

THE CITY AND THE MISSION OF GOD: A NEW PARADIGM FOR CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

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ABSTRACT: Across the ages, the Church has been careful to respond to the call of God. In fact, virtually every Christian gathering today, whether in a formal church setting, fellowship, schools or agencies, tries to develop a theology of mission appropriate to its situation and in consonance with its philosophy of ministry and operational guidelines. While some try to incorporate the holistic approach to ministering by identifying people's felt needs and addressing them, others go headlong into various kinds of outreaches irrespective of all forms of circumstances. In its original formation, missions was launched for those on the streets, those locked out by forces of darkness and helpless in their situations. The mandate given to the Church was to go in search of such people and ensure that they are redeemed, trained and prepared for the Master's harvest. Taking the gospel to the streets of the city reciprocates the price paid on the cross for the redemption of humanity. This paper makes efforts to discuss the vitality of missions on the streets of the city. Attention is given primarily to the command of Jesus Christ to his Church to go out to the streets of the city and reach out to the dying souls. Obeying this divine mandate assures believers of success and identification with Christ. Developing a theology of the city is central to this paper.

KEYWORDS: Missions, Streets of the City, Theology, Approach, Model

INTRODUCTION

In recent times, Christian missions has taken a 360-degree turn in its formation, approach and even in people's perspective. Wearing a totally new look, it has been able to withstand all forms of attacks that could have weakened the human instrumentality involved in its propagation. Lands are conquered; cultures are penetrated with the gospel message. Bridges are built to connect with closed regions, states and nations. Uncommon strategies are constantly being developed, deployed for effective missions' enterprise. Skills are also developed; analogies are discovered to contextualize the gospel in terms relevant to the host cultures. The Church is really matching on, and like the Master said, "... the gates of hell shall not prevail ..."

The spread of the Church in this age has been quite phenomenal. More missionaries continue to move all around the globe, engaging unreached people groups wherever they may be found. But it is disconcerting to know that little has been done to create awareness of the dire need for missionary

efforts on the streets of cities across the globe. It is surprising that the shift in world missions is yet to be felt in most cities across the globe. Missionaries continue to engage rural regions while only a handful are engaged in cities across the globe. As if cities are saturated with angels from above, missionary efforts are scarcely present in most cities. Wrong assumptions that every city dweller is well equipped and prepared to engage urban realities and conquer the forces that wage war against godliness, delay the harvest of souls in the city. The implication of such wrong assumptions is the number of people who die in the city without experiencing Christ as their Lord and Savior. Some who encountered Christ prior to relocating to the city, loose contact with their faith due to conditions that expose them to evil tendencies, and eventually detaching them from Christ. Many city dwellers become so absorbed in their businesses and jobs to the detriment of their relationship with God.

Development of mission activities in this millennium is commendable only where it addresses acute needs in urban missions. Unfortunately, in many cities across the globe there are no sustainable structures for urban missionary efforts. Hence some of those who migrate from the rural areas in search of survival, exit the planet not finding survival or ever making realistic contact with Christ. Are the cities not for God? Does God have jurisdictions to his ministry of redemption and reconciliation? Has he not promised to save the whole world? In John 3:16, did he not speak of the city as part of the “world” that he loves? Why are many cities so neglected by missionaries? It is erroneous to conclude that a missionary in the city is not tangible; therefore not called by God. Such unbiblical assumptions discourage efforts towards city missions and lead to a loss of focus in the fulfillment of the mandate of the church.

URBAN GROWTH AND URBAN CHALLENGE

The growing density of urban areas across the globe has transcended every effort to forestall it. Governments, rather than enact laws to frustrate immigration to cities, are expected to restructure the system to accommodate immigrants. The world's population continues to grow at an alarming rate. Any ideas about decongesting cities can be described as lacking adequate missiological focus. Bakke in *Theology as Big as the City* noted, “In 1900, 8 percent of the world's population lived in cities. By the year 2000, that number will be nearly 50 percent.”¹ If the world had 8 percent living in cities in 1900 that was estimated to rise to 50 percent in 2000, then one can only imagine what would happen by the year 2020. Every single family in rural areas would have some connection to cities. This situation implies that even those in rural areas would be reasonably influenced by their counterparts in the urban

¹ Ray Bakke, *Theology as Big as the City* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academy, 1997), 12.

regions. Bakke notes, "We must acknowledge, then, that not only do nearly three billion of the earth's nearly six billion persons live in the cities, the other three billion are being urbanized as well. Sorry, you have an urban future, whether you like it or not."² It is certain that urban cultures have significant influence on rural cultures.

Throughout Africa for instance, rural farmers have strong links to cities where they access larger markets. The rural postal agencies network with agencies within and outside the rural environment. Churches are connected to the cities, banks are connected to the cities, schools, hospitals, farms, and various religious organizations all have connections to cities. Civilization at it were, has impacted more on the rural areas with influences coming from the urban centers. Style of music, fashion, haircut, architectural design, educational programs, worldviews and perspectives, are heavily influenced by urban culture. The present phenomenological nature of global culture would be best described as interconnected rural-urban communities. Demographically, the shift is to the city with its complex cultural effects spread across borders far beyond its territorial limits. The bad news is that the world is gradually closing up into one culture through *globalization*, the good news however is that the trend comes with diverse opportunities.

CHALLENGE IN NUMBERS

In his book *Transforming Cities: Addressing the Greatest Challenge of the 21st Century, Theory and Praxis*, Jean-Luc Krieg observes, "Each year, cities grow by 70 million people. Humanity has passed the halfway mark on this great transformational journey to urban living. At present, 3.3 billion people live in urban centers across the globe. By 2030 this number is predicted to reach five billion."³ Krieg's study shows that the upward movement to the city cannot be truncated. It is evident that the world's cities are going to experience more growth in numbers of settlers and dwellers. In stating that "3.3 billion people live in urban centers across the globe,"⁴ Krieg affirms Bakke's claim. Where are these people coming from? What could be the factor behind their relocation to the city? Are the cities ready to welcome them and give them opportunities to achieve their vision of freedom from poverty?

Krieg's note on the unprecedented urban population surge in world history is insightful:

² Ibid. 12.

