



CBFY YOUTH RALLY



By Jody McKenna

On Friday, November 7, 2014, young people from the Baptist Convention of Guyana and Guyana Missionary Baptist – Lott Carey met at the Guyana Cultural Centre for a time of worship and fellowship as a part of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship General Assembly programme. Over 200 young people were present. They exhaled a spirit of worship, dynamism and vibrancy and shared openly about their vision for youth work in their respective churches.

The keynote speaker, Mrs. Jody McKenna, President of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship Youth Department, in exploring the theme: *“Go hard for Christ”*, from Philippians 3:14 spoke about the purpose of

youth ministry, how to form a youth ministry and the passion which members and leaders need to possess for the growth and development of youth ministry.

She explained that the basis of the vision of any youth ministry should be *“to go out into the entire world and raise up an army of young people through Jesus Christ who will fight against the immorality that is plaguing the young people of this generation.”*

She further explained that the aim of the youth department should be *“to empower believers through the teaching, preaching, and demonstration of the uncompromised word of God; to fulfill their calling and change the world through Jesus Christ”*.

The young people were urged to pay keen attention to the importance of prayer, the Word of God, defining their identity and developing a sense of mission. They were also encouraged by the guest speaker to see youth ministry as a means of connecting, discipling and transforming.

Tips were shared with the young people as to how to conduct Bible Studies and strengthen youth leadership. Among the qualities of a youth leader shared were commitment, passion, servant spirit, respect for authority and transparency.

Mrs. McKenna emphasized the importance of sharing best practices. Best practices included:



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- Managing expectations of the pastor, the youth leaders, parents, and youth.
- Keeping parents abreast so that they may know what is going on and feel comfortable with leaders and their leadership team.
- Keeping expectations high, but not demanding perfection (from leaders or youth).
- Being compassionate and understanding at all times knowing that some youth live a life which may be very challenging thus making it hard for them to behave properly at church. Youth simply model the behaviour displayed at home.
- Establishing proper boundaries.
- Setting goals for youth ministry.

The coming together of young people from both Baptist groups in Guyana is a move in the right direction. It is hoped that such an initiative will be replicated in the near future.



*Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young,
but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love,
in faith and in purity. 1 TIMOTHY 4:12*

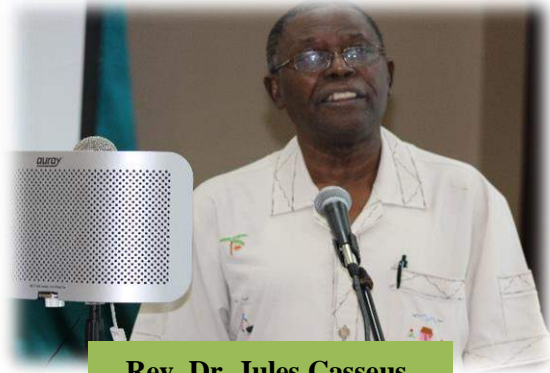


CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY- SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Crime and Violence: The Response of the Church – The Caribbean Context

By: Rev. Dr. Jules Casseus from Haiti

PART 1



Rev. Dr. Jules Casseus

Since the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and the first murder by Cain of his brother Abel, the world is plagued by violence. In a pastoral message of the Catholic Bishops of the United States in 1994, titled: "Confronting a Culture of Violence: A Catholic Framework for Action," it was stated:

"Our families are torn by violence. Our communities are destroyed by violence. Our faith is tested by violence. We have an obligation to respond. Violence --

in our homes, our schools and streets, our nation and world--is destroying the lives, dignity and hopes of millions of our sisters and brothers. Fear of violence is paralyzing and polarizing our communities...Hostility, hatred, despair and indifference are at the heart of a growing culture of violence."

Another Pastoral letter of Bishops in the Caribbean, states:

"We are increasingly concerned by the suffering of our people due to widespread and growing violence throughout the region".

