

CREATING THE NEXT EPICENTER FOR MISSIONS...

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

ANDREW WALLS...

The most important person you don't know....



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Historian Ahead of His Time

Andrew Walls may be the most important person you don't know.

Tim Stafford / FEBRUARY 8, 2007

Andrew Walls was mildly incredulous when I phoned him in Aberdeen, Scotland, to ask for an interview. Of course he would gladly help me, he said in a restrained Scotch brogue, but was I sure I had the right person? He couldn't understand why *Christianity Today* would want to write about him.

The reason is simple: Andrew Walls may be the most important person you don't

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No Longer the Center...

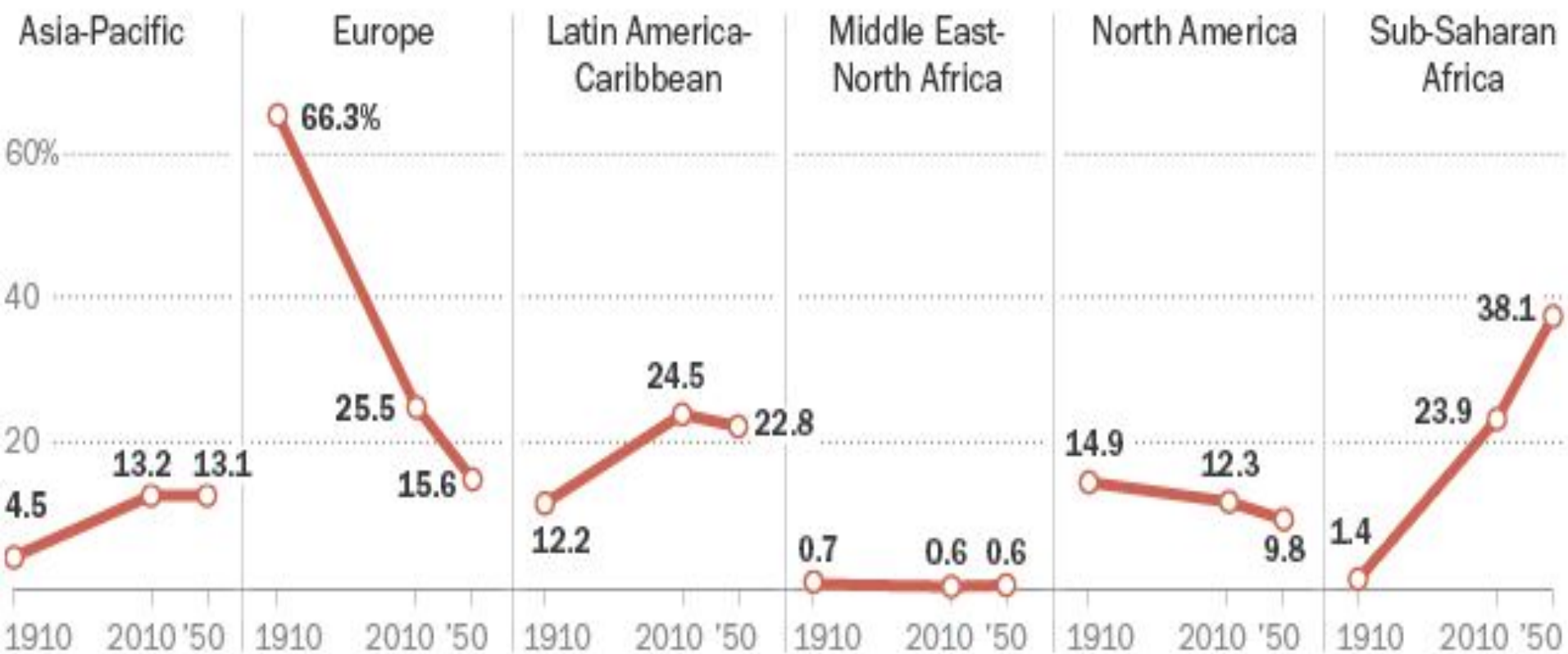
The epicenter of Christianity is a moving target



- > Jerusalem
- > Antioch
- > North Africa
- > Europe
- > North America
- > Southern Hemisphere
- > Asia and beyond

