



CBF Notes



From the CBF President's Desk



PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

His Excellency, Hon. Donald Ramotor, President of the Republic of Guyana, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, specially invited guests; we have come from all over the Caribbean and the diaspora to join hands and hearts with the Baptists in this beautiful country of yours for the general assembly of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship and for two nights of evangelistic services.

Even though the arrival of Baptists in the region coincided with the plantation system which exposed our fore parents to the indignity of slavery, Baptists are known for their invaluable contributions to emancipation, education, and the creation of a better quality of life through the establishment of free villages and advocacy for justice among other things in many Caribbean territories.

We come together, therefore, in this the 44th year of existence of the CBF, conscious of our rich history but not detained by the past, to the extent that we are oblivious to the challenges of the time.

As we gather for these meetings, we are concerned as the rest of the world, for our sisters and brothers in West Africa and other affected countries who are experiencing the onslaught of the Ebola virus. I call upon Baptists in particular and the Christian community in general to stand in solidarity with our affected sisters and brothers not only through prayers but also through our material resources. I urge you to use this opportunity to advocate for a more equitable distribution of the world's resources so as to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor.

Baptists from the Caribbean and the diaspora who are meeting over these days will not just be concerned with matters of the soul. We will have serious conversations about issues of crime and violence, relief and development, the proper use of technology and the provision of Christian literature needed for moral education among other issues.

William Thompson (Rev. Dr.)
President

Caribbean Baptists' way of staying in touch.

We will always need your help in the following ways:

- Distribute *CBF Notes* as widely as possible.
- Forward the *CBF Notes* to your email contacts.
- Post a hard copy of the *CBF Notes* on your church's bulletin board.
- Send us contributions about what is happening at your National body and individual churches.
- Join our mailing list by sending your email address to us.
- Pray for us

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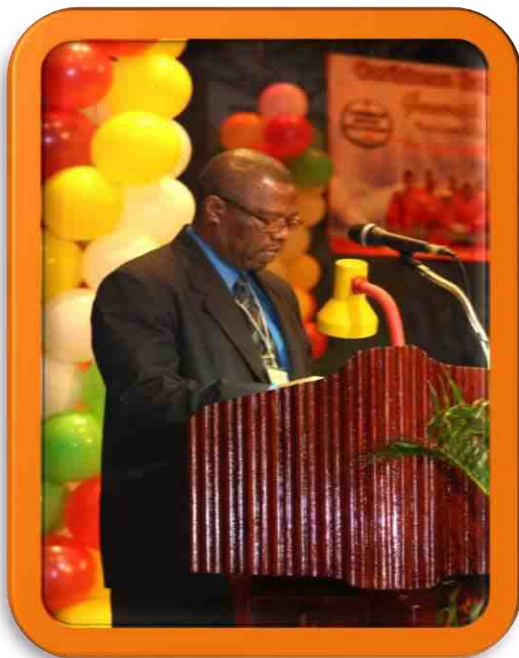
CBWU Report

Feature: Caribbean Baptist Personality Feature





Executive Secretary/Treasurer Desk...Rev. Everton Jackson



EXCERPTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/TREASURER TO CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. President, delegates and observers, the General Assembly of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship is being convened at a time when the entire world is under a serious health watch for the Ebola virus that has infested over ten thousand persons and has resulted in the death of over five thousand lives mainly in West Africa. The footages being shown on our television screens have left many persons traumatized.

At a time such as this, as Caribbean Baptists, we should play our part in assisting the affected countries as well as provide education on matters of hygiene and the care of the environment. Issues of stewardship need to be high on the agenda of the church community, as well as the management and distribution of the world's resources.

CBF- Organizing Itself for Mission

The eight goals established at a think tank meeting in Grand Bahama in 2010 to be realized by 2015 were:

1. To reconstruct the CBF website
2. To construct a prayer calendar
3. To improve communication
4. To provide ongoing training for Pastors and Lay people
5. To promote the growth and development of CCP
6. To establish a Social Justice Commission
7. To establish a CBF Foundation
8. To reorganize CBF in areas/districts

All the goals excepting six, seven and eight were treated during the period and attained varying degrees of success. Efforts will be made during the next period to work towards consolidation of some of the goals and implementation of those not yet realized.

Standing in Solidarity

One of the objectives of the CBF is the sharing of resources and supporting one another in moments of crises. The Caribbean is known for its vulnerability to natural disasters. Over the period, the region was

Executive Secretary/Treasurer Desk... Rev. Everton Jackson (Cont.)

visited by a number of tropical storms/hurricanes that left in its trail disaster of varying proportions as well as cholera outbreak as in the case of Haiti.