At the 4th Conference of Caribbean Theology that was held here in Guyana on the theme "The Challenge of Violence," the introduction to the published papers stated that, the theme of the Conference seemed "to pick itself":

"More and more in recent year's violence has become part of daily life in the Caribbean. Hardly a day passes without some violent deed making the headlines"

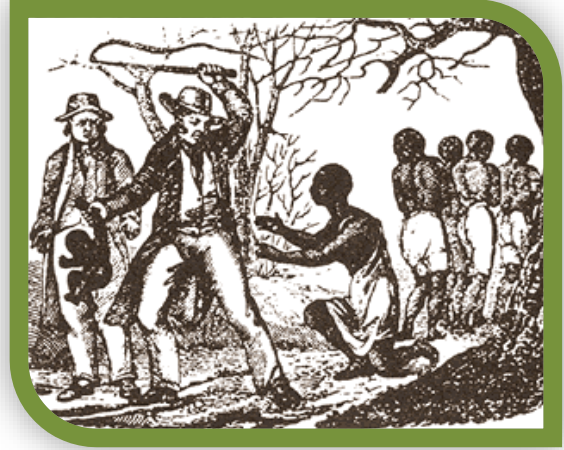
The Letter that Rev. Everton Jackson, EST, addressed to me inviting me to be one of the speakers in this general assembly of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship states.



CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY- SPECIAL PRESENTATION (CONT.)

“The fact is, crime and violence is a common feature in the Caribbean Experience. Various factors--historical and current--have contributed to the creation of a climate that is susceptible to criminal and violent activities.”

The remit given to me by the EST, among other things, is to provide hints or recommendations to the Caribbean churches as to how to respond in such a climate by bearing witness to the presence of God's kingdom and preserving the "imago dei" in God's people.



OUR HISTORY

The history of the Caribbean peoples has been a story of a long struggle for freedom; emancipation from the oppression of slavery and independence from colonial powers for self-determination. It has often been a painful story, filled with injustice, bloodshed and suffering for its people of many origins. But there have also been triumphant moments of liberation and accomplishment. Yet the path to freedom has not yet been fully travelled by our Caribbean people.

As we look around, we continue to see inequality, poverty, exclusion, prejudice, hatred, high levels of crime and horrendous acts of violence. As Christians, we need to try and understand the situation in the light of our faith and see what remedies it offers. For, as the apostle Paul told the Galatians:

“When Christ freed us, he meant us to remain free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery.” (Galatians 5:1)

SLAVERY AND VIOLENCE

The grave sin of social slavery, and of colonialism as well, is that they are systems which dehumanize the person. They imply that a particular people, because of race, color, nationality, gender, age, class or religion, are non-human or marginal. They are mere objects to be used for the gain of the oppressors. They attempt to destroy the dignity of a people by giving no value to the sanctity of their lives.

CRIMINAL VIOLENCE

Criminal violence threatens to take away the dignity of the victim(s). It treats the person as an object to satisfy some desire; the hunger and struggle for material goods, for status, for money, for power and



CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY- SPECIAL PRESENTATION (CONT.)

control of territory or people. To act on these desires is to return to a situation of slavery. It is to return to the oppression of Egypt and Babylon, or in colonial times to the so-called “New World”, where persons were treated as dehumanized objects.

In an article titled “Christianity and violence” that I have consulted in preparation for this presentation I have read the following:

“The relationship of Christianity and violence is the subject of controversy because some of its teachings advocate peace, love, and compassion, whereas other teachings have been used to justify violence and hatred. Peace, compassion and forgiveness of wrongs done by others are key elements of Christian teaching. However, Christians have struggled since the days of the Church Fathers with the question of when the use of force is justified. Such debates have led to concepts such as just war theory. Throughout history, certain teachings from the Old Testament, the New

Testament and Christian theology have been used to justify the use of force against heretics, sinners and external enemies. The Crusades, forcible conversion to Christianity, Christianity and capital punishment, religious hate groups, justifications of slavery, world-wide colonialism in the name of conversion to Christianity, the white supremacists, are unfortunately among notorious examples of Christian violence... It may include also forms of systemic violence such as poverty, racism and sexism”

CRIME AND VIOLENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN EXPERIENCE.

The first UN report on Human Development in 2011, focusing on the Caribbean – a result of extensive consultations with 450 experts, practitioners and leaders - reflects a large-scale survey with 11,555 citizens in the seven assessed countries in the region: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Even though the total number of murders in Jamaica dropped after the report’s completion to 1,124 in 2011 – a seven-year low – the country has the highest homicide rate in the Caribbean and the third-highest murder rate worldwide in recent years, with about 60 murders per 100,000 inhabitants.

According to a CARICOM report, crime costs Jamaica alone over \$529 million a year in lost income. In Trinidad and Tobago, a one per cent reduction in youth crime would boost tourism revenue by \$35 million per year. In general, gangs in the Caribbean, namely in Trinidad and Jamaica, have a very unusual and ultimately far more dangerous effect on their surrounding areas.

