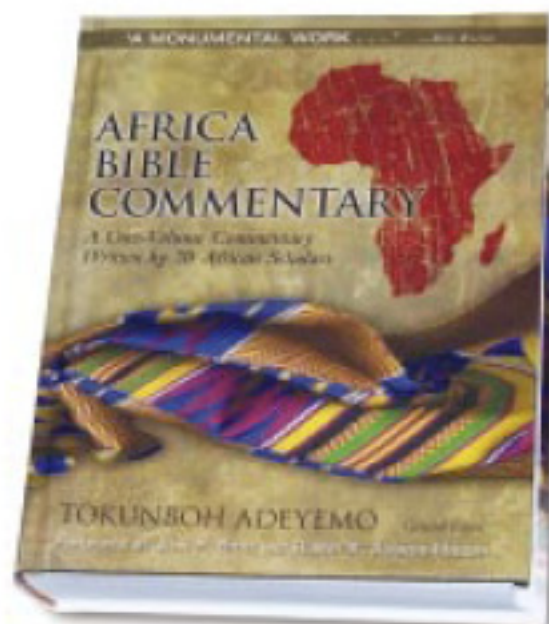


A Publishing Landmark for Africa

Africa today is facing hardships at a level not experienced anywhere else in the world. Four out of ten African girls-almost half-will suffer some kind of abuse. The average life span has dropped from age 62 to age 47. And more than 12.3 million African children have lost one or both parents to AIDS.*



It is a tough environment for pastors who have to answer questions such as, "Where was God when both of my parents died of AIDS?" or "How does God's grace heal me when I have been

abused all my life?"

At the same time, Africa is one of the most exciting places in the world to serve God's people. More than one-third of Africa has come to Christ, and faith is growing exponentially. More than ever, pastors find themselves with the need to be well equipped for handling a continent of seekers.

Long overdue is advent of the Africa Bible Commentary (ABC), the most important tool for African pastors who need biblical, relevant support. The ABC is the first one-volume Bible commentary to be produced in Africa, for Africa, by African scholars. John Stott Ministries (JSM) partnered with the Association of Evangelicals of Africa (AEA), Serving in Mission (SIM) from South Africa, and many JSM-Langham Scholars and other African writers, to produce this much needed tool.

In production since 2001 and now available in the U.S. from Zondervan Publishing, the 2000-page commentary includes a section-by-section interpretation of the Bible as well as 70 topical articles by African men and women. The authors represent Africa's finest theological scholars and evangelical

church leaders of all denominations and nationalities from across the sub-Saharan Africa area. Contributing editors include JSM-Langham Scholars Douglas Carew, Emily J. Choge, Youssouf Dembele, Tewoldemedhin Habtu, James B. Kantiok, Paul Mumo Kisau, E. Kingsley Larbi, Onesimus Ngundu, James Nkansah-Obrempong, and Cyril C. Okorochoa.

"The pastors in Africa have an excellent tool in their hands and this will greatly impact their congregations positively," said Dr. Paul Mumo Kisau, former Langham scholar and Assistant Professor for Biblical Studies at Nairobi International School of Theology. Mumo contributed a commentary on the book of Acts to the ABC, based on research that he started as a Langham scholar. Langham Partners also supported Mumo with a writing grant so he could work on the commentary, and LPI's funds continue to impact Mumo's research. "I am most grateful to Langham and do continue to pray for this ministry," Mumo said.

General Editor Dr. Tokunboh Adeyemo of Kenya, former General Secretary of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa for 27 years, led the commentary development to cover all books of the Bible and keep it relevant to everyday African life. "Producing the Africa Bible Commentary now is doing the right thing at the right time for the Christian Church in Africa," said Adeyemo.

The groundbreaking resource covers universal Christian topics as well as issues that Africans most often face, including AIDS, polygamy, persecution, syncretism, widows and orphans, the role of African women, and tribalism.

"It is simple without being simplistic," said Youssouf Dembele, contributing editor and former Langham scholar, who also noted that Africa has a scarcity of resources like the ABC. "It is just right for most of the pastors of the continent. I took it as a blessed opportunity to contribute to the edification of the church through this commentary."

Pieter Kwant, International Programme Director for Langham Literature, managed the ABC project. The JSM-Langham Literature program seeks to address the lack of evangelical books available to majority world pastors, working in more than 90 countries to distribute needed biblical commentaries and

reference works in the four major languages of English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. The ABC plays a crucial role in the JSM-Langham Literature program efforts to equip efficiently the pastors and church leaders of the African continent.