The CBF, with assistance from the American Baptist Churches International Ministries, Baptist World Aid and some member bodies, provided help to some of the affected countries through its member bodies. In addition, local conventions like Grenada and the Jamaica Baptist Union gave unilateral support to some of the affected countries. The CBF is grateful to those member bodies and partners who responded to our appeals.

Major Developments

The period witnessed some major developments as the executive repositioned the Fellowship for greater effectiveness. The category "Friends of CBF" was finally established; plans are proceeding satisfactorily for the establishment of a center for Caribbean Baptist Studies and the commencement of a Ministry Programme designed to further equip Pastors and other church leaders.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the American Baptist International Ministries and the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship to facilitate mission partnership between both organizations as well as churches/unions/conventions affiliated to both entities. The CBF is a part of a tri-partite relationship with Jamaica Baptist Union and St, Vincent and the Grenadine Baptist Convention gear towards strengthening the Baptist work in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as well as Jamaica Baptist Union and the Missionary Baptist of South Haiti for the purpose of theological training.

The drive by CBF to interest unions/conventions/association in the region to become members of the BWA has borne fruits. The CBF provided recommendations for three Baptist groups that were accepted into the membership of BWA at the annual gathering held in Jamaica, July 2013. They were the Baptist Union of Turks and Caicos Islands, Connection of Haitian Baptist Churches and the Evangelical Baptist Mission of South Haiti.

Special mention must be made of Haiti Baptist Convention who celebrated their fiftieth anniversary of indigenous ministry this year and the fiftieth anniversary of the Turks and



Executive Secretary/Treasurer Desk... Rev. Everton Jackson (Cont.)

Caicos Islands Baptist Union observed in 2012.

Concluding Remarks

From all indications, the CBF has made significant progress over the past four years in a number of areas. Evidently, there is a revival of interest on the part of some member bodies. However, there are some areas of weaknesses that need urgent attention if the Fellowship is to develop and grow at the desired pace.

One of the frustrations experienced is the unresponsiveness to emails/letters. Going forward, member bodies need to recommit to improving communication. Efforts are being made from the CBF office through the available technology, but without a similar effort from member bodies frustration can develop.

Another area is lack of financial support to the fellowship. If all member bodies were fulfilling their responsibilities in this regard, the Fellowship would have been able to accomplish much more. I am urging member bodies to recommit to fulfilling their financial obligations to the CBF.

It should be a matter of practice that the CBF is invited to the general assembly of each member body at least to bring greetings in one of the sessions. This would give visibility to the Fellowship and lend more support to its relevance.



It is a known fact, that travelling within the Caribbean is very expensive. This I believe, affects attendance at CBF related meetings, as well as, the functioning of the various ministry committees. I propose that in order to get around this problem, more use be made of technology to facilitate meetings. The times designated for executive meetings, could also be better utilized by arranging ministry committee meetings around the same time - in Jamaica we would say "using one stone to kill two birds."

The value of our involvement and participation in the Baptist World Alliance cannot be overemphasized. Therefore, I urge Caribbean Baptists to ensure that our respective unions/associations/conventions are represented at the General Council of the BWA, where important decisions are made. In addition, efforts should be made to honour our financial obligations to the Alliance. I further encourage those member bodies that are not yet members of BWA to consider becoming members. Let us continue to do all we can, to strengthen the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship and make it relevant to the times in which we live.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Everton Jackson".

Everton Jackson (Rev.)
Executive Secretary/ Treasurer



THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2014



When the General Assembly of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship met on November 5-9, 2014, no one could have anticipated what the Lord had in store for the participants. The host country, Guyana, lived up to its reputation for being a hospitable nation and went all out to show the visitors true love in action.

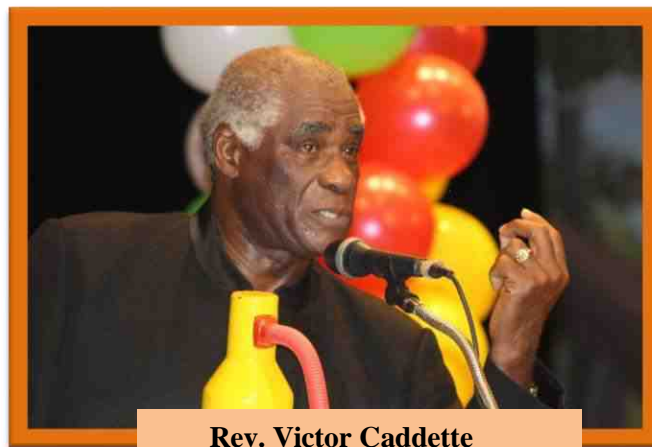
There were 35 delegates from member bodies, Barbados - Dominica, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, The Turks and Caicos Islands and, of course, Guyana. Led by the CBF President, Rev. Dr. William Thompson, and the Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Rev. Everton Jackson, under the theme, “In Step With the Spirit - Free at Last”, the participants assembled in the conference room of the Princess Hotel Guyana International for business meetings and Bible Studies.

