



ELECTION FRENZY IN UGANDA The Church and Politics

Some people are of the opinion that these should be well separated. Both should focus on their own concerns and not interfere in each others business. In some countries where the church has spoken against government policies, which are morally wrong, the church has been strongly advised to mind their own business and to get their own house in order first.

Should the church have a prophetic voice in society today? They are the representation of Christ on earth and through the members of his family; God has chosen to communicate the Good News about Jesus' substitutive death on behalf of sinful mankind. The church does have a voice.

In the present run-up to the elections in Uganda, this voice is speaking in such a way that the daily newspapers have taken a clear interest. One of the candidates, a pastor, said "God has told me to stand for Mayor of Kampala." The First Lady, Janet Museveni, is standing for Member of Parliament for her home district. When interviewed, she replied that she is standing because "the Lord has instructed me to do so!" The



pastor of one of the largest churches in Kampala has once again pronounced God's verdict on the upcoming presidential and multi-party elections: "God says that one of the candidates will step down, one will die and one will win with a 66% majority". This has stirred up a lot of dust and fear amongst the presidential candidates. The last oracle is of course true (though in part): there will be only one winner; the chance that one will step down is very high as the polls show who the favourites are. However, because all have sinned and fall short of God's glory it is destined for (all) man to die and to face judgement. The pastor simply did not state when this death would take place or who will die first!

What will happen if these 'God appointed' contestants do not win or if the 'prophecy' does not take place? Does that mean God had it wrong? Would it not be much better to be silent about and wait how things work out instead of using 'God's calling' to urge people to vote for God's man or woman? To vote for the other candidate might mean going against God's will and who wants to incur his wrath?

In the Prophetic books in the Bible, this issue is addressed as well as the true ministry of the Prophet. "...prophets whitewash these deeds for them by false visions and lying divinations. They say, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says'—when the LORD has not spoken." Ezekiel 22:28. In this passage the Lord gives the true ministry of his prophet and as such of his church: To point out corruption, unrighteousness and injustice in the land, its leaders and its people. How true it is that the people of God themselves need to be good examples in these areas!

Once again it shows how desperately the believers need to be disciplined and trained in how to handle the word of God correctly and how to apply its message to today. God has spoken already and revealed all he wanted to communicate through his Son Jesus Christ. It is paramount that we all heed what he has spoken (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Security Update

The upcoming elections have featured regularly in the international news. This is the first time Uganda will have multi-party elections with many parties participating. President Museveni, who has been in the seat for 19 years and has been elected president for the last 2 terms, has changed the constitution to allow him to stand for a third term. The only serious challenge to Museveni comes from Major Dr Kizza Besigye, his former ally and personal doctor. However Besigye's reputation has been tarnished with allegations of rape, treason & terrorism and has been charged, jailed, released on bail and is still facing many court hearings. It has created a serious dilemma. If Dr Besigye is guilty, who wants a president with such a track record? But equally who wants a president who will do anything to stay in power? There is a lot of tension amongst the

populace as many people desire a change in leadership. This tension has erupted in violent protests which the government suppressed by calling in the army. Uganda has not seen this kind



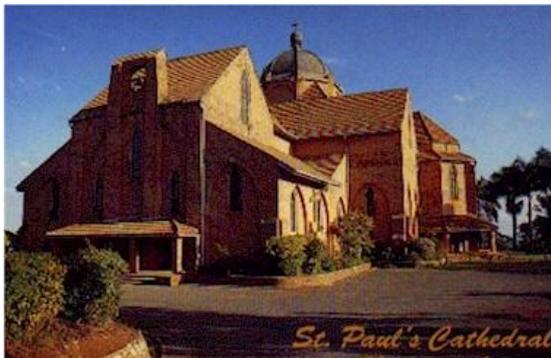
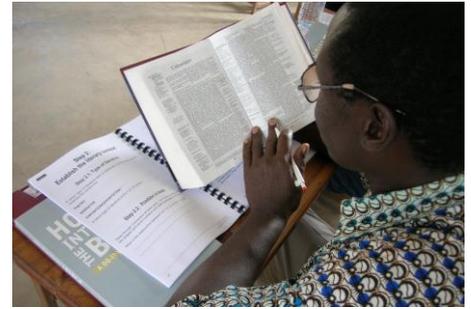
of display since the Idi Amin years. We value your prayers for Uganda and for a peaceful transition to the next stage in Uganda's turbulent history.

