

TRANSFORMATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Countries Practising Transformation

Brazilian Transformation Project www.tranformacao.com.br

What began as a dream and a prayer, along with the shedding of tears, led to a letter of intention, followed by an act of faith, and then a project. It is called "Brazil Transformation Project."

It is the implementation of the movement of the Spirit of God. It has shaken up the Brazilian church. A new song is being sung for worshippers throughout all of Brazil, courageous believers are rising up, the nation is being claimed for Jesus!

Since then, great gathering of God's people are happening in the main cities of Brazil. Believers join together in prayer, in intercession, in a spirit of worship, and to hear words from the Lord. Brazil has become a place where God's presence can be experienced.

The first national transformational conference took place during a moment of prayer and fellowship among some Brazilian evangelical leaders. It happened in the midst of a solemn assembly on the 4th April, 2001, at a moment of communion with God and one another. Fifteen leaders of the Evangelical Church in Brazil experienced a call from God to awaken the conscience of Brazilian Christians – so that they might live a life of victory under the principles of the Word of God and His Kingdom. Seven months later, the first national transformation event took place in the city of Belo Horizonte, which was to become one of the cities that would catalyze the transformation project. It was on that occasion that a letter of intention was

drafted for what at that time was called the "Rescue Brazil Project."

In the next few years, the vision for transformation was broadened and deepened. At the national conference in 2002 in Goiania, the letter of intention was consolidated with increased mobilization of the churches throughout the nation. During the national conference of 2003 in Sao Paulo, the Brazilian Transformation Project was launched (previously called Rescue Brazil, with a foundation made up of various pillars.) The 2004 event is planned for the 8th to the 11th of December in Recife. God is working through the process. There are various practical steps emerging that include the preparation of transformational leaders, along with strategies for each of the five pillars to work harmoniously to bring personal, community, and national transformation.

The letter of intent follows:

LETTER OF INTENTION (a summary)

Gathered in Belo Horizonte on November 14-17, 2001, about 7,500 servants of God from all the states of Brazil, we became burdened by the need to change the culture of Latin America. This occurred through a powerful visitation of the Holy Spirit. We believe this will take the form of establishing the ethical values of the Kingdom of God among all the spheres of society, provoking a spiritual revolution that radically transforms the life of our people in religious, economic, cultural and political arenas. This transformation will take place to such a degree that our cities will receive a new name, because of which we can declare:

“And the name of the city from that time on will be: Yahweh Shammah, THE LORD IS THERE” (Eze. 48:35b).

In the meeting, the following subjects were discussed:

1. Awareness of our responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission in our generation;
2. Awareness of our spiritual inheritance as a result of the ministries raised up for God in the past and in our day;
3. Awareness of the place of the Brazilian nation in the plans of God for our generation;
4. Awareness that only the Body of Christ qualifies to fulfill the giant task of delivering the Native land to its legitimate owner in our generation;
5. Awareness of the invincible force of the Body of Christ to defeat the kingdom of darkness;
6. Trusting the leadership and ability of the Holy Spirit;
7. Imbued with a passionate determination to launch all the spiritual and human resources at our disposal, we are united in our intent to transform Brazil for Christ in the next five years, embracing the challenge to:

- a. Seek with intensity the spirit of favor and supplication that result in confession and repentance for the sins of the Body and the society. (Zech 12:10; II Cr 7:14);
- b. Mobilize our churches to pursue God in our lives and, consequently, in our nation, through fasting in the spirit of Isaiah 62:6-7, “I have posted watchmen on your walls,....;they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the Lord, give

yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest till He establishes...and makes her the praise of the earth.”

- c. Awaken our churches to a consistent return to the reading, meditation, memorization, and study of the Word of God and the authentic Biblical values of the Kingdom of God;
- d. Prioritize the worship of God to occupy first place in our personal lives and in the life of the Church;
- e. Adopt a Great Commission lifestyle;
- f. Embody a discipleship program in our churches based on the priesthood of every believer, with the goal that each disciple becomes a minister and each house a center of worship. (Acts 5:42);
- g. Inculcate the ethical values and cultural expressions of the Word of God in all segments of Brazilian society; through mass media such as radio and television; and establish Christian principles of education at all levels, until marks of the visitation of God are concrete not only in the Church, but also in the transformation of society.

With this intention, we agree to:

1. Organize seven annual conferences on a national level, in the different regions of the country, to be hosted in the following cities: Belo Horizonte, Goiania, Sao Paulo, Salvador, Manaus, Recife, and Porto Alegre;
2. Organize smaller conferences in some cities of Brazil, with the focus directed toward strategies to reach these cities, in order to motivate church planting movements, so that

all the Brazilian cities have vigorous churches with a strategic vision for Kingdom building;

3. Mobilize the largest number of evangelical leaders and churches from all the denominations for the joint project of evangelizing our cities;
4. Commit to a systematic plan of fasting and prayer for the cure of the Brazilian economy, so that poverty is eradicated;
5. Encourage the partnership of ministries for the moral and cultural change of radio senders and television in order to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the values of the Kingdom of God;
6. Awaken evangelical leaders for the establishment of schools and universities based on Christian values.

Understanding that this is only the beginning, we will seek to continue hearing what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches of Brazil toward the transformation of this nation – in all its breadth and depth – that it may be said of Brazil: “Yahweh Shammah, THE LORD IS THERE.”

