordinary bicycles, etc. Wheels for God's Word envisage sending motorbikes too.

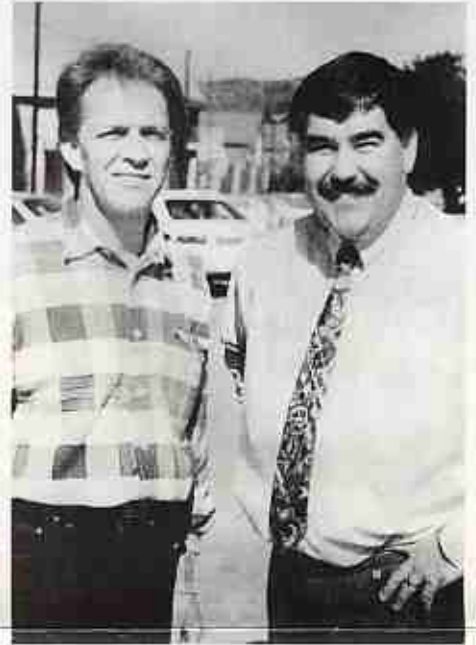
Many people have bicycles they no longer make use of and donate them to bless a pastor or evangelist to fulfill the great commission of Jesus to "Go preach the Gospel." The bicycles are crated and flown to Kinshasa. From here they are distributed. New bicycles are also purchased and sent as people respond to the challenge. Dr Dia made a desperate plea for 1200 bicycles to reach 70 000 villages, and 300 BMXs for Pigmy preachers.

The Heart of Man chart and accompanying booklet from All Nations Gospel Publishers was a hit as hundreds responded to the illustrated Gospel message. They require 300

charts (R30 each) immediately and 1 million heart booklets (R2 each). The "Growing in Grace Discipleship Course" is in great demand to grow and bring the church to maturity in Christ. Dr Dia pleaded with us for 250 000 copies in French, Swahili and Lingala and 150 000 copies in Kigongo and Tsiluba (Approx. R8 each).

Zaire has nothing! Generally speaking there is little or no work. Crime, corruption, poverty, bondage and fear are the order of the day. The military control the country. The Christians have nothing so God has become everything, Jesus their salvation and the Church their reason for living. We returned to beautiful South Africa, thankful to God for the abundant blessings we enjoy, sometimes take for granted and an overwhelming burden for the lost without Christ.

BY: F. WARWICK



PASTORS Ferdie Warwick and Raymond Lombard are determined to place 7000 bicycles in the hands of evangelists throughout Africa by the year 2000.

Making a difference

Since "Wheels for God's Word" has been operating in Africa, it has been blessed. Many people who had never heard the Gospel before have been reached and many new churches have been established.

A team of 8 pastors and evangelists of Every Home for Christ have only one bicycle to share amongst them. This team started one new church a month among the Yako Hojo people of

Bandundu in Zaire. Leading the team is evangelist Kabaja Neron.

The pastors and evangelists work under very harsh conditions. Not only is the country war-torn but extremely

poor. Sometimes they get a decent meal only once every two weeks. At times they even have to eat the leaves from the trees to survive. Yet, they do the work of the Lord without complaining and with joy. By receiving bicycles to assist them they are inspired to do even more for the Lord's work.

As Dr Dia wrote in one of his faxes: "At a conference of Pygmy Christians from Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire, where they heard that bicycles would be arriving the next day, they shouted and praised God for sending them bikes to do His work. They literally jumped for joy.

Already new churches have been established. In one instance Doctor Diafwila (Every Home for Christ International), French Director for Africa, found that one pygmy with one bike and one Heart of Man chart started 108 small churches in the Ituru forest in Haute Zaire.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE The eight-man Christ Maison en Maison (Every Home for Christ) team with the shared bicycle. This team was able to start one church a month among the Yako Holo people of Bandundu in Zaire. Leading the team is Evangelist Kibala Neron (centre, wearing tie).

Growing in Grace - a discipleship course.

- * A work manual to grow "babes in Christ" and enthuse established Christians.
- * A practical, how-to, hands-on, tried and tested discipleship course.
- * God's heart-beat!
(Mk 16:15)
(Matt. 28:19-20)
- * Bible-based; exciting; challenging; easy to teach; easy to understand.
- * Spirit-filled; dynamic, powerful - a must for every Christian.
- * Life-changing; develops and matures Christians; equips the saints.
- * Ideal for small groups/home cells or personal study.
- * A discipleship course that makes disciples.

AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH, AFRIKAANS & ZULU FROM

WORD ON WHEELS
GROWING IN GRACE
P.O. BOX 159
AMANZIMTOTI 4125
SOUTH AFRICA

TEL: (031) 903 6059 FAX: (031) 903 2090

Where have all the bicycles gone?

To date 741 bicycles have been sent into the following countries in Africa. 5 Motorbikes and 1 wheelchair have also been donated.

Angola
Benin
Ivory Coast
Kenya
Madagascar
Malawi
Mozambique
Namibia
Northern Province (RSA)
Sudan
Togo
Zambia
Zaire
Zimbabwe

Requests have been streaming in for bicycles from countries like; Burkani, Cameroon, Faso, Mali, Niger and Pakistan. Wheels for God's Word are presently investigating these requests and hope to soon have the wheels rolling with the Good News in these countries.

Heart of Man charts - a mighty sword in the hands of an evangelist

Wheels for God's Word is based on two pillars (1) wheels and (2) literature. The literature consists mainly of Heart of Man charts and booklets. These charts are a visual presentation of the Gospel of Salvation and are used by pastors and evangelists to spread the Gospel to the often illiterate peoples of Africa.

To date Wheels for God's Word has sent 2500 Heart of Man charts and over 6000 Heart of Man booklets into Africa where they are used with great success by evangelists and ministers.

How you can get involved

Not everyone can go into the mission field, but everyone can get involved in one of the following ways. Should you wish to support Wheels for God's Word, please tick where applicable and send to us at our postal address.

Wheels for God's Word has a video available that can be ordered at a cost of R30 per copy. The video was filmed in Africa, made in South Africa by our visiting team and shows clearly what Wheels for God's Word is all about.

Wheels for God's Word's newsletter will be sent out quarterly. Extra copies may be ordered from us. Feel free to distribute them amongst your friends.

If you have any queries, you may contact Marinda Hamman at (021) 913-1052.

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- Prayer
- By receiving your newsletters in Afr. / Eng.
- I would like to donate a bicycle
- I would like to contribute financially by sponsoring: a bicycle
Heart of Man chart/s

I enclose a cheque/cash/postal order for the amount of R.....

PLEASE FILL IN YOUR PARTICULARS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Mnr/Mev/Mej First Name: _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Postal code: _____

Telephone (h): _____

Telephone (w): _____