In Haiti, while the homicide rate in Port-au-Prince is lower than that of some other Caribbean cities, Haiti’s capital saw 60.9 murders per 100,000 residents over the year leading up to February 2012, the





CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY- SPECIAL PRESENTATION (CONT.)

highest recorded murder rate since 2006, according to the study. The report reveals that the bulk of the Haiti murders happened in densely populated areas in the cities where there are high levels of social marginalization and poverty, which included Cap-Haitien, Les Cayes, Gonaives, among other.

However, as in many of these countries, violence in the Dominican Republic has turned into something systematic. Major changes also occurred in the patterns of what until then were considered "common crime," with the appearance of kidnappings, the rise of micro-trafficking and contract killings, and the emergence of gangs fighting each other and the police.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO VIOLENCE

The report points out that sociologists link the following factors to the recent increases in crime in the Caribbean:

- * increased urbanization and high population density (decline in agriculture);
- * increased income inequality between rich and poor;
- * increased migration (and corresponding family disintegration);
- * increased deportation from other countries of convicted criminals;
- * increased unemployment (a growing urban wageless class);
- * declining living standards;
- * high level of economic discrimination (exclusion based on skin color, family ties, regional identity, language differences, social circumstances and religion)

The experts, in this report, do not claim that these social conditions cause violent behavior. But they do affirm that some or all of them are present in situations of increasing violent crime. Individuals remain relatively free - and morally responsible - for their behavior. Still socialization and the social context remain important.

Clearly, those who commit crimes must be swiftly apprehended, justly tried, appropriately punished, and held to proper restitution. However, correctional facilities must do more than confine criminals; they must rehabilitate persons and help rebuild lives.

A joint Report by the United Nations office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, March 2007, states:

"A major factor contributing to the surge of gun's related criminality in the region is the trafficking of narcotics, which has facilitated the availability of firearms... The drug trade is a prime driver of crime across the Caribbean. The authorities estimate that 75 percent of crime is drug-related. Examples of risk factors at this level are poverty, inequality, youth unemployment, an ineffective criminal justice system and drug trafficking... the Caribbean has had a culture of aggression rooted in slavery since colonial times... Domestic violence, child abuse and corporal punishment, Gang and drug related violence are among the primary motivation identified for committing crime.

CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY- MEN'S CONSULTATION



By Rev. David Serrant

As a part of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship's General Assembly held in Guyana November 5-9, 2014, a consultation was held with the men of the Guyana Baptist Convention and Guyana Missionary Baptist – Lott Carey on November 6. The President of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship (CBF) Men's Department, Rev. David C. Serrant, addressed the men. He used the account of Moses tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, recorded in Exodus 3 to challenge the men, reminding them that God was calling them from a life of routine to purpose. The men were encouraged to avail themselves for service in the Church.

In analyzing the demise of the CBF Men's Department over the years, it was observed that the absence of men's group in the local churches results in the absence of a national

group which is the key to having a vibrant CBF Men's Department. One of the reasons for the meeting was to consult with the men of Guyana on the status of men's group in the churches, and to challenge them to begin to think about establishing such a group.

In discussion on the subject, it was suggested that the absence of men's groups in the churches was due to many reasons. Among the reasons given were lack of spirituality and the economic demands on men to care for their family which sometimes make it difficult for them to attend meetings. It was further revealed that some pastors do not encourage men's groups because they view these groups as a threat.

Despite the reasons posited, the importance of men's groups in churches was underscored. The Caribbean Baptist Fellowship reaffirmed its commitment to working with the men of the region to develop a handbook for men's ministry which will outline succinctly, how to establish a men's ministry, the roles and functions of a men's ministry and programme ideas among other things.



EXCERPTS FROM CBWU REPORT TO CBF GENERAL ASSEMBLY

By Yvonne Pitter



It is a tremendous privilege and opportunity to present yet another report to this august body on behalf of the Caribbean Baptist sisters. The Caribbean continental union represents at least fourteen Islands. Last year, we welcomed back Guadeloupe. A special welcome was extended to the sisters from San Andres Islands, Colombia, who attended our Conference that was held in Jamaica in July of this year. We look forward to having the San Andres women becoming a member of CBWU in the not too distant future. This report to the General Assembly of the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship will cover the period July 2013–September, 2014.

To God be the glory great things he has done. Over the past year we have experienced the goodness of God in our lives amidst the challenges that we experienced in the Caribbean. These challenges were similar from Island to Island. I would like to salute the leaders of the various Islands and CBWU Officers for the work they have been doing. Let us remember that whatever we do in our Women's Ministry should be to advance the Kingdom of God. He is depending on us to help the weak and down trodden women and children in our fellowship.