³ Jean-Luc Krieg, *Transforming cities Addressing the greatest challenge of the 21st century: Its theory and praxis* (Chimalhuacan, Estado de Mexico: Comunidad Mosaico, 2011), 8.

⁴ Ibid.

The greatest impact will be felt in the majority world, mainly in south and southeastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, since 93% of the additional urban population growth will occur there and other developing countries. Over the next three decades, Asia's urban population will double from 1.36 billion to 2.64 billion, Africa's city dwellers will more than double from 294 million to 742 million, while Latin America and the Caribbean will see a slower rise from about 400 million to 600 million, according to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). The problem will not be growth per se, but unplanned growth.⁵

The growing nature of world cities is non-negotiable. It is a natural phenomenon occurring with various variables simultaneously across the globe. While some regions of the world anticipated such rapid urban change, others never thought of its sudden emergence and therefore never prepared for its effects.

GOD'S PICTURE OF THE CITY

The word עִיר (ir) and πόλις (polis) for “city” are used 869 times in the King James Version of the Bible to refer to regions known as the metropolitan centers or centers where major activities took place and where people from different backgrounds, and ethnic groups converged for one purpose or the other.

The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (TDNT) defines the word πόλις (Polis) as follows:

In the NT as in the OT (522, 6ft.) there is no trace at all of the aura which attended πόλις and the whole group of the Greeks. The word πόλις occurs about 160 times, most commonly in the Lucan writings (half of the instances), about equally in Mt. (26 times) and Rev. (27), only 4 times each in Paul and Heb., 3 times in the Catholic Epistles, the rest divided almost equally between Mk. And Jn. The word is thus most common where concrete relations are depicted, in historical presentations, and in the eschatological images of Rev. On the other hand, it occurs only occasionally in works of pastoral or dogmatic content. This is connected with the fact that πόλις never means “state.” In no passage in the NT can this translation even be considered. The use of πόλις in the NT is thus completely non-political.⁶ Πόλις simply means an “enclosed place of human inhabitation”

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ According to TDNT, “Antonyms of πόλις are ἐρημία in 2C. 11:26; ἔρημος τόπος καὶ ἰδιαι in Mat. 14:13; κῶμαι καὶ ἀγροί in Mk. 6:56; κῶμαι in Mt. 9:35; 10:11; Lk.

as distinct from uninhabited areas, pastures, villages and single houses. Sometimes it can also mean the “population” of the city, Mt. 8:34: ἡ πόλις ἐζήλθεν, 21:10 ἐσειθῇ πάσα ἡ πόλις, Mk. 1:33 ἡ πόλις ἐπισυνηγμένη πόλις and κῶμη.⁷

Cities in the Bible times were constructed for various purposes. However TDNT gives a picture of the city as a place where people inhabit, not a political geographical location, but neighborhood of people who are interconnected in various ways. Such a city is characterized by peace (*Shalom*) depicting its original state.

1. The Shalom Community

The picture of the city in its original form was that of a *Shalom* community. The *Hebrew Dictionary (Lexicon-Concordance)* defines the word “*Shalom*” in the following manner:

#7965 שָׁלוֹם shalomw (shaw-lome') or שָׁלוֹם shalom (shaw-lome')

- 1) completeness, soundness, welfare, peace
 - a. completeness (in number)
 - b. safety, soundness (in body)
 - c. welfare, health, prosperity
 - d. peace, quiet, tranquility, contentment
 - e. peace, friendship: (i) of human relationships; (ii) with God especially in covenant relationship
 - f. peace (from war)
 - g. peace (as adjective)⁸

The word *Shalom* significantly describes God's original intention for the city. In Jeremiah 29:7 the Prophet wrote, “*Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.*” God created every human environment for the good of those who reside in it. The

8:1; 13:22; τόπος in the sense of “inhabited place” (εἰς πᾶσαν πόλιν καὶ οὐ ἤμελλεν... ἐργεσθαι, Lk. 10:1); oikia in Mt. 10:14; 12:25 cf. Ac. 12:10.

⁷ Gerhard Friderich, Gerhard Kittel, and Geoffrey William Bromiley eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. VI ΠΕ–Ρ (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1968), 529, 530.

⁸ “*Shalom*” *Hebrew Dictionary (Lexicon-Concordance)*, accessed April 28, 2014,

twenty-ninth chapter of Jeremiah is particularly important as it was read to the bewildered Israelites on the streets of Babylon. Few points are captured in this chapter that is necessary for our attention:

a. 29:4: “... to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.”

Bakke interpreting this verse notes, “Viewed theologically, these exiles were not victims; they were on a mission from God.”⁹ Many people in various cities are on mission with God, and if they do not fail in such missions, they will be crowned.

b. 29:5, 6: “. . . build houses and settle down. . . . Marry and have sons and daughters. And raise your kids there in Babylon.”

God's intention was not to abandon Babylon to waste away in sin and awful practices; rather he initiated a strategy to deliver the city.

c. 29:7: “Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”

Bakke notes: “God is not asking the exiles to lead a passive, patient existence in the enemy city. He's asking that they actively work for Babylon's *shalom*, that is, peace with justice. Moreover, the promise is that they and presumably their families will be blessed thereby.”¹⁰ God's mission is to save mankind and he achieves his mission irrespective of human resistance. In His determinative holiness, God reserves the right and power to move even a deviant servant to a chaotic, corrupt and ungodly city. The case with Jonah who was invited to preach to the erring Nineveh is a clear example. Daniel understood God's missions strategy, joined in the divine mandate and became victorious.