"Five years and one month after that first meeting the finished manuscript went to the printer and today we hold advance copies in our hand and praise God for what He has done," said Jim Mason, Literature Consultant for Serving in Mission (SIM) International, which supported and produced the

project. "My own prediction is that we will go back to printer [for the next translation] within a year."

The ABC is now available in English, with versions in French, Amharic, Swahili, Portuguese and other languages to come in the next three years. It brings together sound doctrine and biblical accuracy from a culturally relevant perspective. As a first-time, all-African commentary, the ABC fosters hope for a unified continent and for a spiritually rejuvenated population, by means of a contextual, readable, affordable guide.

Excerpts from an Interview with **Pieter Kwant** International Programme Director for Langham Literature

Pieter Kwant, International Programme Director for Langham Literature, has been deeply involved with the project from the start, and attended the launch in Cape Town on June 17th. LP News asked him a few questions about this great event, and about other Literature projects.

Is there anything else like the ABC being planned for other parts of the world?

We are in the very early stages of planning a Latin American Bible Commentary which would be both in Spanish and Portuguese and we are also considering the possibility of other regional commentaries.

What are the most exciting things that Langham Literature is doing these days?

- One of the most exciting books we are looking forward to is the **Contemporary Arabic Theology** (in the spirit of a systematic theology), which is being written by 10 evangelical Arab scholars in Arabic. This group includes a number of Langham scholars. The first draft of the manuscript is expected in October this year.
- Our Regional Council in West Africa urged us to combine the **French and English Catalogues**, so we are now working on this in the next few months. Many seminaries in Africa want to have books in both languages.
- The Spanish programme is expanding with the Bibliotheca Clava, that is the Spanish Student Basic Library set of titles, and also a new Spanish Catalogue. This Spanish catalogue is the first ever and will be a major help throughout Latin America.

• These Langham Literature Catalogues form the basis of our Library Grant Programme and give seminary librarians a choice of the very best evangelical literature available.

• Then, on the creative side, we are supporting a number of writers and publishers in South America, Pakistan and Africa.

• We are also inviting our first African editor for two months training alongside the editor of the ABC, to develop an African editorial capacity that is able to take on the challenge of producing a range of more serious African Christian books.

What are the most pressing needs in Langham Literature that you would want to put before our supporters?

- Our core distribution programmes, to graduates and pastors and libraries, have to be funded every year, so this is an annual 'pressing need'! This year we simply could not send the normal **Pastors Book Club** gifts, because we do not have sufficient funds for it. We need people to continue to support these annual programmes, to avoid this kind of disappointment.
- We would like to be able to provide a larger annual grant in the **Library Grant Programme** in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese (at the moment it is only about £100 per seminary; we would love to double that if we could). We are also exploring the possibility of running this programme in Arabic and Chinese.



From the Foreword by John Stott

"One of the most significant recent developments in the churches of Africa is the rise of sound biblical scholarship. The church is fortunate indeed to see this resurgence in the continent that gave us such interpreters as Augustine and Athanasius. The Africa Bible Commentary is a publishing landmark and I congratulate contributors and editors on their achievement. Its foundation is biblical, its perspective African, and its approach to controversial questions balanced. I intend to use it myself in order to gain African insights into the Word of God."

- The **Student Basic Library** is still quite expensive for students and we want to be able to lower the prices of the individual books even further, but of course, this increases the subsidy we have to provide.
- We want to see well-crafted indigenous books written in the local language and context. But for that we need to develop and train good editors in the Majority World, and that is part of the **Langham Writers** programme.
- There are two **Arabic** books particularly aimed at pastors and under-graduate students that a former Langham Scholar is proposing for which we need financial support: one on interpreting the parables of Jesus and another which is a commentary on the parables of Jesus.

Thank you, Pieter!

As Pieter Kwant says, even though our new creative initiatives in Langham Literature are exciting and strategic, we still need to increase our funding for the distributive side of our work. There is an understandable tendency for supporters to want to give to people - such as our individual Scholars, or the pastors who attend Preaching seminars - rather than to books. But do remember that supporting Langham Literature means giving to people also - whether to those who receive and profit from the books we send, or those we encourage and support to write books for their own context. They are people you may never meet, but they will be greatly blessed by your generosity.