As a Continental Union, we continue to focus on our Vision and Strategic Objectives. The CBWU Vision is to see women in every Island working together, growing in effectiveness, solidarity and impacting our region and the world for Christ.

Let me remind us of the CBWU five Strategic areas and focus.

- Strengthening the fellowship in CBWU through communication e.g. News Letter;
- Equipping the leadership of CBWU for service e.g. Training Sessions /Workshops;
- Engaging in Mission – Mission awareness e.g. Street Witnessing and Visitation;
- Social development Ministry;
- Development of resources and identify.

Leaders are encouraged to discuss and implement these strategic areas in their Islands as much as possible.



FEATURE: CARIBBEAN BAPTIST PERSONALITY- REVEREND PETER PINDER



Rev. Peter Pinder

Peter Pinder, a Bahamian, was born to the late Rev. Dr. Wellington Pinder and the late Verdell Pinder on September 18, 1950.

He received his primary and high school education from the public and private school system, respectively. He attended Grand Bahama Catholic High School, where he served as the first student council president. During his high school days, he was very active in church; teaching Sunday School and leading Bible study in the Boys Brigade.

Upon graduating from high school in 1969, Peter entered Florida Memorial College, Miami, Florida, USA, where he pursued a Bachelor of Arts degree in Religious Education. By 1972, Peter, having sensed a call to ministry, was licensed to preach at Memorial Temple Baptist Church in Miami, Florida.

In 1973 he married Joycelyn Gilbert. The union produced three children, Katheldra, Kenton and Kerel .

In 1976, Peter was ordained to the ministry and appointed pioneer pastor of Zion Baptist Church. However, he was not satisfied with the level of his theological education, having experienced the demands of ministry. This led him, eight months after assuming the pastorate of Zion, to resign in order to pursue further studies. This he did at Morehouse School of Religion Interdenominational Theological Centre, where he obtained a Master of Divinity degree in Pastoral Counselling upon graduation in 1980.

Upon completing his postgraduate studies, he returned to his home country in 1979 and was re-elected a part-time pastor of Zion Baptist Church a few months after. He served as a bi-vocational pastor until 1983 when he began serving the church in a full-time capacity.

Peter was not only committed to his local pastorate, but he also committed himself to serve his denominational body - Zion Baptist Convention - where he served as Executive Secretary and later as Vice President.

Pastor Pinder attended his first Caribbean Baptist Fellowship meeting in 1986 when he was invited to lead Bible study for the week. In 1988, he was elected Vice Chairman of the Christian Education/Stewardship Committee of the CBF and began serving as a Regional Coordinator of Caribbean Christian Publications.

FEATURE: CARIBBEAN BAPTIST PERSONALITY- REVEREND PETER PINDER

While serving as a volunteer lecturer at Barbados Baptist College, Pastor Pinder heard of the search for a replacement for the Rev. Azariah Mckenzie, Executive Secretary/Treasurer of the CBF. Pastor Pinder subsequently applied and was elected EST at the CBF meeting in Trinidad in 1994.

In August 1995, Peter began serving as Executive Secretary/Treasurer-EST of the CBF and Regional Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, while continuing to serve as the pastor of Zion Baptist Church in Freeport, Grand Bahama.

Having served for 15 years, Pastor Pinder did not make himself available for a fourth term as EST. Therefore, in 2010, Peter Pinder concluded his stint as EST for the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship and Regional Secretary for the Baptist World Alliance. However, he continues to serve as the pastor of Zion Baptist Community Church, formerly Zion Baptist Church as well as president of the Grand Bahama Christian Council.

The Caribbean Baptist Fellowship pays tribute to Peter Pinder for his sterling contribution to Baptist work in the Caribbean. His unswerving commitment and sustained integrity did not go unnoticed during his tenure. *CBF* Notes congratulate Peter Pinder as Caribbean personality for this issue.





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Caribbean Christian Publications is affiliated with the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship (CBF).

UPCOMING *Mark Your Calendars* **EVENTS**



- ✚ **BWA EXECUTIVE MEETING-** VIRGINIA, USA (MARCH 2-4, 2015)
- ✚ **CBF SUNDAY** (JUNE 28, 2015)
- ✚ **BWA BAPTIST WORLD CONGRESS-** DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA (JULY 22-26, 2015)
- ✚ **CBF EXECUTIVE MEETING-** GUADELUOPE (OCTOBER 21-23, 2015)

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