2. God in the Shalom Community

In its original design, the city was carefully planned to accommodate whoever comes across its streets or runs into it for refuge. It was designed to be the hub of political, economic, cultural, religious and social systems to serve humanity. Defining the word “*Shalom*,” Robert Linthicum in *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a*

<http://lexiconcordance.com/hebrew/7965.html>

⁹ Bakke, 85.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Difference in your Community argues:

Shalom is most often translated into English as “peace.” But the English word peace doesn’t begin to capture the nuances of *shalom*. Peace simply means there is no hostility occurring right now – no fighting, warfare or conflict. But the Hebrew word *shalom* means much more than the simple cessation of hostilities. *Shalom* is an exceedingly rich concept, a comprehensive word dealing with and covering all the relationships of daily life, expressing the ideal state of life in Israel and, indeed, the entire world. The concept of *shalom* essentially encompasses what the Israelites saw as being foundational to life: being in community with each other.¹¹

A *shalom* community in Linthicum’s view is not just the absence of war and the presence of peace. He writes concerning God’s intention in the usage of the word “*shalom*”: “The fundamental meaning of *shalom* is captured by such English words as ‘totality,’ ‘wholeness,’ ‘well-being’ and ‘harmony.’” It is a comprehensive word that includes in it:

- bodily health (see, for example, Ps 38:3)
- security and strength (Judg 6:23; Dan 10:19)
- a long life ending in a natural death (Gen 15:15)
- prosperity and abundance (Job 5:18-26; Ps 37:11; Lam 3:16-17; Zech 8:12)
- successful completion of an enterprise (Judg 18:5; I Sam 1:17)
- victory in war (Judg 8:4-9) (Note that *shalom* does not necessarily mean a cessation of conflict; it means victory for Israel’s troops)¹²

The idea of *shalom* in Israel’s cultural context embodied deeper socio-economic and religious perspectives. Linthicum adds, “So when Jews wish each other “*shalom*,” they are wishing for each other health, security, long life, prosperity, successful completion of an enterprise, victory in war. In other words, they are wishing God’s best for the entirety of a person’s life, for all her relationships with others, for all he sets his hands to do.”¹³

Shalom community is God’s original vision and blue-print for the world. It is God’s gift to mankind. Announcing his special gift to humanity, Jesus said, “Peace (*Shalom*) I leave with you, My peace

¹¹ Robert Linthicum, *Transforming Power: Biblical Strategies for Making a Difference in your Community* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2003), 36.

¹² Ibid., 36, 37.

¹³ Ibid., 37.

(*shalom*) I give to you; not as they world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”¹⁴ Jesus' theology of ministry centered on the concept of world peace, the *shalom theology*. As noted by Linthicum, “It takes very little reading of the Gospel accounts, however, to recognize that what Jesus meant by the kingdom of God was simply the full living-out of shalom upon the earth, in its private and public dimensions, in its personal and corporate dimensions, and in its political, economic and religious systemic dimensions.”¹⁵ It will be ironic if Jesus took such an approach of ministry to the city seeking the peace of the world, while his Church tends to neglect such a vital dimension of ministry.

REFERENCES TO CITY IN THE BIBLE

BOOK	CHAPTER AND VERSE ¹⁶	REMARKS
Genesis	4:17; 10:11, 12; 11:4, 5, 8; 18:24, 26; 19:4, 12, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22; 23:10, 18; 24:10, 11, 13; 26:33; 28:19; 33:18; 34:20, 24, 25, 27, 28; 35:27; 36:32, 35, 39; 41:48; 44:4, 13.	Key word: City No. of times used: 41
Exodus	9:29, 33.	Key word: City No. of times used: 2
Leviticus	14:40, 41, 45, 53; 25:29, 30, 33.	Key word: City No. of times used: 7
Numbers	21:26, 27, 28; 22:36; 24:19; 35:4, 5, 25, 26, 27, 28, 32.	Key word: City No. of times used: 14
Deuteronomy	2:34, 36; 3:4, 6; 13:13, 15, 16; 19:12; 20:10, 14, 19, 20; 21:3, 4, 6, 19, 20, 21; 22:15, 17, 18, 21, 23, 24; 25:8; 28:3, 16; 34:3.	Key word: City No. of times used: 31
Joshua	3:16; 6:3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 24, 26; 8:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27, 29;	Key words: City No. of times used: 69

¹⁴The New King James Version

¹⁵Linthicum, 37.

¹⁶“Cities in the Bible” *The Official King James Bible Online* <http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/search.php?word=city&page=26&order=&bse> c= (accessed February 25, 2014).

	10:2; 11:19; 13:9, 16; 15:13, 62; 18:14; 19:29; 19:50; 20:4, 6; 21:11, 12, 13, 27, 32, 39.	
Judges	1:8, 16, 17, 23, 24, 25, 26; 3:13; 6:27, 28, 30; 8:16, 17, 27; 9:30, 31, 33, 35, 43, 44, 45, 51; 14:18; 16:2, 3; 17:8; 8:27, 28, 29; 19:11, 12, 17, 22; 20:11, 40, 48.	Key word: City No. of times used: 47
Ruth	1:19; 2:18; 3:11, 15; 4:2.	Key word: City No. of times used: 5
I & II Samuel	I Sam. 1:3; 4:13; 5:9, 5:11, 12; 8:22; 9:6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 25, 27; 10:5; 15:5; 20:6, 29, 40, 42; 22:19; 23:10; 27:5; 28:3; 30:3. II Sam. 5:7, 9; 6:10, 12, 16; 10:3, 14; 11:16, 17, 20, 25; 12:26, 27, 28, 30; 15:2, 11, 12, 14, 24, 25, 27, 34, 37; 17:13, 17, 23; 18:3; 19:3, 37; 20:15, 16, 19, 21, 22; 24:5.	Key word: City No. of times used: I Sam: 28 II Sam: 38
I & II Kings	I Kgs. 1:41, 45; 2:10; 3:1; 8:1, 16, 44, 48; 9:16, 24; 11:27, 32, 36, 43; 13:25, 29; 14:11, 12, 21, 31; 15:8, 24; 16:4, 18; 16:24; 17:10; 20:2, 12, 19, 30; 21:8, 11, 13; 21:24; 22:26, 36, 50. II Kgs. 2:19, 23; 3:19; 6:14, 15, 19; 7:4, 10, 12, 13; 8:24; 9:15, 28; 10:2, 5, 6, 25; 11:20; 12:21; 14:20; 15:7, 38; 16:20; 17:9; 18:8, 30; 19:34; 20:6, 20; 23:8, 17, 27; 24:10, 11; 25:2, 3, 4, 11, 19.	Key word: City No. of times used: I Kg: 39 II Kg: 51
I & II Chronicles	I Chron. 1:43, 46, 50; 6:56, 57; 11:5, 7, 8; 13:13; 5:1; 19:9, 15; 20:2. II Chron. 5:2; 6:5, 34, 38; 8:11; 9:31; 11:12, 13; 12:23, 16; 14:1; 15:6; 16:14; 18:25;	Key word: City No. of times used: I Ch: 15 II Ch: 39

