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### The Hope of Holiness Education

Dr Daryll Gordon Stanton

Lecturer, Africa Nazarene University (ANU), Nairobi, Kenya

**Thesis Statement:** Holiness education will have a major impact on where the Church of the Nazarene will be in Africa in the twenty-first century.

#### **Introduction: The Dream**

The Kenyan government awarded Africa Nazarene University (ANU) its charter on the eighth of October 2002. This opened the door for holiness education to have a major impact on the Church of the Nazarene in Africa in the twenty-first century.

A long process led to the awarding of this charter. Twenty years ago at the Africa Regional Conference in Mbabane, Swaziland, university level holiness education was just an idea discussed by members of the regional education committee. Members left the conference praying that God would bring to reality a dream of preparing both lay and ministerial leaders at the university level for the Church in Africa.

In the early 1980's, African countries were not granting church related university charters. Then Zimbabwe and Kenya led the way. Following the provisions of the Kenyan Universities Act of 1985, Nazarene leaders spent countless hours preparing necessary documents and curricula to enable ANU to receive its Interim Letter of Authority from the Kenyan Commission of Higher Education in 1993. Hundreds of volunteers and Work and Witness team members have contributed their time, money, and expertise, especially with campus development, helping to make ANU possible. The Charter means ANU has full academic approval as a holiness university to:

- Develop youth for effective Christian living,
- Develop a community of scholars,
- Prepare Christian leaders at the degree level, and
- Develop appreciation of our African heritage.

## **The Church of the Nazarene in Africa Hopes to Develop Youth for Effective Christian Living in the Twenty-first Century.**

Nazarenes know that their youth are not merely the Church of tomorrow. They are a vital part of today's Church. There are a variety of institutions in Africa which assist the Church in developing youth for effective Christian living:

- 286 primary schools,
- 7 secondary schools,
- 2 vocational schools,
- 1 teachers' training college,
- 1 nurses' training college,
- 3 degree-granting colleges, and
- 1 university.<sup>145</sup>

ANU is the university for the Church of the Nazarene in Africa. "It is the aim of Africa Nazarene University to teach, challenge and inspire students to seize the opportunities while in the University to prepare for effective Christian living."<sup>146</sup>

Frequently parents choose ANU for their sons and daughters because they value the Christian environment in which they will study. Earlier this year, the father of two ANU students, a prominent pastor from Nakuru, Kenya, visited ANU and spoke in our chapel. This parent, Rev Daniel Gitau, urged the ANU community to pray for one another as John prayed for Gaius in 3 John 2: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." He suggested six reasons Christians can fail to prosper.

- (1) Rebellion - The devil is the leader of rebellions. For effective Christian living our youth must find Christ as their example and leader.
- (2) Jealousy - Sometimes we pray for others to be blessed, and then we are angry when their "blessing" seems better than ours does. Rather than dwelling on what others have, our youth must be

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<sup>145</sup> Africa Region Church of the Nazarene *Action Planner*, Florida South Africa: Nazarene Publications 2003

<sup>146</sup> Africa Nazarene University. *Bachelor of Theology Bulletin 2001–2003*. p. 3.

thankful for their “blessings”.

- (3) Pride – “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).
- (4) Unwillingness to be where God wants us to be – We need to be in the right place at the right time to receive the blessings.
- (5) Lack of faith – Our youth must learn that without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).
- (6) Murmuring - The Israelites spent 40 years in the wilderness for their complaining.<sup>147</sup>

### **The Church Needs a Community of African Scholars to Articulate its Beliefs**

To develop a community of scholars is another of ANU’s major objectives. “We at Africa Nazarene University have as one of our objectives to help both students and staff to be all we can be and do what will enhance the lives of others.”<sup>148</sup>

There are eight Nazarene institutions on the Africa Region which are recognized by the International Higher Education Council<sup>149</sup>. All are charged with sending out into the world thinking, loving servants of Christ<sup>150</sup>. ANU is one of these eight. All these institutions of higher education adhere to the “Educational Mission Statement “ of the Church and must “...seek to provide a curriculum, quality of instruction, and evidence of scholastic achievement that will adequately prepare graduates to function effectively in vocations and professions such graduates may choose.”<sup>151</sup>

Dr Jerry Lambert, Commissioner of Education for the International Church of the Nazarene, has been very supportive in the development of ANU. He notes, “From the earliest days of the groups that eventually formed the Church of the Nazarene, education in a Christian environment has been a

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<sup>147</sup> Gitau, Rev Daniel. “Will the Church in Africa Prosper?” ANU Chapel Message, 11 February 2003.

