

A PEACEFUL GOSPEL

Antoine Rutayisire

This talk was filmed at *The Lausanne Movement's Cape Town 2010 Congress*.



As part of the Evangelical Alliance's *Confidence in the Gospel* initiative we are hosting a series of five national consultations to wrestle with significant and timely issues relating to the gospel.

To ensure that as many people as possible can engage with this programme, the talks are being filmed and made available online.

Why not watch some of the videos, and use the questions provided, to explore these vital subjects with your small group or leadership team?

For more information, videos and resources visit eauk.org/confidence

Antoine Rutayisire

is a Rwandan, who at the age of five saw his father murdered for being a Tutsi. He is vice chair of the Rwandan's National Unity and Reconciliation Commission and team leader of African Enterprise.

Synopsis

Rwanda is one of the most Christian countries in the world and has often been held up as an example of successful Christianisation of a nation. In 1994, 90 per cent of the population was considered Christian. However, that same year, genocide claimed the lives of one million people in 100 days. How was it that alongside growing churches, the build up to genocide was going on?

Antoine Rutayisire suggests that there are four areas where things went wrong. (1) There was a lack of contextualisation of the gospel. (2) The method of presentation was inappropriate, (3) The messengers spoke a message of love but did not always communicate that with their actions. (4) The relationship between the Church and politics was unhealthy.

Out of a crisis often come positives. The genocide pushed Christians to rediscover the message of reconciliation, and as that happened, Christianity has continued to grow in the country.

Antoine Rutayisire highlights six themes. (1) A rediscovered perspective on sin and alienation. (2) Rediscovering the power of preaching Christ *and* him crucified. (3) Discovering new perspectives on our identities. (4) Discovering new perspectives on the mission of the Church, recognising that we have been given the ministry of reconciliation. (5) Discovering new perspectives on our social relationships. (6) Discovering a new perspective on the power of unity.

In conclusion, if we want to heal our nations we need to re-examine the evangelisation and discipleship in our nations. We need to analyse our past and present, identifying those areas of woundedness and alienation, so we can lead people towards healing. We have to be intentional about reconciliation, it doesn't just happen. We need to accept our calling as ministers of reconciliation; let reconciliation become a lifestyle, not a programme of project.

Questions

for small groups

- 1) Rwanda is an extreme example, but what experience do we have in our context of the four areas that Antoine Rutayisire suggested went wrong?
- 2) Why is it essential that the gospel message is about reconciliation with one another as well as reconciliation with God?
- 3) How can we be ministers of reconciliation in our daily lives?

for leadership teams

- 1) What damage may we have inadvertently done in the past as a result of our words, actions and attitudes?
- 2) How might discovering a new perspective on the mission of the Church, that focuses on our role as ministers of reconciliation, transform the work of your church and how you communicate the gospel?
- 3) What can we do to ensure that we are intentional about reconciliation and don't just expect it to happen naturally?