	19:5; 21:1, 20; 23:21; 24:16, 25, 28; 27:9; 28:15, 25, 27; 29:20; 30:10; 31:19; 32:3, 5, 6, 18, 30; 33:14, 15; 34:8.	
Ezra	2:1; 4:12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21; 10:14.	Key word: City No. of times used: 10
Nehemiah	2:3, 5, 8; 3:15; 7:4,6; 11:1, 9, 18; 12:37; 13:8.	Key word: City No. of times used: 11
Esther	3:15; 4:1, 6; 6:9, 11; 8:11, 15, 17; 9:28.	Key word: City No. of times used: 9
Job	24:12; 29:7; 39:7.	Key word: City No. of times used: 3
Psalms	31:21; 46:4; 48:1, 2, 8; 55:9; 59:14; 60:9; 72:16; 87:3; 101:8; 107:4, 7, 36; 108:10; 122:3; 127:1.	Key word: City No. of times used: 19
Proverbs	1:21; 8:3; 9:3, 14; 10:15; 11:10, 11; 16:32; 18:11, 19; 21:22; 25:28; 29:8.	Key word: City No. of times used: 13
Ecclesiastes	7:19; 8:10; 9:14, 15; 10:15.	Key word: City No. of times used: 5
Songs of Solomon	3:2; 5:7.	Key word: City No. of times used: 3
Isaiah	1:8, 21, 26; 14:4, 31; 17:1; 19:2, 18; 22:2, 9; 23:7, 8, 11, 16; 24:10, 12; 25:2, 3; 26:1, 5; 27:10; 29:1; 32:13, 14, 19; 33:20; 36:15; 37:13, 33, 34, 35; 38:6; 45:13; 48:2; 52:1; 60:14; 62:12; 66:6.	Key word: City No. of times used: 44
Jeremiah	1:18; 3:14; 4:29; 6:6; 8:16; 14:18; 15:8; 17:24, 25; 19:8, 11, 12, 15; 20:5; 21:4, 6, 7, 10; 22:8; 23:39; 25:29; 26:6, 9, 11, 12, 15, 20; 27:17, 19; 29:7, 16; 30:18; 31:38; 32:3, 24, 25, 28, 29, 31, 36; 33:4, 5; 34:2, 22; 37:8, 10, 21; 38:2, 3, 4, 9, 17, 18, 23; 39:2, 4, 9, 16; 41:7; 46:8; 47:2; 48:8; 49:25; 51:31; 52:5, 6, 7, 15, 25.	Key word: City No. of times used: 81
Lamentations	1:1, 19; 2:11, 12, 15.	Key word: City

		No. of times used: 6
Ezekiel	4:1, 3; 5:2; 7:15, 23; 9:1, 4, 5, 7, 9; 10:2; 11:2,3, 6, 7, 23; 17:4; 2:19; 22:3; 24:6, 9; 26:10, 17, 19; 27:32; 33:21; 39:16; 40:1, 2; 43:3; 45:6, 7; 48:15, 17, 18, 19 20, 21, 22, 30, 31, 35.	Key word: City No. of times used: 47
Daniel	9:16, 18, 19, 24, 26.	Key word: City No. of times used: 5
Hosea	6:8; 11:9.	Key word: City No. of times used: 2
Joel	2:9.	Key word: City No. of times used: 1
Amos	3:6; 4:7, 8; 5:3; 6:8; 7:17.	Key word: City No. of times used: 8
Obadiah	Nil	
Jonah	1:2; 3:2, 3, 4; 4:5, 11.	Key word: City No. of times used: 8
Micah	4:10; 6:9.	Key word: City No. of times used: 2
Nahum	3:1.	Key word: City No. of times used: 1
Habakkuk	2:8, 12, 17.	Key word: City No. of times used: 3
Zephaniah	2:15; 3:1.	Key word: City No. of times used: 2
Haggai	Nil	
Zechariah	8:3, 5, 12; 14:2	Key word: City No. of times used: 6
Malachi	Nil	
Matthew	2:23; 4:5; 5:14, 35; 8:33, 34; 9:1; 10:5, 11, 14, 15, 23; 12:25; 21:10, 17, 18; 22:7; 23:34; 26:18; 27:53; 28:11.	Key word: City No. of times used: 22
Mark	1:33, 45; 5:14; 6:11; 11:19; 14:13, 16.	Key word: City No. of times used: 7
Luke	1:26, 39; 2:3, 4, 11; 4:26, 29, 31; 5:12; 7:11, 12, 37; 8:1, 4, 27, 34, 39; 9:5, 10; 10:1, 8, 11, 12; 14:21; 18:2, 3; 19:41; 22:10; 23:19, 51; 24:49.	Key word: City No. of times used: 36

John	1:44; 4:5, 8, 28, 30, 39; 11:54; 19:20.	Key word: City No. of times used: 8
Acts	7:58; 8:5, 9; 9:6; 10:9; 11:5; 12:10; 13:14, 50; 14:4, 13, 19, 20, 21; 15:21, 36; 16:12, 13, 14, 20, 39; 17:5, 8, 16; 18:10; 19:29, 35; 20:23; 21:5, 19, 30, 39; 22:3; 24:12; 25:23; 27:5, 8.	Key word: City No. of times used: 42
Romans	16:23.	Key word: City No. of times used: 1
I & II Corinthians	II Corinthians: 11:26, 32; 13:14.	Key word: City No. of times used: 3
Galatians	Nil	
Ephesians	Nil	
Philippians	Nil	
Colossians	Nil	
I&II Thess.	Nil	
I & II Timothy	I Timothy: 6:21.	Key word: City No. of times used: 1
Titus	1:5.	Key word: City No. of times used: 1
Philemon	Nil	
Hebrews	11:10, 16; 12:22; 13:14.	Key word: City No. of times used: 4
James	4:13.	Key word: City No. of times used: 1
I & II Peter	Nil	
I, II & III John	Nil	
Jude	Nil	
Revelation	3:12; 11:2, 8, 13; 14:8, 20; 16:19; 17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21; 20:9; 21:2, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23; 22:14, 19.	Key word: City No. of times used: 28
Table 1.		Total word usage= 869

SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SOME CITIES IN THE BIBLE

City	Meaning	Bible Passage
Zion	City of God	Psalms 48:2, 8
Pergamum	Where Satan's throne is	Revelation 2:12, 13
Tekoa	City of Wisdom	2 Sam. 14:1-4, Amos 1:1

Tyre	City of Unjust Trade	Psalm 45:12, Ezekiel 28, Isaiah 23
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¹⁷Table 2.

