



A PUBLICATION FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN MISSIONS, UNITED PENTECOSTAL CHURCH INTERNATIONAL

The world is shrinking. We live in a global village. This trend called “globalization” facilitates both the move of people and the rapid spreading of the Gospel. It used to take months to cross the globe. Now, it can be done in a couple of days or a few hours. People who once lived in rural areas are flocking to cities for employment, education, and ease. This process is called “urbanization.” In the year 1900 only eight percent of the population lived in cities. In 2000, this figure jumped to fifty percent. By 2010, the percentage may rise to ninety percent. This translates into excellent opportunities for evangelism in both urban and rural areas. You might wonder, “How does evangelism in cities help with evangelism in villages?” Many who were born in rural areas, maintain a home connection, and may return there after retirement. Saints need to be encouraged to establish UPC preaching points when visiting or moving to rural areas. Of course, the reverse is also true.

Philip Jenkins recently captured a glimpse of the global scene. He wrote, “For some centuries, European and American Christians prayed fervently for the conversion of the wider world, especially in Africa and Asia, and many devoted their lives to achieving this end. And to an astonishing degree, they succeeded. During the 20th century alone, around 40 percent of the population of Africa converted from animism or primal religion to some variety of Christianity. Within a few decades, the African continent could be, in numerical terms, the center of world Christianity. Growth in Asia has also been impressive, while enthusiastic new forms of Christianity have blossomed in Latin America...”

Some are crossing borders into neighboring nations, or traveling across the continent or

globe. This is referred to as “migration.” Churches are rapidly becoming multi-cultural. Coupled with that, the church around the globe is growing by leaps and bounds. With maturity comes a sense of responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission. Those reached are now reaching. As these global pilgrims blaze the trail to new horizons they establish preaching points and churches. Such evangelistic endeavors uplift the kingdom of God when they come under the umbrella of—and in submission to—the overseeing United Pentecostal Church in such nations or locations.

### ETHICS IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

Psalms 137 is the Song of the Exiles. God’s people were imprisoned and posted to work by the rivers of Babylon. They grieved and wept as they remembered their home land. Today, the circumstances are much different. Ministry, employment, education, and sometimes war lead some to foreign lands. However, the feeling often remains. “How shall we sing the LORD’S song in a foreign land? If I forget you, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget its skill!” (Psalms 137:4-5, *NKJV*). How exactly can one survive in a foreign land? What are the Christian ethics in a global village? Here is my advice.

When a member is moving to a new location the pastor should send a letter of introduction to the UPC in that area. Find out the pastor’s name and church location. Make sure you encourage your member(s) to seek out the United Pentecostal Church. Be the bridge! We do not want any of our sheep to be lost!

A minister visiting another country expecting to minister (even for one service) in the UPC there should have a letter of introduction from his

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Presbyter or national board. One should never be offended when not asked to preach. It is best to have an advanced letter of invitation if you are expecting to minister. It would not be correct to expect the UPC (locally or nationally) to accommodate or financially support someone they did not invite to come to minister. To be a “guest” and to expect “hospitality” implies that the host has extended an official invitation.

A minister moving to another country should secure a letter of introduction and/or recommendation from his national board. Advanced planning and communication is crucial. Being licensed or used in the ministry in the new location is at the discretion of the UPC leadership in that nation. Never assume this to be automatic. The constitutional bylaws of the UPC in that country must be followed. God’s Word admonishes: “Brethren, get to know those who labor among you” (1 Thessalonians 5:12, *AMP*).

Remember our central Scripture when it comes to tithing. We all teach it. We all believe it. (I hope!) “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10). Where is the storehouse? It is the place of feeding, distribution, strength and direction. For the member it is the local church he attends. For the minister it is his national church in the country where he ministers. It is unprincipled for a member who has moved to a new location within or without a country to send his tithes back to his “home” church when he attends the UPC in his new location. It is equally unethical for a minister to send his tithes back to his “home” country. There are other sacrificial ways to express concern for what God has done through our home churches and nations. Tithing belongs in the storehouse where one presently receives spiritual nourishment.

Remembering the homeland motivates one to want to do something to help. I appreciate reports of ministers traveling or moving to other parts of the world that are assisting the churches “at home” by providing financial and moral support in purchasing land, building churches, or supplying musical equipment. That is commendable. But, let us never shortchange the

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proverbial hand that feeds us. The *NIV* admonishes, “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse” (Malachi 3:10). Each minister is to comply with the tithing and financial policies/bylaws of the (national) church where he holds his ministerial credentials and performs his ministerial duties.

Someone has compared Christianity to soccer (referred to as football in many parts of the world). There is only one governing body called FIFA. All football associations all over the globe have an alliance to this body. Rules covering football are made and regulated by FIFA. All football rules are the same regardless of where the game is played. Every referee irrespective of tribe, language, color or race lives by the common rules. Because of this any referee can officiate the game without any barrier. The only equipment needed is a whistle.

Christians do not blow a whistle. They make a clear and certain sound from God’s Word. Throughout the United Pentecostal Church International we uphold the teachings of God’s Word as evidenced in our *International Articles of Faith*. One national Superintendent relates this to “God’s Spiritual Syllabus.” In many countries whether the school is in an urban or rural area—village or city—the same syllabus is used in all schools along with common examinations. The same plan of salvation is for all people, throughout all time. It does not change. The *International Articles of Faith* remains the same in every nation where we have the UPC. This is evidenced in our constitutions and the guidelines of the Global Council. Each nation has the right to establish administrative bylaws and policies governing the operation of the UPC in that respective nation. The bylaws may differ from nation to nation but the *International Articles of Faith* remain constant. As ministers migrate from one nation to another they would do well to keep this in mind. It is inappropriate to go to a nation where the UPC is established, and to start a church imposing bylaws and cultural standards from the country he came from. Such a minister comes under the jurisdiction of the UPC in his new country, would adhere to the constitution there, and would keep teachings in line with the *International Articles of Faith*.

Together, as we follow proper guidelines and ethics we can impact the global village.