The strategy adopted includes several pillars: first, a united, national, intercessory network; second, the inculcation of Christian principles of education in schools throughout Brazil; third, the launching of and a center for an inquiry into the nature of spiritual and societal transformation; fourth, becoming Kingdom change agents in all sectors of Brazilian society, seeking to introduce Kingdom values; and fifth, that social action be the direct product for the betterment of society.

Our dream is to establish a Transformation Center committed to analyzing the history and facts of Brazil, bringing the light the current subjects of the economy, politics, marketplace, education, and arts, as well as

current situations surrounding poverty, misery and corruption. This Center would inform the Body of Christ and encourage the transformation of Brazil to the glory of Jesus Christ!

The letter of intention was written only few years ago. Now, few years later, the secular press takes notice. It recognizes that the evangelical church is on a mission of transformation to introduce the value system of the Kingdom of God. On June 7, 2004, a front page article titled “Moved by the Spirit to Govern” appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*.

In an opening interview with Adelor Vieira, a congressman is quoted as saying: “The churches to which evangelicals belong have a mission, which is to promote the Kingdom of God.” It was as though Vieira was thinking of that letter of intention written up in 2001.

In Brazil, the region’s largest country and an unshakable Catholic stronghold for centuries, census figures show 15% of the population to be evangelicals – about 27 million people.

...For many here, faith remains a private affair, their devotion playing out at church and at home. But others are heeding what they believe is a divine calling to shine the light of Christian truth on “works of darkness,” which encompass perceived evils as varied as abortion and the corruption rampant in Brazilian politics.

“We cannot be silent when those things happen,” said Walter Pinheiro, an evangelical Christian deputy in Brazil’s congress. “We

have to bring light to and condemn those practices.”

By “we”, Pinheiro means an evangelical contingent in Brazil’s lower house that has grown over the last few years and, last September, formed an official lobby in Congress, the Evangelical Parliamentary Front.

The group, whose goal is to ensure that public policy falls “in line with God’s purposes, and according to His Word,” boasts 58 deputies and three senators out of nearly 600 legislators...

The group opposes any liberalization of Brazil’s already strict abortion laws. Gay marriage is anathema. So are legalizing drugs, handing out clean needles to addicts as a public-health measure, and distributing condoms in schools.

One of the group’s biggest victories in Congress last year was amending a bio-safety bill to outlaw the cloning of

human embryos to harvest stem cells for research. On the local level, the evangelical governor of Rio de Janeiro state, Rosinha Matheus, has outraged scientists by authorizing public schools to teach creationism.

Yet, to view the evangelical front as a simple analogue of the religious right in the United States would be off the mark...the Brazilian deputy belong to a motley, squabbling bunch of rival groups that span the ideological spectrum.

The latest national transformational event for the Brazilian project involved more than 8,000 Brazilian Christian leaders in assessment, review of the progress, adjustments, and expansion of the vehicles for implementation of the vision. It called for fresh commitment to the vision and mission to transform Brazil. They have begun planning for Christian leaders engaged in transformation from the Church around the world to participate in **Transform World: Brazil 2008.**

UK

By John Smith, UK Director, Evangelical Alliance

In 2000 Evangelical Alliance, representing a constituency of 1 million across the UK, launched the vision of a mass movement – a Movement for change – setting a mission agenda for unity, that of societal transformation – uniting to change society. At its heart is a call to holistic or integral mission which takes seriously the full Gospel mandate as expressed for example in Jesus’ Nazareth manifesto of Luke 4. It stresses grassroots identification and involvement, emphasizing the ‘me’ in the movement and the ‘all’ in alliance.

In 2002, *facevalues* provided a framework for churches to engage in social justice, and social action agendas alongside evangelism.

Seventy mission agency badged their products and programmes under *facevalues*.

Evangelical Alliance made available

- ❖ A mission menu
- ❖ Adaptability, a CD rom based diagnostic tool for social action;

- ❖ Prayer resources; a provocative poster set featuring kingdom values;
- ❖ A Say Sorry Sunday
- ❖ A National Forgiveness Day.

Advertising and PR provided a backcloth for local activity in a campaign with a national identity. Some 3000 local churches participated in some way in this mission project. An independent review concluded 'no-one can undertake national mission in the UK again without taking account of *facevalues*.'

Facevalues was a short-term expression of Movement for Change designed to raise the profile of holistic mission and to engage with society on the issue of values.

Movement for Change continues to develop on several fronts.

- ❖ A theological colloquium has reflected on the characteristics and influence of other transformational movements.
- ❖ A strategic forum draws together thinkers from several agencies considering opportunities to influence education, politics, arts and media, business and professions, identified as key change-drivers in society;

- ❖ Salt and light research will quantify the benefits of Christian based social action projects.
- ❖ An annual values engagement will raise the profile of a kingdom value – this year 'hope' – this will include resources for churches and a press and media campaign.

A major strategy of Movement for Change taken up principally by the Alliance-*changemakers* - is designed to help church leaders equip, mobilize and support church members to become agents for change through their daily activities. This involves a serious reflection on the purpose of church, and emphasizes a paradigm shift from simply 'the church gathered' to include 'the church dispersed' or scattered. The task has been described as 'turning the church inside out to turn the world upside down.' In pursuing the vision of a Movement for Change, Evangelical Alliance is conscious of a number of parallel initiatives using similar language of change and movement, and with closely related objectives, e.g., the faithworks movement of Oasis and the change activist programme of Care. A clear priority for Movement for Change is the avoidance of competition and the concern to bless an encourage what God is raising up.

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