MISSION MANDATE OF THE CHURCH

*And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18–20).*¹⁸

Reading through the lines of Matthew 28:18–21, one identifies the tenacity of the mandate. The instruction is explicit and the command is clear. Jesus gave the Church an approach to missions that had no duplicate. He pointed the Church to a specific direction, with adequate details on what to do, how to navigate the terrain with the assurance of his full support. There's no other emphasis one needs to understand the commission and implement it completely. It is evident in this passage that the Lord of the Church is generous enough by making timeless and enduring grace available, proven in realities that can be measured in the achievement of the Church over the ages. Where would the Church have gotten the authority to penetrate cultures and spread the gospel of Christ, breaking every barrier and winning battles if grace has not been provided at the inception of the Church? But then, Jesus had earlier on said, “I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail.”

Obedying the mandate requires that the Church becomes incarnational as the Master was during his earthly ministry. In his book *Constructing Local Theologies*, Schreiter observed, “Rarely have Christian communities been more sensitive to the incarnate character of the church, in its moments of grace and abject sinfulness, in times of prophetic witness and shameful betrayal. All of these factors have been combining to create an important shift in perspective in Christian self-awareness and theology.”¹⁹ Traditionally, the Church’s ministry is that of incarnational presence. Through such ministry the host culture or context is dramatically overhauled, needs sieved and holistic approaches developed to ministering to the people. In its ministerial and less philosophical tendencies, the Church’s goal is to change lives and reunite humanity with the creator. The simple definition of the Great Commission is “Go ye therefore

¹⁷ Gaza – originally a Philistine city meaning strong or stronghold
¹⁸ *King James Version*, Ages Software Albany, OR USA, 1995, Version 1.0
¹⁹ Robert J. Schreiter, 1985, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 4, 5.

wherever human being may be found.” The targets are those who have not experienced Christ as their Lord and Savior and who, due to challenges of life are gradually drawn backward into the world of sin. The church must become sensitive to the needs around its walls. It must rise to the challenge using the timeless and enduring grace that has been made available for its missions efforts.

The founder of the Church introduced another dimension of his ministry with a bigger platform that addresses the question of incarnation. In Luke 4:18–19, he speaks of the anointing of the Spirit when he said, “*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*”

This single declaration of Christ revealed the un-polarized nature of his earthly ministry. Whether the Pharisees understood his message or not, what He communicated is the foundation of Christian missions. Christian missions seeks to heal the brokenhearted, preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of both physical and spiritual blinded sight, liberty for all, the bruised, the social outcaste, and the marginalized. All of these point back to one thing, total salvation for all irrespective of race, language, color, region, status and situations. Here again one sees that the mandate is explicit enough, the goal is well defined. The target is all of humanity, not just those in the rural or urban areas, but all humanity irrespective of geographical location, culture and context. Therefore it is improper to focus missionary efforts to rural areas or the unreached peoples' groups while the cities languish with many people wallowing in a cluster of spiritual starvation and darkness which Christ had already addressed through his death on the cross.

THEOLOGY OF THE CITY

Developing a constructive theology for the city is essential. *Constructive theology* here refers to theology that is adequately biblical and missiologically contextual. Theology that is *constructive* also refers to reconciliation theology that accommodates the unique composition of the cosmopolitan environment where majority of the world's population resides today. Inventing a *constructive theology* implies seeking a missional theology that identifies the presence of God in the city and strategically extrapolates such presence for dramatic transformation.²⁰ *Theology of the city* is the *theology of the street*, reading the

²⁰ The word “transformation” as used here refers to holistic renewal of the soul of the average city dweller. It conforms with Christ's goal in Luke 4:18ff. The transformation of the total man is the objective of Christian mission.

Scripture in the context of the streets of the city, developing a theological structure that strategically listens to the cry of city dwellers. It is a pragmatic theology that does not infer meanings, impose answers, but one that carefully identifies the city's felt needs and designs relevant answers that are contextually sufficient.

Constructive biblical theology for the city must recognize peculiar images²¹ of the city. These images are various institutions and sectors that make up the city. In the same vein cities are saturated with different layers of inhabitants, the rich and the poor, the upper, middle and lower classes. One of the unique features of global cities is uniformity in structured and unstructured social stratification. This conscious or unconscious grouping leaves majority of the world's population on the margins of society. Stanley Saunders and Charles Campbell in *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context* relate, "While Atlanta's economic growth has surpassed that of the nation over the last three decades, the gaps between rich and poor, black and white, city and suburb have grown ever deeper, with more devastating results for poor families and individuals."²² Theology that appeals to the city is that which is sensitive to the images of the city. When Christian theology adequately responds to various images within the city, then it would have been sufficiently relational and relevant to the context.

How does Christian theology address for instance the issue of homelessness among city dwellers? What are the provisions made by the Church's theology to handle the challenge of unemployment, poverty, crime, and social injustice? What about cultural differences, a major feature of cities all over the world? What method and structures are in place to handle the issue of diverse cultures and divergent worldviews of urban settlers? How has the Church handled the issue of drug addicts, homosexuals, gangs, touts, prostitutes, and alcoholics? It's unfortunate that some churches have no idea as to what strategy to employ to minister to people found in these categories. Some churches believe it's not part of their calling to engage in evangelism and transformational witness to drug addicts or homosexuals, for instance. If that is true, then whose ministry is it to do so? Some churches in cities across the globe align themselves with what they feel comfortable doing, and do not consider the cities as part of the regions of the world where the Lord has called us to minister as missionaries. Ben

²¹These images refer to various beautiful sites, structures (buildings), car parks, bus stations, recreational parks, museums, estates, islands, market places (the banks, post offices, airports), educational institutions, hospitals, prisons, religious centers, barracks, cantonments, government houses and quarters and historical edifices etc., that make the city a unique geographical location.

