

Chapter 49

Epilogue

Lord willing, the history of Open Air Campaigners, which has been presented in the preceding pages, will continue well into the future and even into many new fields. God has given us a rich heritage, made possible by His grace, as He is using our staff around the world to fulfill the purpose for which He has created all people: to know Him and to make Him known.

We are grateful to God for the godly international leadership of this mission through the years, many of whom are still alive today. We should listen to their counsel as we look forward to what He has in store for us as an organization in the years ahead. With that in mind, hear what our former OAC International presidents have to say.



David Wilson from the USA

OACI President from 1996 to 2004



What is the primary purpose of OAC? It is to publicly proclaim the gospel to the lost, calling them to repentance and faith in Christ. Simply stated, it is proclamation evangelism. We are evangelists assisting the church to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ (Ephesians 4:11).

The word “proclaim,” or “Kerusso” in Greek (sometimes translated “preach”), occurs throughout the New Testament. It means to be a herald. A few examples of Kerusso are:

John the Baptist: “came preaching in the desert of Judea, saying, ‘Repent...’

Christ: “...traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news.”

The disciples: “He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God.”

Philip the evangelist: “...went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there.”

Paul: “How can they hear without someone preaching”



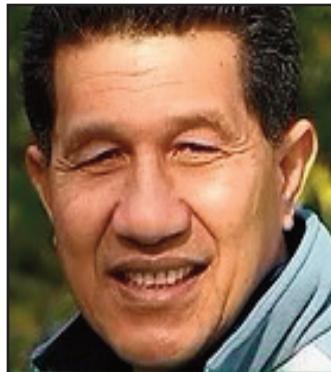
The Great Commission: “...repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations.”

Our OACI Statement of Purpose declares that we are a ministry of evangelism committed to preaching the gospel to the unreached through open-air and other outreaches in partnership with the church.

May we never be diverted from this high and holy calling, given to us by God.

Robert Siakimotu from New Zealand

OACI President from 2004 to 2012



Open Air Campaigners (OAC), from my personal perspective, is a ministry birthed by God at the right time many years ago and still going strong today by the grace and mercy of God. God called and used ordinary people like Edward P. Field and many others who followed right to our time as His vessels to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by all means everywhere. OAC evangelists/workers today continue to do the same as well, equipping other Christians to preach the gospel in the open air, schools, camps, prisons, festivals, and in many other places where people gather. I was asked a question a few years ago when I was doing some research for university studies: "What is the key reason for OAC's longevity?" My short answer was, "OAC has remained true

to the original calling of God to the early evangelists in the ministry to 'proclaim the gospel and equip the church to do the same.' The OAC evangelists today, in more than thirty countries where we are now established or working, continue in this original calling to preach the gospel and equip the church to do the same. The methods of doing the above differ from country to country, but the main focus is the same: 'Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ by all means everywhere and equipping the church to do the same.'



The gospel of Jesus Christ is what the world needs to hear more and more today. My prayer is that OAC evangelists and workers will continue to proclaim the Gospel of Christ Jesus effectively by using all means everywhere and continue to equip other Christians to do the same.

Rob George from Australia

OACI President from 2012 to 2020



OAC has a long and effective history of reaching out to those without Christ, many of whom have never before heard the gospel clearly presented.

As we **LOOK BACK**, we are proud of that history; we greatly respect those who have gone before, upon whose shoulders we stand today; our founder, EP Field, in 1892 in Sydney, Australia; Jim Duffecy and others who pioneered our international expansion in the 1950s; David Wilson who has planted many of our current branches; so many could be mentioned. But we do not rest on the achievements of the past.

As we **LOOK AROUND** today, we see that there are still millions who have not responded to the claims of Christ. Our passion, as it always has been, is to go out where the people are: onto the streets, into the schools, wherever crowds gather, and to engage them in creative, relevant ways with the unchanging message of the gospel.

Our ministry has grown from one country to more than thirty, from a staff of ten to that of hundreds. We **LOOK FORWARD** to continued growth and development as the Lord leads. It is simply a matter of continued obedience to Jesus! We are commanded to “go” to the people, not expect the people to come to us. Imagine a fisherman with a sign in his fishing boat asking the fish to get into the boat! No, the fisherman puts the right bait on the hook, goes at the right time, to the right place, to catch the right fish.



As we continue on, we **LOOK UP** to Him who not only provides for our needs but is the source of our message and strength in every situation. So often, we are unsure how many people will stop and listen or what the state of their hearts may be, but we go out trusting in Him. William Carey said, “I will go ... but remember that you must hold the ropes.” It is a team effort. Will you join us on the frontline, becoming part of our next ‘History’ book, or play that essential role of holding the ropes for us?

David Proaño from Ecuador

OACI President since 2020



The work and ministry of Open Air Campaigners International is well described in Psalm 96:3-4, “Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples! For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised.”

OACI exists for the glory of God by being a tool of evangelism so that many may come to know Him and rejoice in His presence as a result of the transformation produced by the gospel!

The history of the expansion of OAC from Australia to now, over 30 countries around the world, is profoundly inspiring! What a great legacy that our OAC leaders, men of prayer and passion for the gospel, have left us! Therefore, we press on ... knowing that we, too ... have been set apart for the glorious ministry of reconciliation. Each generation of OAC evangelists have been called by God to joyfully use their talents, spiritual gifts, and resources for the advancement of the gospel into “every nation and tribe and tongue and people.” It is a great joy and privilege for me to serve with OAC. We are simply “servants of Christ” and “stewards of the mysteries of God” (Luke 17:10).

SOLI DEO GLORIA!