<sup>148</sup> Africa Nazarene University, *Bachelor of Theology Bulletin 2001 –2003*. p. 3.

<sup>149</sup> *Church of the Nazarene Manual*, 2001-2005 ed., Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 2001. ¶ 901.5

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., ¶ 380.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., ¶ 380.1

priority.... With the advent of Africa Nazarene University, a new dimension has been added to the proud heritage of preparing God's people for service."<sup>152</sup>

Following the award of the ANU Charter, Dr P Ken Walker, the Africa Region Education Coordinator, expressed ANU's significance saying, "Truly, Africa Nazarene University has become a 'flagship' for Nazarene Education in Africa."<sup>153</sup>

### **To Meet Present Day Needs, the Church Must Prepare Christian Leaders at the Degree Level.**

The Church needs more African leaders who are trained at the degree level to meet the demands of both a rapidly growing Church and the rising level of education. Dr Louie Bustle, the World Mission Director, recently reported that the Church is active in 146 world areas. He indicated that the Church on the Africa region received 36,000 new members during the past year. Having 252,645 members it is second in size only to the United States of America.<sup>154</sup>

The Church in Africa has many non-degree institutions. However, ANU is empowered to grant certificates, diplomas, pre-university programmes, baccalaureate degrees, master's degrees, and even doctorates, according to the needs and demands of the Church in Africa.

Since October 2002, the ANU leadership team has been aggressively planning and implementing more ways to offer degree level education. In addition to its current bachelor degrees in computer science, commerce, and religion plus its masters' degree in religion, ANU will soon offer bachelor degrees in information technology, teacher education and mass communication, plus the masters' of business administration. Additional master's degrees and even doctoral degrees within this decade are expected. Truly ANU is positioned to prepare and send out our youth in a wide range of vocations as well as at multi-levels of academic achievement.

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<sup>152</sup> Lambert, Dr Jerry D. "Nazarene Education Heritage Passed on to Africa Nazarene University, *Trans African*, 2002, No. 3: p. 12

<sup>153</sup> Walker, Dr P Ken. "Charter Day", *Trans African*, 2002, No. 3: p. 6.

<sup>154</sup> Bustle, Dr Louie. "Intermission" Email Newsletter, March 2003. Kansas City, MO.

## **The Church of the Nazarene in Africa Must Develop Appreciation of Our African Heritage**

Africa Regional Director, Dr J Fred Huff, Chairman of the ANU Board of Trustees notes, “We are a university in Africa for Africans to study and to receive an education which will equip them for a life of service to God, country, family, and mankind.”<sup>155</sup>

Rev Ezekiel Kigathi, a Kenyan youth leader who visited ANU earlier this year, reminded the university community that despite all the hopeless situations surrounding us, it is possible to maintain hope. John 10:10 notes that the devil came to steal, kill, destroy; but Jesus came to give life - and to give it abundantly. However, Jesus expects our participation. Rev Kigathi suggested five things that African youth need to do if they are to take the opportunity of being all that God wants them to become. The hope of holiness education must:

- (1) Help motivate our youth to lives of success, believing in themselves - in their hearts - that they can excel through God’s grace.
- (2) Help our youth change their outlooks from that of their secular peers, and get them ready for God’s best possibilities for their lives.
- (3) Help them change their language, getting rid of negative words, envisioning that things can be better. Although this may be hard, it can be done.
- (4) Challenge our youth to be willing to begin where they are. Things do not simply work out automatically. They will have to exercise patience.
- (5) Also help our youth to see that blessings also come by age. Thus time is required. Our youth must grow to the point that they are able and responsible.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Huff, Dr J Fred. “A Momentous Occasion!” *Trans African*, 2002, No. 3: p. 7

<sup>156</sup> Kigathi, Rev Ezekiel. “Hope for the Youth of Africa”, ANU Chapel Message, 20 February 2003.

All Scripture Verses taken from *Holy Bible*, New King James Version. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1982.

### **To Conclude**

The door is open wide for holiness education to have a major impact on the Church in Africa in this century. Let us challenge our youth to effective Christian living. We can achieve this as we develop a community of African scholars to articulate our faith in Jesus Christ. ANU is leading the way as it prepares both ministers of the Gospel and lay Christian leaders at the degree level. There is much to appreciate of our African heritage. Yes, Africa has difficulties to face. But, we expect a better future in Africa. Because of all we, as Christians, have already received from God, we know there is infinitely more to be expected.