²²Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 11.

Sawatsky notes that:

Their [cities] unique nature and staggering needs require a carefully laid plan. We must minister to the city as well in the city. . . . Traditional strategies which call for the purchase of land and the erection of buildings are costly, not frequently repeatable, and beyond the reach of national church bodies. We need innovative and contextualized church planting strategies for the world class cities frontier.²³

Every city needs careful study that takes into account the multicultural dimension, density, economic situation, and religious affiliations. Frank Allen observes that “Each high rise, each squatter settlement has its own character and should be studied individually. Language, culture, family composition, employment – all these have a way of impinging on the strategy that is applied and the character of the church that emerges.”²⁴ Exegeting humans requires exegeting the environment where humans are found. Cities are unique and should be studied accordingly. The presence of churches in cities does not translate to effective city outreach. Successful urban missions must be evidenced in holistic transformation of individuals and the environment. Contextualized theology of urban missions must be backed up with practical steps toward transformation.

STRATEGIC MODELS FOR REACHING CITIES

It's important to mention here that any attempt to identify a uniform approach toward rebuilding global cities would amount to a sincere effort in the wrong direction. There can't be an absolute approach in terms of methodologies, approaches, or models for rebuilding the world's cities. However central to any idea of transforming cities and their inhabitants is God's Word, which is the missing piece in the world's quest for peace. In rebuilding the cities of the world, God's *shalom* is inevitable, it's paramount as the only solid foundation any city could ever have. Rejecting it means returning to abject poverty, ruins and total collapse of any city.

Approaches toward rebuilding global cities confronted by poverty, darkness, economic oppression, and political oppression, must take into consideration the context being addressed at every given time. Reiterating the importance of missiological practice in building communities, Paul Hiebert, presenting his thesis on “exegeting humans” in *The Gospel in Human Contexts*:

²³Ben A. Sawatsky, “A Church Planting Strategy for World Class Cities,” *Urban Missions* (November 1985), 8.

²⁴Frank W. Allen, “Toward a Biblical Urban Mission,” *Urban Mission* 3 (January 1986), 11.

Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions, argues that proper understanding of humans “must also draw on studies of human history and human sociocultural systems. Missiologists must then study how the gospel can be communicated to humans in their many settings.”²⁵

The erroneous perception that attempting to develop strategies for urban and rural missions amounts to disregarding the Holy Spirit and ignoring his power to transform people through his divine power, has been identified as one of the most inaccurate interpretations of the Great Commission mandate of the Lord to the Church. Kenneth Davis in his work “Developing Strategies for Reaching Cities” argues:

In the past, many Christian leaders and missionaries shunned strategy planning. Some felt strategic planning was incompatible with the belief in the sovereignty of God. Others contended it left out dependency upon the leading of the Holy Spirit, quenching His work. Both objections were wrong. A Sovereign God has always chosen to use human instruments to do His work. The divine-human cooperative in spreading the gospel is clearly seen in Scripture (1 Cor 3:6, 7, for example).²⁶

The grace of God upon the Church requires human activity to make it relevant to human contexts. After the salvation experience the saved remains human with all the senses fully at work but becomes a renewed agent who is now empowered to influence people toward salvation in Christ. The following models and approaches can be helpful in the quest to redeem cities:

Model I: Rebuilding the City through Prayers

If we are to rebuild cities for God's presence to saturate the place and bring holistic transformation, then God's Word must be obeyed in full. “If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my

²⁵Paul Hiebert, *The Gospel in Human Contexts: Anthropological Explorations for Contemporary Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic 2009), 161. Hiebert added, “Thus the study of missiology covers four main areas, each of which has its own central questions, data to be examined, and methods to be used. It examines the place of mission in theology, using the philosophical methods of systematic theology. It looks at the mission of God as a central theme in the unfolding story of God's revelation, using the methods of biblical theology. It studies the history of the missionary outreach of the church throughout history, using the methods of historiography. Finally, it studies human social and cultural systems, using the methods of the human sciences in order to understand how best to communicate the gospel in specific human context,” (161).

²⁶Kenneth L. Davis, “Developing Strategies for Reaching Cities” *The Journal of Ministry & Theology* Vol. 4 No. 2 (Fall 2000): 118.

face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land”²⁷ (2 Chronicles 7:14). The process of city renewal and rebirth begins with the church praying to God about the city. Seeking God’s face for the transformation of a city is a major missional dimension of God’s mandate to the Church. In Acts 1:8, the Bible offers an important strategy and model for world missions: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”²⁸ Why was Jerusalem mentioned first in this passage? Why would the witnesses begin from Jerusalem and not from the uttermost part of the earth? Today missions efforts are concentrated in the rural areas to the detriment of the urban regions. Assumptions are that those in the rural areas are the right people to receive missionaries, because they are blind, idolatrous, animistic, or barbaric. In 2 Chronicles and Acts, the authors writing at different times called attention to locations that were obviously urban. The new Temple built by Solomon was in Jerusalem. Dedicating it to God, Solomon cried and called on God to come and tabernacle in the Temple for the good of His people. God responding gave the blue print that the people must follow in order to experience a total transformation of the land.

Acts 1:8 gives a clear indication that urban missions precedes rural missions. Anything short of that defeats the divine plan for world evangelization. It is important to mention at this juncture that part of the reasons why world evangelization seems like a mirage in this dispensation can be traced to the Church’s failure to follow the divine model clearly defined throughout Scriptures. If the city is not delivered, the rural areas would remain unsaved. As the world gradually becomes urbanized, urban practices, perspectives (culture), become widely disseminated and adopted. Cities across the globe influence rural communities around them. Praying for the salvation and restoration of the city is therefore vital in accomplishing the task of missions.

Every city needs prayers in the following directions:

- i. for repentance and restoration
- ii. for cleansing from evil and atrocities committed by individuals, leaders and the entire city
- iii. for recommitment to God

Missionaries called to minister in the cities can adopt the following prayer approach:

²⁷The Holy Bible, English Standard Version (Good News Publishers, 2001).

²⁸Ibid.