Please consider how generous you could be towards Langham Literature, and the life-changing work it does. Thank you!

Just to give you a taste of how the ABC is being faithful to God's Word and at the same time, addressing local concerns, this is what the reviewer from the Guardian newspaper says....

"....Africa Bible Commentary, a new 1,600-page tome, provides explanations of verses from all 66 books of the Bible, using local proverbs and idioms to make reading relevant to African eyes while remaining true to the scriptures. More than a decade in the making, the book has been put together by 70 scholars and theologians from 25 countries, and represents a range of Protestant churches.

Even with a £15 price tag, early sales appear brisk. But there are contradictions between Christianity and age-old traditions and taboos, and it is these tensions that the book seeks to address. In the Old Testament, for example, Ruth's decision to look for food on arriving in Bethlehem instead of waiting for assistance is explained by the Malawian saying "the one with diarrhoea opens the door" - meaning that the one with a problem goes to seek help."

The ABC also contains full-length articles on various issues pertinent to the African churches today besides HIV/AIDS, such as,angels, demons and witchcraft, funeral and burial rites, refugees, ethnic conflict and persecution.

Langham Foundation East Asia -

Gift Books for China and East Asia !

The Alliance Bible Seminary in Hong Kong organised a week-long Summer course in July this year for 140 pastors and church leaders. The focus of the course is on exposition of the first epistle of Peter. Since it was conducted in Mandarin, more than 80% of the attendees were from mainland China, coming from Beijing, Wenzhou, Sichuan, Yunnan and nearby Guangdong. As part of our support for this Summer course, Langham Foundation East Asia sent to each visiting scholar two gift books - commentaries on First & Second Peters and on Ecclesiastes. These gift books were much appreciated as they are written by

Chinese Christian authors whose both are not yet available in China at the moment.

Langham Foundation East Asia has been allocated funds for the Langham Library Grant programme in 2006. Fifty seminaries in the East Asian region (outside China) were given the special grant to order evangelical books for their libraries from the Langham Literature catalogue. The recipient seminaries are located in Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia.

What is Langham Preaching?

Langham Preaching provides practical on-site support for preachers and teachers. We work with national leaders to organise training seminars, provide resources, and build a local movement committed to Bible exposition. We work in partnership with other national initiatives, and programmes are underway in many parts of the world, including Uganda, Ethiopia, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania, Eurasia, Argentina, El Salvador, Albania, Poland, Myanmar, Pakistan and the Caribbean, with plans to develop networks in each continent.



We have three strategic objectives:

To Facilitate: working with national believers country by country to strengthen a movement for relevant Bible exposition, with ongoing support and continuity

To Network: providing a forum for people who share the conviction that a movement for Bible exposition is an essential part of the church's mission

To Pioneer: acting as a catalyst in those countries where the need is considerable but the resources are very limited

by local leaders and to shape a programme that suits the context.

Support, continuity and development

The programme is supported by **Langham Literature**, often including a book pack of resource material for seminar participants. Continuity is encouraged through refresher days, informal preachers' clubs, or small regional programmes. The seminars encourage pastors to pass on the vision and practical training to others in their area. In that sense our programmes are less an event, more of a process.

Seminar programme

Our seminars give practical help and encouragement to those who have a Bible preaching/teaching role, whether pastors, lay leaders or workers in para-church settings. This is offered initially at a basic level with a seminar of a few days duration. But there is also a three-level programme for those who can sustain training over several years. In some countries the strategy is to provide support for trainers, who will then develop programmes in their town or region, enabling a more contextualised training for local pastors and lay leaders.

The aims of the seminar programme are **motivational** - encouraging people to take the Bible seriously in their ministry; **educational** - an evangelical doctrine of scripture and principles of interpretation; and **practical** - workshops on developing an expository ministry, sermon preparation, planning a programme, understanding our culture and developing a spiritual life. We are especially concerned to meet the needs identified



Plans are underway to develop the **Langham Preaching Network**, a forum of like-minded leaders around the world who will share ideas, news and resources through a website as well as regional and international consultations.



Langham Preaching seeks to equip Majority World pastors and lay leaders to preach more effectively. For more information please contact us: preaching@langhampartnership.org



Interview with Chris Wright: Marketplace ethics

Joy Lo Cheung

In January 2006 the Rev. Dr. John Stott, founder of Langham Partnership International, led a delegation to build up working relationships with the church in China. During their visit, I interviewed the Rev. Dr. Christopher Wright, Stott's

successor, about what it means to be a marketplace Christian and what it takes to witness effectively.

