

Lausanne, Young Leaders Gathering 2016

An Invitation to a dialogue and missionary commitment from Latin America and the Caribbean

In our story as evangelicals of Latin America, Lausanne 1974 represents a landmark in the understanding of global mission from the Latin American context. We want to continue writing this story of reflection and transformation in seeking God's kingdom. We acknowledge and are grateful for those men and women who have walked before us doing mission by proclaiming and living the good news of reconciliation and justice for all of creation.

In our beautiful continent the number of evangelicals keeps rising, and people keep flocking to church, while at the same time, poverty continues to spread, violence claims more and more lives, and corruption erodes the social fabric. As a result, our understanding of God's mission from the Latin American context means the growth of the kingdom requires the commitment to the transformation of these realities. We tell the story of a Messiah who, being Lord, identifies himself with the victims of exploitation and suffering caused by the abuse of power prevalent in our continent. We believe this story has the power to change our history.

In the same way the story of God's mission begins with creation, our response to the missionary calling emerges out of being created in His image and likeness. In this response we affirm the centrality of the gospel as the story of God reconciling the world to himself through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This enriches our understanding of the great commission and the great commandment expressed in our responsibility towards the care of life in all its forms, the valuing of our African-Indigenous-Latin and Caribbean cultures and the commitment to walk with and fight on behalf of the most vulnerable in our societies. This specifically affirms the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the triumph of life in contexts of death, injustice and evil. We believe that God's mission is holistic and affects all areas of life. We believe that the Good News, the incarnated Gospel proclaimed by Jesus Christ, manifest itself in concrete forms of liberation, love, justice, and reconciliation for all nations and creation. Therefore we cannot fail to proclaim this Good News and to bring everything under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

In a Latin American society in which community and familial relationships are vital to its social fabric, to adopt praxis, liturgy and individualistic approaches of mission affects the collective witness of the local church to the world. We confess that the expressions of sin in Latin America are also present within the church, but you Lord, invite us to cultivate authentic relationships and to act as your body valuing each person. Therefore, deliver us from reducing the gospel to an escape from the world. Deliver us from erecting towers of rebellion and following models of leadership that are self-imposing and self-serving. Deliver us from our desire to triumph over others and undermine the unity of your Spirit.

Deliver us from a uniform and exclusive proclamation and praxis of the Good News which undermines the existent diversity in our land.

We affirm our love for God when we acknowledge the beauty of creation and commit ourselves to its care; as well as when we fight against the indifference toward structural sin which permeates all social spheres and when we show interest and care in the whole person. We affirm that unity in love is the mark and evidence of the followers of Jesus, therefore, we take on the ministry of reconciliation not only as a job but as a mystery promoted by the actions of the Spirit in our communities of faith.

Consequently and in recognition of the Christian hope we join the prayer for the consummation of the Kingdom of God asking that:

We reconcile to one another, eliminating all existing forms of domination and discrimination evident in relationships of power contrary to the model of Jesus.

In unity we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

May love and respect abide among the various churches, without letting denominational affiliation prevent us from joining efforts for transformation.

In unity we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

That amid the political upheaval of our countries, may we promote spaces for listening and dialogue recognizing the plurality of ideas and feelings.

In unity we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

May we build bridges of love towards society and destroy walls that separate us.

In unity we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

May we ask for forgiveness from those we have wronged, by excluding or discriminating them because of their beliefs, age, gender, ethnic/race and social class.

In unity we say, "Come Lord Jesus!"

May the church in our continent reflect the diversity of originating cultures, valuing the colorfulness and richness of the people of God.

In unity we say, "Come Lord Jesus!", guide us Holy Spirit in your kingdom of life!