- Early Morning Prayer Walk: This approach begins with a clear understanding of the history of the city. Once there is a proper grasp of its past and present history, dealing with the spiritual challenges of such a city becomes easier.
- Prayer Mapping: Once the city has been mapped it helps to strategize and pray specifically and intelligently.
- Prophetic Prayers: Every city requires prophetic prayers to release God's blessings upon it. Prophetic prayers confront the evil that wages war against the material progress and spiritual transformation of the city.

Model II: Rebuilding the City through Holistic Ministry

Called to be a witnessing community, the Church is responsible for the transformation and renewal of the community in which she finds herself. The holistic ministry model accommodates variety in evangelization strategies and captures the essence of Christ's invitation to kingdom building. The evangelistic ministry of the Church does not preclude it from getting involved in social transformation. In *Church without Walls: A global examination of the Cell Church*, Michael Green notes that, "The evangelistic element of the group must be a top priority. This may include helping one another to break out of the Christian 'ghetto' and make non-Christian friends through work, sports, hobbies, social activities and community involvement."²⁹ The Church must retain her ministry of the Word as a preaching Church, yet vastly developed and rooted in a theology of the city. John Miller notes:

God's purposes are such that the church will realize her purpose in the world, though some branches may be broken off in the blindness of their self-righteousness. The great fact that the church is Christ's missionary representative in the world cannot be displaced. We are His witnessing team in the world; we are His conquering army; we are His representatives inviting everyone to come to the party of grace. Nothing can stop us as we rely exclusively on His grace for witnessing power. The excellences and deeds of God will shine unto the world's darkness through our combined proclamation.³⁰

The holistic ministry model addresses the cogent needs that confront city

²⁹Michael Green ed. *Church without walls: A global examination of Cell Church* (Berkshire, UK: Cox and Wyman, Reading, 2004), 53.

³⁰John C. Miller, *Powerful Evangelism for the Powerless: A new, revised edition of Evangelism and Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1980), 78.

dwellers. Kenneth Davis writes: “Because of the startling growth of poverty in many of our world’s great cities, urban Christian ministries must be responding compassionately yet discerningly.”³¹ The Church cannot shy away from taking a holistic approach to ministry especially in the cities where various felt needs can be addressed to open doors for evangelism and city transformation. Part of the danger of not being involved in holistic evangelism is perpetual poverty and overwhelming pains that leave most urban dwellers in chaos debarring them from making any solid commitment to the Lord.

Model III: Rebuilding the City through Holistic Ministry

Effective urban ministry engages in the building of people and not property. The concept of getting a property for the church in order to attract people is now out of fashion. The high cost of buying a property will hinder a young group of passionate city ministers from getting involved in their ministry to the city. Churches that spend time building and rebuilding their Cathedral at the expense of holistic evangelism, undermine the call of Christ in Luke 4:18ff.

The instruction of the Master was not to build properties, but to invest in people. The Great Commission places emphasis on this: “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19). There is nothing wrong with having a good building for church meetings, but when it takes over the mission mandate of the Church, then it’s no longer in agreement with the divine assignment. “The rule of thumb: a church building is the *result* of increased church growth, not the cause of it! Numerous new church plants today affirm that most popularly, Rick Warren at Saddleback advocates this approach.”³² When the church invests in people, the people will in return build the structures. Investing in people has no end, but developing of structure should be a one-time well planned and executed project. Every year, the church should be investing in people and not just building houses and acquiring new properties.

³¹Davis 2000, 125. The word “Holistic” as used in this article is against the liberal sense of social gospel interpretation. Holistic used in this work is in the sense that Jesus Christ used the word as seen in Luke 4:18ff. See also James 2:14-17, 8-9). It refers to the concept of ‘total gospel to the total man.’ The argument between evangelicals and fundamentalists on the subject of ‘holistic’ ministry in view of its relationship between evangelism and social action continues to attract wide readership. An overview of the various viewpoints can be found in Samuel D. Faircloth, *Church Planting for Reproduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), 80-85.

³²Davis, 126.

Model IV: Rebuilding the City through Responsive Groups

Proper understanding of this model speeds up things for the urban minister. In every city across the globe there are groups that resist the gospel while others accepts its message of hope and click to its appealing invitation to build a spiritual family. Answering the question of how one discovers the people in acute need of the message of hope, Kenneth Davis noted: “We must find those going through personal and social change. People in transition—the recently immigrated or moved, the uprooted, displaced, divorced, separated; those who have recently married, had a baby, lost a loved one, or lost a job—these will often be open to the message of hope in Christ.”³³ It is unfortunate that many churches in cities have no theology for people in these categories. It's not enough to claim that they are in your church, but what are they doing there? And what is your church doing about their situation?

The streets of every city should be filled with people whose pains and burdens have been lifted by Christ. People who have been set free from the bondage of spiritual death and people who herald the joy of their salvation and the blessings of the coming Kingdom of God. The Lord's Prayer partly states, “Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” Unfortunately the reverse is the case on the streets of our cities. There are many without shelter, food, clothes, shoes etc. as there are many debtors on every street of the city. The call to ministry in the city begins with the healing of the broken hearted, the afflicted, and those living on the margins of society.

Responsive groups have certain characteristics:

1. **Language barrier:** The church should be able to reach each group through the language that would give them the freedom of expression during worship. Services conducted in multiple languages attract larger participation.
2. **Local leadership:** Training and appointing local leaders for various target groups is crucial in church planting in cities, which usually have people from various language groups. For instance, Spanish communities in the United States of America usually prefer Spanish pastors. Imposing a non-Spanish pastor on a Spanish church can be awkward. Meeting the spiritual and physical needs of a local congregation through a leader who can be sensitive to their needs is important. Local leadership plays a major role in building the people, and Christ's incarnation was not to dramatize his authority over nature, but to identify with the human context so he could

³³Ibid., 125.

be a compassionate High Priest.

3. **Transitory:** It is important to bear in mind that as people from the responsive groups grow in all ramifications: spiritually, socially and in other areas, it is possible that they will relocate to other places where they may not be able to access the congregation that brought them up or helped them through their challenges. That should not discourage the leaders, but arrangements should be made to ensure that as such persons move on in life, they remain in Christ.

