

STAGE 2	AFRICA	Monrovia, Liberia	The birth of a Church Planting Movement in West Africa
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Liberia was founded as a Christian State in 1847 but Freemasonry, imported by the early settlers, was fused with indigenous tribal secret societies and penetrated nearly every sphere of life and church in Liberia. Corruption and war have devastated the land and destroyed much of the economy for two decades. A civil war raged from 1989-1996 and 1999-2003. An entire generation of young people received no schooling. The rate at which whole people groups are turning to cults, Islam and animism is alarming. The gospel is spread very unevenly in Liberia. Five very populated and wealthy counties of Liberia are completely unreached (Bomi, Cape Mount, Lofa, Gbapolu and Grand Gedeh) and have the highest influence of Islam and animism.

In the midst of this chaos, David K., a young Liberian pastor, believed that young people can be equipped to start and lead simple fellowships of believers. He founded Hope Evangelical Free Church in Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia, a church with barely fifty attendants, mostly from the lower class. David had the advantage of theological studies focused on the area of church planting. His studies, along with a passion for making disciples and compassion ministry, prepared him to develop, empower and release others in ministry. So, from the start, instead of seeking to grow a mega-church, he equipped others for the harvest.

In about ten years, through his leadership and ministry, that first church grew to a movement of sixteen congregations. The resulting movement is called the Evangelical Free Church of West Africa (EFCWA). Some are house churches; others meet in rented buildings. One is a mobile church that is reaching drug addicts in the marketplace. They have purchased a 20-acre parcel of land that will produce food for needy families. A well will provide water for the farm and drinking water for the nearby village. And on the land they have begun to build a training center for disciples, leaders, and workers.



The EFCWA churches reach out in creative ways to specific communities through holistic ministries, such as the establishment of primary schools and disaster relief. In addition, micro-finance and agriculture projects are being established to help with economic development and ministry support.

The Monrovia church operates a primary school with over 200 children! Makeshift reed mats divide the small clay-bricked structure into four cramped classrooms without electricity or running water. The majority of the children meet in open air “classrooms” because the building cannot accommodate them. Though primitive by Western standards, Pastor Titus D. is proud of their accomplishments. The members built everything themselves with little help from outsiders and nothing from the government. Teachers of large classes lack the most basic materials and are paid barely enough to purchase rice for the month. When asked how they can do the seemingly impossible, Pastor Titus replied, “We have to. Our children are the future of the country and they must be educated, whatever it takes.”

Five movements in Liberia and the Evangelical Free Church of Sierra Leone joined hands to launch this holistic training and implementation strategy. They help local churches improve their capacities and abilities to multiply healthy Kingdom communities by training and equipping lay people in “Multiplication Church Planting” skills. This training was launched in January 2011.

The story of the EFCWA is a story of what God can do with people who have few resources but great vision and a great faith in Him. This story is continued in the case study entitled “The Generational Multiplication of Disciples and Churches in West Africa.” Please read on.