Chinese Whispers in Veritas Training?

How does the training process actually work? Here we go with a genealogy of training: Bennie (Veritas International Director) & Martin trained Richard. => Richard trained Pastor Jonnes (VCU Chairman) => Jonnes trained Michael (Richard's assistant) => Michael trained Charles Lubega (member of his church) => Charles trains Eva Kisakye (member of training project in Kamengo). Eva shares the following:

"I have been married to a Muslim man and share him with 2 other wives. After I was saved I was told that I needed to leave him (I have 4 children with him). However, I did not want to leave my husband. I am very thankful that I am part of the Veritas group. We studied a few weeks ago about how to interpret the Ten Commandments and how to apply this through making ethical decisions. My small group looked at polygamy which is very real to me. As we worked through this issue, I felt the Lord telling me that I should not leave my husband but stay with him and love him. I really felt encouraged. The most exciting part is that my husband has since given his life to the Lord and things are much better in our home..."

How do we prevent a breakdown in communications the way they occur with 'Chinese Whispers'? Veritas training is not simply a transfer of information from one person to the next and down the chain, but *an equipping with skills in Bible interpretation*. We focus on developing these skills in our facilitators. We use many passages from the Bible to model the steps, which we use to find the message which the original receivers of the Bible understood. The next step is let them practice for themselves whilst we monitor how they use the skills we have modelled. Then they show the group their findings and when they are competent, they can pass the skills on to others. It is hearing, seeing and doing and then teaching it to others.



Historic Development in the Church of Uganda

After many meetings and deliberations, the Church of Uganda (Anglican and the largest protestant church in Uganda) and Veritas College are officially formalizing their 10 year old relationship. They will be responsible for training and implementation in the Dioceses, Theological Colleges and the Christian University, whilst Veritas will serve them in consultation and providing training materials. Over the last 5 years many church leaders have been equipped in local churches, parishes, dioceses and Theological Colleges and training is running in thirteen dioceses, covering half the country!

Pentecostal Assemblies of God (PAG)

In December 2005 PAG's Theological College in Mbale invited Veritas to introduce the training approach to their college lecturers. We had a great week together with many challenging discussions. One of their concerns had been that though they teach interpretation of the different Bible books, the different lecturers have not followed the same approach. Furthermore they have discovered a pressing need to make their theological training more practical and more relevant to the local situation in Uganda.

Some testimonies: *"The Veritas Approach is down to earth and easily adaptable to any local church situation. Our wish is to have this approach integrated in our curriculum"* Rev Patrick Ouke, Principle PTC; *"This approach of integrated leadership development is a timely development in meeting the need of growing leaders"*, Rev. Sam Onyait, lecturer PTC; *"I find this approach very exciting and pray that God will enable me to start straight away with training my colleagues in Nanyo Presbyterian Bible College"*, Rev Kamate Katsongo;



PAG In-Service Bible School (IBS)

To meet the rapidly growing need for equipped leadership, PAG, which is the 2nd largest protestant church (and also the fastest growing one), started the In-Service Bible School to provide training for leaders of their many rural churches. They were not able to come to the Theological College for many reasons: They could not leave their churches, families and shambas (small plantations) and residential training is also financially inaccessible to the majority of rural church leaders. But with the IBS programme, the training could come to them! Last year Veritas was invited to provide training for 20 of their top trainers who are already active in training others. They in turn start this February to multiply themselves through training 250 other leaders in areas where Veritas is not active. Most of these leaders live in the war-torn North of Uganda, this is also the area where the church is growing the fastest (and is the neediest). We praise God for this wonderful opportunity to impact the church through these *faithful men who are qualified to train others, 2Timothy 2:2*.