1. What does the Bible say about the marketplace and the value of wealth creation?

First of all, God created the marketplace, so there's nothing wrong or sinful about being a Christian in business. It's part of the creation mandate to use, preserve, and care for the resources of the earth, so I think the entrepreneurial spirit is part of God's gift to human beings.

[The Book of] Revelation shows us that the kings of the earth will bring their wealth into the kingdom of God or the city of God. So there's a role for wealth creation and cultural creation and civilization and all the great human achievements. They're not all just going to be burnt up and destroyed. They're [human achievements] going to be purged of sin and redeemed of fallenness, but they will also ultimately contribute to the kingdom of God.

So, Christian entrepreneurs need to have a perspective on their work which is not 'it's just a place where I can witness,' but also what I do matters to God. There's a value in every job.

2. What traits or qualities should distinguish a Christian entrepreneur from an unbeliever?

[Accountability]

Deuteronomy 8:17 says, 'You may say to yourself, my strength and the power of my hands have produced all this wealth for me,' which is the capitalist ideology, and then the next verse says, 'but remember that it is the Lord your God who gives you the ability to produce this wealth.' So whose is the strength? Where did you get your ability from? Where did you get your bread from? Where did you get your resources from? They all come from God. So therefore, you're accountable to God for how you used the resources that he's given us. All economic activity has to be carried under the perspective of accountability to God the creator.

[Integrity]

The second principle can be broadly spoken as integrity. Again and again, the Old Testament especially talks about the importance of truth, honesty, integrity in business. You see in the laws, 'You shall not have two standards, two sets of weights,' so that you get your advantage if you're buying or selling (Leviticus 19:36). So the rules that govern the village marketplace also govern the urban or global marketplace. You have to have integrity.

[An integrated life]

I think I would also want to say to Christian business people, don't dichotomize between your secular business life and your Christian witnessing life as if somehow they were completely distinctive from each other. Work is part of God's creation mandate to us, so work as a

Christian in itself is a valuable thing to do.

There are some Christians who think the only value of going to work everyday is 'if I've got an opportunity to witness to the gospel, [to] give people my testimony.' And of course, if those opportunities come along, use them. But our testament and our witnesses, actually our lives, our integrity, our relationships, the way we greet people, just the people we are - are we Christ-like in our work? Do we have a theology of work which sees that if God cares about the earth, society, business, work, the use of resources - the product of our work will ultimately be for the kingdom of God, eschatologically.

3. How can marketplace Christians, business people, become effective witnesses?

Two principles for Christian ethics which are very powerful, almost humanly impossible, come from Colossians 3:23 where Paul says: 'Whatever you do, do it as unto the Lord, not as unto men.' He's talking about masters in their treatment of slaves and slaves in relation to masters. He says you should work for the other person as if they were Jesus. So do it as unto the Lord. If I were to say to a CEO, suppose if that employee or staff were Jesus, how would you speak to them? Do you behave towards other as if they were Christ.

A few verses above, Paul says: 'Whatever you say or do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.' (Colossians 3:17) Now that's the other way around, because to do something in the name of Christ means doing it as if He were present, as if He were in you doing it. Supposing I were Christ, what would I do and say to this person? How would I behave?

If you put these two things together, they are enormously powerful. I should treat other people as if they were Jesus, and I should treat other people as if I were Jesus. If that were to happen in the workplace, I would be a much more powerful witness than by preaching to them. Almost humanly impossible, but it's something to have in mind, it's something that makes you think.

4. In your most recent book *Old Testament Ethics for the People of God*, you examine the prevalence and danger of some common economic sins such as greed. Can you explain this one?

The Bible has a lot more to say about greed than about lust, so there's much more in the law of the prophets, the wisdom literature, the gospels, the epistles, about sins of greed - covetousness, economic exploitation, mistreatment of the poor - than there is about fornication or adultery.

If you just take the balance of the Scriptures as a whole, God sees much more simple, destructive power in human greed than in human displaced sexuality. They're all marks of our fallenness, because sexual exploitation is also a form of greed ~ human trafficking, prostitution and child abuse happens because of male dominance, greed, and power. These are all forms of human wickedness and sin, but there's something particularly nasty about greed.