On arrival at the National Cultural Centre for the opening ceremony on Wednesday evening, November 5, the guests, which included His Excellency, Donald Ramotar, President of Guyana; Retired Brigadier, David Granger, the Leader of the Opposition; and the Rev. Andrew Morris Grant, Chairman of the Guyana Council of Churches, among other members of the Christian, political and civic communities, were met with a gaily-decorated room, featuring balloons in the national colours. The music, dance, poetry and songs enthralled everyone.

The CBF President, who declared the event open, called upon Baptists in particular and the Christian community in general to stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in countries affected by the Ebola virus, not only through prayers but also with our financial resources.

In bringing greetings, His Excellency lauded the Baptists for their interest in the affairs of the poor and urged the participants to continue holding up the banner of unity.

The guest preacher, Rev. Victor Caddette – a Trinidadian, and a past CBF president, who now lives and pastors in the United States of America – challenged the over seven hundred and fifty attendees to see life in the Spirit as quality of lifestyle over that of ecstasy and excitement. Using the Lord’s Prayer as the basis of his sermon,



Rev. Victor Caddette



THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2014



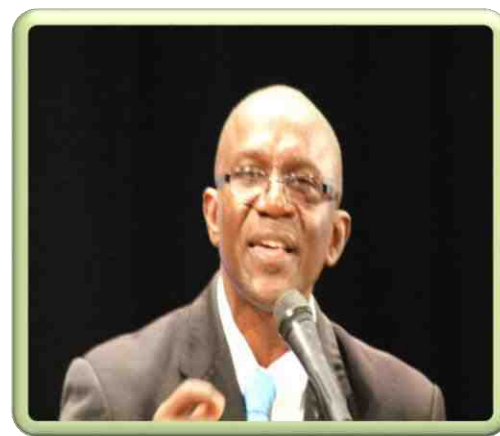
Rev. Mr. Caddette pointed out that God is known not so much by name but by His Self-Revelation and Self - Disclosure in persons' various and varied existential circumstances.

Rev. Anselm Warrick, General Secretary of the Trinidad and Tobago Baptist Union, using the conference theme Scripture, Galatians 5:13-25, encouraged the delegates and observers to 'walk in the Spirit' and live true to their commitment in the service of God. Rev. Stanford Simon from Grenada and Rev. Dr. Julius Casseus from Haiti made presentations on “Advancing the Mission of

Christ through Technology,” and “Crime and Violence – The Role of the Church”.

On Thursday and Friday evenings the Gathering met once again at the National Cultural Centre for evangelistic meetings. The preacher was Rev. Franklyn Small of Jamaica. The services were a blessing to all who attended and many accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

The major decisions during the business meetings of the General Assembly included the passing of resolutions addressing issues such as Pollution; Unity, Celebrating the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, and Racism and Domestic Abuse, reaffirming the Baptists commitment to sharing and living out the gospel of Jesus Christ in practical ways. The Assembly also voted to amend its constitution and by-laws thus allowing the President to succeed himself for another five-year term.



Rev. Franklin Small

An historic feature of the Assembly was the addition of two new member bodies, namely: Guyana Missionary Baptist Church (GMBC) and the Evangelical Baptist Mission of South Haiti. Another historic feature was the launch of the first edition of the Baptist Exclusive – a special General Assembly publication.

The Assembly culminated its meetings with special organized tours to places of historic interest around Guyana on Saturday and, on Sunday, shared in worship services in Baptist churches where some visiting pastors preached.



THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PICTORIAL





THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY PICTORIAL





THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS





THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY BIBLE STUDIES

Presented by Rev. Anselm Warrick, General Secretary, Trinidad and Tobago Baptist Union

Study 1

Theme: In Step with the Spirit. Galatians 5: 13 to 26



Rev. Anselm Warrick

The letter to the Galatians was written to address an issue which threatened the spiritual life of the believers that almost destroyed the young churches in Galatia. The letter is sometimes referred to as the Magna Carta of Christian liberty and in conjunction with the book of

Romans, formed the basis for the Protestant Reformation.