Model V: Rebuilding the City through Bi-vocational and Lay Ministers

Urban ministries should accommodate bi-vocational ministers. Preaching the priesthood of all believers as one of the biblical doctrines is not adequate. Living it out as a church is what matters. People in different vocations who demonstrate maturity in the kingdom mission of the Church and who believe they have a calling to participate in Church ministry at the leadership level, whether in pastoral or lay ministry, should be encouraged to serve. The marketplace evangelism emphasis in recent missiological teachings of the Church should be the hallmark of every congregation.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

Adopting any of the following approaches at the expense of the other would lead to structural problems in the kingdom ministry of the Church. Which of these approaches best describe the mind of Christ in relation to world evangelization that includes city ministry?

1. Approach I: *Kingdom Mission*

Ralph Winter's research into Christian missions gave birth to the terms: Kingdom Mission and Church Mission. "*Kingdom Mission* views the Church as God's primary instrument for His larger purpose of extending His Kingdom to destroy the full range of the devil's work (1 Jn 3:8). *Kingdom Mission* also sees combatting the devil's work as an essential component of our witness to God's Kingdom, by which the Church is built. While it pursues the eternal salvation of individuals, it also seeks to enlist them in seeking God's Kingdom."³⁴

³⁴Robby Butler, "New Insight from three Eras of Mission History: Reflections on the Nature of God's Mission for His Church" *Mission Frontier* 30:6 (November-December, 2008): 16.

Kingdom Mission is focused on developing the people, investing in rescue missions that identify the urban poor for instance, and gives them hope. It deals extensively with the felt needs of the people than in building of structures. “Where variants of *Kingdom Mission* may be tempted to neglect building the Church, *Church Mission* is tempted to view combating the devil’s works as a distraction and to focus on building the Church solely by getting individuals saved and sanctified.”³⁵ The *Kingdom Mission* approach to urban ministry is ideal in that it does not just focus on eradicating the problems that confronts urban dwellers, but goes beyond the surface to dealing with the root causes of such problems to ensure that total deliverance is achieved.³⁶ *Kingdom Mission* is missions to the core, dealing with both physical and spiritual needs of those who receive the gospel.

2. Approach II: *Church Mission*

Explaining the concept of *Church Mission*, Robby Butler submits:

Church Mission calls for most disciples to be simply beneficiaries and supporters of ministry within the Church and of gospel proclamation to extend the Church. *Kingdom Mission* abolishes false dichotomies between secular/sacred, clergy/laity, and evangelism/social action, and seeks to actively engage the full resources of all disciples in multifaceted large-scale efforts to proclaim and demonstrate God’s Kingdom. As *Kingdom Mission* involves many more disciples *through* their full-time vocations – as well as their prayers, witness, giving and after-hours service – the additional breadth of activity involved in *Kingdom Mission* is undergirded by a much greater release of additional manpower and other resources.³⁷

Butler, reviewing the impact of the two approaches on world evangelization from the perspective of Ralph Winter’s “Three Eras,” noted:

Winter observed that Evangelicals’ perception of what God has empowered

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid. Butler added, “*Kingdom Mission* differs from *social action* in that it actively recognizes evil intelligence behind, for example, at least some diseases and natural disasters, rather than simply encouraging individual good deeds or mopping up consequences without regard to the source (for example, dealing with sickness and not attempting to eradicate the pathogens causing the sickness).” It then suffixes that *Kingdom Mission* aligns with the paradigm shift in missions introduced by the Lord Jesus Christ, where he advocated and practiced ‘total gospel to the total man.’ Holistic ministry that confronts both physical and spiritual challenges of humanity represents the ideologies of *Kingdom Mission*.

³⁷ Ibid., 16.

them to do influences them toward either *Church Mission or Kingdom Mission*. Thus missionaries of the First Era, during which Evangelicals had influence at all levels of society, complemented their church-planting efforts with sweeping efforts to impact the surrounding society. This is in contrast with the *Church Mission* of the Second Era, during which Evangelicals had spread widely among the working classes but lost most of their presence in the leadership of society and thus “tended to deemphasize, almost to the point of total exclusion, ideas of social reform.”³⁸

A proper understanding of Ralph Winter's two approaches to missions shows that while *Kingdom Mission* was practiced by Jesus (Matthew 24:14), and thus advocated by fundamentalists, *Church Mission* should not be thrown away, but allowed to consolidate *Kingdom Mission*. The danger faced by many who are involved in urban missions is the misconception that *Church Mission* is *the* ideal and *the* only way to Christian missions.

CONCLUSION

God called the church to a ministry that seeks comprehensive shalom of the city. Using a new ministry approach that identifies unique urban theology the Church will adequately address:

1. Urban conflicts
2. Politics of oppression
3. Economic exploitation
4. Religious crisis and domination
5. Urban poverty (the presence of slums and squatters in the city).

The Church will successfully finish the task of mission in urban centers only when urban ministers have carefully developed relevant theology of the city and context of ministry. Engaging in urban theology that addresses the following is paramount in the *Kingdom Mission* mandate of the Church:

1. Media evangelism
2. Networking of urban leaders and social groups
3. Internet evangelism
4. Specialized Ministry to
 - i. gangs
 - ii. prostitutes
 - iii. the homeless
5. Networking students groups

³⁸Ibid.

6. Networking market places, offices, agencies and private and public sectors etc.

Facilities provided by social media afford urban ministries great opportunities to reach every individual without much challenge. Each urban church should be engaged in Internet evangelism, using social media platforms such as: tweeter, Facebook, 2go, LinkedIn, and Google hangout. The Church should be the leader in transformation projects. In his book *Revelation: God and Satan in the Apocalypse* James Kallas lamented, "This tragically, is usually the case with contemporary theology. Rarely is it a leader, usually it is a follower, always one step behind, always beating the drum for a cause identified by the secular world, but usually beating that drum long after the secular world has moved to new issues."³⁹ As the carrier of God's *Shalom* the Church has no excuse for failure in dispatching and heralding the good news. Her mandate is so unique that just announcing it makes the difference as her message is the world's missing piece for transformation, peace and tranquility.

³⁹James Kallas, *Revelations: God and Satan in the Apocalypse* (Minneapolis, MI: Augsburg Publishing House, 1973), 14.

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