While the Bible condemns greed it doesn't condemn wealth in and of itself. It condemns wealth where it has been gained by oppression and exploitation, directly and indirectly. But there are such people in the Old Testament, the righteous rich, who had wealth and used it appropriately, like Abraham, Job, David to

some extent.... They saw their wealth as a way to benefit the poor and they didn't idolize it. If wealth becomes an idol it becomes wicked.

*With permission to reprint from The Tapestry - Spring 2006 Issue.
The Tapestry is the church magazine of the Evangelical Community Church in Hong Kong.*

Regional Council - East Asia

In September 2004, there was a first meeting of the Langham Partnership Regional Council for S.E. Asia, held in Singapore. After nearly two years, the Council met again

in Chiangmai, Thailand from 11 to 13 August 2006. As the Regional Council is a advisory body loosely set up to provide local knowledge and strategic guidance to Langham Partnership International, it was hoped that as many representatives from the region would be able to join us over the weekend for discussions. In the end, we were gratified to see participants from Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong being there. They are a mixture of Langham scholars and senior



leaders from the local seminaries and churches. Chris Wright, our International Ministries Director was chairing the meetings together with Merritt Sawyer, Programme Director for Scholars and Pieter Kwant, Programme Director for Literature.

Victor Sun, the General Secretary for Langham Foundation East Asia attended the meetings and has this to say:

I went to Chiangmai not sure what to expect as this was my first meeting with the Langham friends in South East Asia. We started on Friday evening sharing a meal together and spent the rest of the time getting to know one another. Over the next two days, we were able to have stimulating discussions on many aspects of the Langham programmes of scholarship, literature and preaching. The key concern was how suitable and relevant were these programmes in the various countries represented? Were the Langham resources provided able to connect with what was happening in the South East Asian churches - many of which are undergoing tremendous pressure? The challenge we faced was how to apply John Stott's vision which has global implications to the local situation. Specific topics discussed include the shape of theological education, Christian writers in Chinese and the local languages, publication opportunities as well as broader geo-political issues.

South East Asia consists of many countries with huge differences in languages, historical development and background. We came together as a culturally diverse group sharing little common ground except our love

for the Lord Jesus and an eagerness to serve Him. In the end after much soul-searching and sensitive listening to each other, there was a strong consensus that we should work together to ensure a closer integration and cooperation. It was agreed that the Regional Council should be for

East Asia, not only South East Asia. An executive committee for this Regional Council was formed, to be convened by a Langham Scholar Michael Poon, one of the founding members of LFEA, now living in Singapore. And in order to establish and maintain strong links with Langham Foundation East Asia in Hong Kong, either I myself or our Chair, Philemon Choi, will attend meetings of the Regional Council. In the end, this will be enormously helpful for sharing resources and monitoring the development of specific Langham projects in the various countries in the region. I was

also grateful to the brothers and sisters from other para-church agencies and seminaries for their valuable insight into doing the Lord's work effectively in the countries where they are currently serving.

Recent News on Rev Dr John Stott....

Some of you may have heard already, Uncle John tripped and fell in his own apartment on Sunday, 20th August in the morning. His personal alarm system worked very promptly and he was taken to hospital, where it was confirmed that he had sustained a fractured hip (at the upper end of the left femur). Tests have shown that there was no malfunction involving his heart or brain, and he remained conscious and lucid throughout. On Monday 21st August, he received surgery on the broken limb, which included the fitting of a replacement hip. He has come through the surgery well, and has spend about two weeks recovering in the hospital. After that, he has checked into a Christian healing centre in Kent where he is probably going to stay for a few more months. We are happy to report that he is making good progress with the daily regime of physiotherapy exercise.

We are indeed grateful to the Lord that the most critical stage is past and thank you all for remembering him in your prayers. Please continue to pray that during this period of steady recovery, Uncle John will be able to build up his strength with a good measure of restored ambulatory function.

Have you considered including Langham Partnership in your will?

Like many mission organizations, we can benefit greatly when friends make a final gift that continues to bless the ministries they have generously supported in life. Once you have made proper and primary provision for family and friends, this can be a very effective way to go on making a difference to the church on earth when you have joined the church in glory! If you would like to consider this option in your will please let us know and we will send you a helpful legacy leaflet. Contact Victor Sun, General Secretary of Langham Foundation East Asia at email: LFEA@langhampartnership.org or telephone (852) 3005 4498.

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