Update on Translation Work

Uganda has about 40 languages grouped into 6 language groups and it is Veritas' aim to make the training as accessible to the local rural pastors as possible. Even though English is the Lingo Franca, the rural pastors use the vernacular and are less confident in English. Presently we have pastors working on four different languages, three in the North and one in Southern Uganda. Translation work is a big but vital task for which we need a full-time person to provide linguistic training, coordinate the translation work, editing and desktop publishing.

Please pray with us for the right person to fill the job of coordinating the translation work (soon). We are in consultation with the Wycliffe Bible Translators who will help train someone for this role but are not able to provide personnel.

However, the challenge of 'reversing' the Tower of Babel in Eastern Africa is even bigger! We still need to find a solution for the Amharic language of Ethiopia, Swahili for Kenya and Tanzania and Juba Arabic for



Our Translation Team

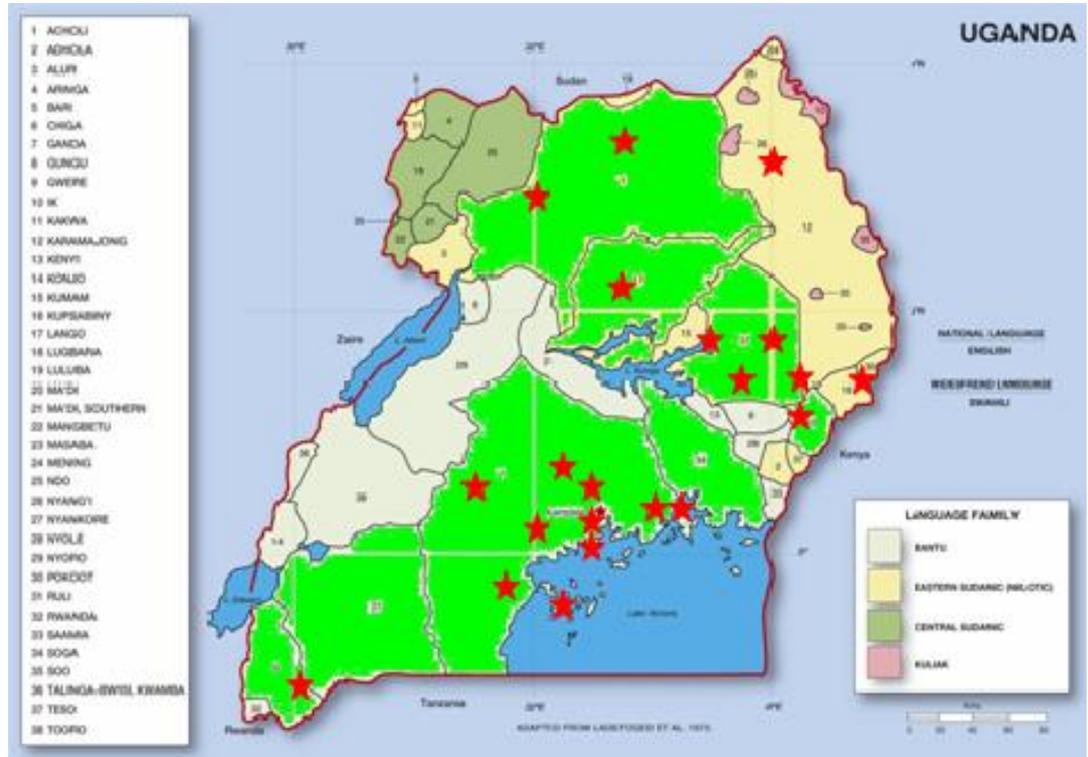
Southern Sudan. Veritas has been invited to branch out in these regions and is doing so through our mission partners.

As it is the Lord who created different languages, we are confident that he will help us find the right solution! The Bible Translator aims to bring God's Word to people in their own language. Veritas aims to (where possible)

train leaders to understand, apply and communicate the message of God's Word effectively and relevantly in the language of their church members.

Language Distribution

This map gives a picture of the language distribution in Uganda according to a recent survey. The language areas our translation team is presently working at with a translation of the Veritas modules have been highlighted in green as these are also the areas where most of our training is taking place. The stars show the Veritas project locations.