The churches in Galatia were started by Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Shortly after Paul and Barnabas left, some misguided believers from the Jerusalem church, caused a rift, by claiming that in addition to believing in Jesus for salvation, the Galatians must also keep the law and be circumcised. In this letter, Paul opposes this subversive and destructive teaching of legalism.

Having assessed the danger of this teaching and having seen its effects of disharmony and disunity within the churches, Paul sets out to remind the Galatian Christians, that the essence of Christianity is a life lived in dependence on and submission to the Holy Spirit.

1. **Firstly, Paul issues a Command - "Walk by the Spirit"**

Walking by the Spirit means to live in the Spirit's power; to walk in the Spirit's guidance and to allow the Spirit to direct you. All Christians possess the Holy Spirit. Therefore, there is no need to pray and fast for Him since it is the Holy Spirit who gives us life; baptizes us into the body of Christ; gives us gifts; enables us; intercedes for us, and seals us (unto the day of redemption.)

Further, it is the Holy Spirit who causes growth and spiritual development in the believer, thereby, enabling spiritual maturity. How foolish then of the Galatian Christians to turn away

THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY BIBLE STUDIES

from the only hope of growth and sanctification. This is tantamount to forsaking the fountain of life and turning to broken cisterns, according to Jeremiah 2: 11 to 14.

2. Secondly, In addition to Issuing a Command, Paul Identifies a Conflict.

Possessing the Spirit is not the same as walking by the Spirit. Yes, we are born again; yes, we have the Spirit of God dwelling in us. However, walking by the Spirit is the process of learning to allow the Spirit to control every facet of our lives. The word “walk,” means to live. The Bible has a lot to tell us about walking. We are told to walk in purity- Romans 13:13; walk in contentment- 1 Corinthians 7:17; walk in faith -2Corinthians 5:7; walk in love- Ephesians 5:23; walk in light -Ephesians 5:8, 9; walk in wisdom Ephesians 5: 16, 17.

The key to all of the above is not self- effort, license, magic or mystery but living under the controlled direction and enabling of the Holy Spirit. The key to a life of growth, victory, power and true freedom is to walk by the Spirit.

What we hear today, however, is that the key to growth and victory is about learning how to motivate oneself, how to confess and possess and how to name it and claim it. Is this the result of a loss of the consciousness of the place, work and ministry of the Holy Spirit today? Many pastors are arrogating powers to themselves which ought rightfully to be placed in the Holy Spirit.

In Galatians 5: 17, Paul outlines the nature of the conflict. He says that the sinful nature (the flesh) is contrary to the Spirit and the Spirit is contrary to the sinful nature. The word used for flesh is SARX. This Greek word does not only refer to our physical bodies, but also to an innate weakness; a principle that operates within us driving us to do what our redeemed nature does not want us to do. Paul refers to this in

Romans chapter 7, likewise James in chapter 1:13 to 15. This conflict is to be fought by walking in the Spirit; not with self – effort or will-power or with rules and regulations.

The conflict is further shown to manifest itself through what Paul refers to as the works of the flesh (Gal 5:18, 19) on one hand and the fruit produced by the Spirit on the other hand (Gal 5:21-23). Where the fruit is present, there is no need for law, because the fruit of the Spirit meet all the requirements of the law and the law cannot and does not produce these fruit.



THE CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY BIBLE STUDIES

3. **Thirdly, Paul finally indicates the CONQUEST - The Victory that is ours in Christ.**

In Galatians 5:24, Paul reminds believers that those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh - that sinful nature - with its habits and compulsions. He uses the phrase "we have crucified" which speaks of a past event with a present consequence. When did we crucify the flesh? This is a **positional** truth completed at salvation and effected in the believer by the unseen operation of the Holy Spirit.

We were crucified with Christ, buried with him in baptism and raised with him in his resurrection. When we put our trust in Christ's finished work, the Spirit of God applies to us all that Christ had accomplished. Simply put, when we walk in the Spirit, we are working out in our daily living, the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Having been crucified with Christ, the passions, desires, lusts and cravings of the flesh are also crucified (Rom 6:6 and Gal 2:19, 20). Therefore, sin no longer holds a position of dominance in the life of a person who is walking by the Spirit. The Lordship of evil, ungodly desires and passions have been broken.

Conclusion

The lesson from this study is a strong reminder that those who walk by the Spirit have no obligation to the flesh. Instead, they are obligated to the Spirit since it was by the Spirit they have been made new and set free from the dominating power of the law and the flesh. Keep on walking therefore by the Spirit.

