IT'S NOT ABOUT THE SUPERSTARS

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Category: Church: World

There are some big names in world mission. For the most part, they aren't actually missionaries they are pastors, but they are big names nonetheless. They write books which sell in huge numbers, preach sermons that get thousands of views on YouTube and write blog posts that go viral. They are the people to listen to; the opinion formers. The problem is that for all their celebrity status, they really aren't all that important.

Yesterday, I mentioned two key passages in the book of Acts where the Gospel where the Christian message broke out of it's Jewish cultural restraints and in to a wider world. In Acts 8, it is Philip, someone best known up to that point as a waiter, who was responsible for evangelising the Samarians and the Ethiopian official. Then in Acts 11, we aren't even told the name of the believers who finally made the breakthrough in preaching to Gentiles.

It is true that Peter was involved in sharing the Gospel with the Roman soldier, Cornelius in Acts 10, but he was pretty reluctant to do so. There is a clear contrast between Peter's reluctant conservatism and the spontaneous, joyous cross-cultural evangelism practiced by Philip and the un-named disciples.

We are in a similar situation today. The big advances in mission are not being made by famous people (or even by bloggers, like myself). The main way that the Gospel is spreading around the world is through the quiet, but determined witness of Christians whose names we have never heard of (and would struggle to pronounce).

In a new post on the Global Connections blog, Kent Anderson says this:

> *One of the reason the church is growing in places like the Congo is because people there are still willing to talk about what God is doing in their lives. How heâ€™s healed them of diseases, delivered them from spiritual oppression and freed them from the sins that used to control them.*

And it isn't just in Congo.

The future and growth of the world wide church isn't going to be determined in mega-churches in the US, or in publishing houses in Europe, but by the faithful witness of millions of people whose name is written in the book of life, but may not turn up on a Google search.