A few areas where you can help us practically:

- We welcome your involvement if you are interested in partnering with Veritas in supporting this project.
- Translation of one module costs £200. £800 for the 4 modules for each language group.
- Support the translation of one module at £200.
- Help us obtain 5 old laptops for the translators. They need to be able to run MSWord.

God's Faithfulness in Provision

With a growing work comes a growing price tag! Veritas is very thankful for the favour the Lord has given us with many churches, church groups, Bible Colleges and organisations here in Uganda. We praise the Lord for his faithful provision over the last 12 years and especially the last couple of months. Veritas faced a serious financial challenge, which would have resulted in cutting back on training and central costs. As we were deliberating these issues in prayer, new

donations were received which have, for now, put Veritas back in business. Thank you Lord and a 'thank you' to all who have stood with us during this challenging time!

We value your commitment and we are very aware the Lord is using your faithful commitment in prayer and support to enable the Veritas Team in carrying out our Mission to bring the needed training to the local church leaders in Uganda.

Mission Statement of Veritas Uganda

To equip church leaders in Uganda to train their own and other leaders with skills in leadership through interpretation & application of the biblical message.
Equipping, Empowering & Releasing!

Sue's News

Eight years ago, four school boys gave us money they had saved to give to a missionary family. When they heard we needed a fridge freezer, they blessed us with the ability to do so. We bought it from an Indian salesman and I happened to meet his wife, Shilpa who was raised in the UK. Over the years a close friendship has developed and Shilpa has become more and more interested in the Good News about the Lord Jesus. She witnessed his instant healing power when he touched her diseased hands. She was suffering from severe eczema. She wants to know more about who Jesus is but fears the repercussions that a commitment to Jesus will bring about from her husband Rai and his family who are staunch Hindus. Please pray for Shilpa and especially for Rai. Shilpa does want his permission for her pursuit of Christ.



We are planning to have an extended time in Europe in particular Holland this coming summer. We are not sure exactly how long but we aim to stay for at least one school term, to give the children (and me!) a chance to become fluent in Dutch. We have spent 14 years in Uganda and feel it is time to be with our Dutch family, friends and supporters and in particular Richy's mother who is 76 this year. Each

furlough we tend to spend more time in the UK than in Holland. Rich would like to do some further training and this will be a good opportunity to do so. We will of course be visiting our family and friends in England and hope to see many of you then. We are also looking forward to meet up with my dad whom we have not seen for many years.

Last year our kids have been in a Christian International School. Rachel has been able to keep up very well and found the work challenging despite her dyslexia. However due to various factors we have had to start home-schooling her again. We have found a lovely Ugandan teacher who will be working with her. I will be supervising Rachel's progress as well as continuing office work with Richard. Hannah & Caleb



are still longing to be home-schooled also! Rich and I have decided for this term to keep them in the International School as Rich feels I need to have a longer break from home-schooling even though I am enjoying my new found health.

We are very grateful to the Lord for the financial support, which we have received for the kid's school fees. Thank you to all who have been a part in this!

Opportunities, Prayer Requests & Praise

The greatest **opportunity** we want to present to you is the following: Become involved in the Lord's work through enabling the Ministry of Veritas College in Uganda:

- We realise that we are part of the Body of Christ and that together we are called to fulfil the Great Commission which includes *"Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* Your prayer, encouragement and financial support is what enables the staff of Veritas Uganda to bring essential leadership training to pastors who otherwise have no access to training. We invite you to seriously and prayerfully consider your involvement.
- Also through inviting your family, friends & colleagues to take up this challenge.
- And encouraging your house /cell group and church to be involved.

Opportunities for involvement

- Support a staff member
- Donations towards Vehicle Fund
- Support translation work

Pray for the following

- The translation project Co-ordinator
- Julia Etter (The wife of Martin who is one of our director) who has been diagnosed with cancer. She is presently undergoing treatment in South Africa.

- God's provision for the existing work

Praise for

- Sue's health and protection on all our lives
- For God's continued provision through many of you!
- Life transformation of our participants and facilitator

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