Global Share of Christians by Region, 1910-2050

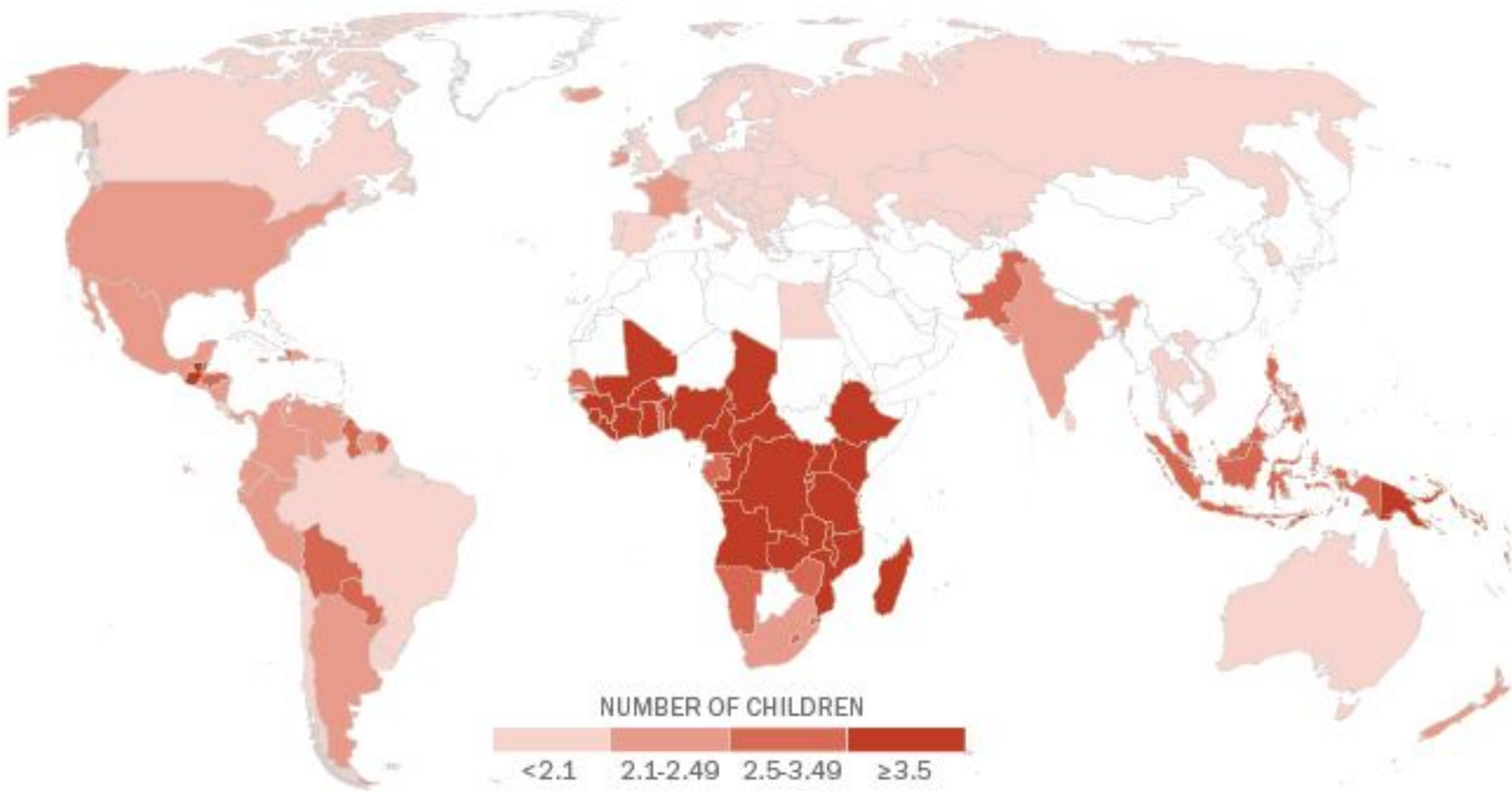
% of all Christians living in ...



Sources: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050; 1910 estimates based on Pew Research analysis of data from the Center for the Study of Global Christianity; 2050 estimates are projections.

Total Fertility Rates of Christians, by Country

Number of children per woman, 2010-2015 estimate



Source: The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050

Note: Only countries for which there are sufficient data are shown.

Conclusions

- Sub-Saharan Africa is fast becoming the new heartland for Christianity
- This is fueled by birth rate, the history of missions, and the cultural milieu of Africa.
- This window is temporary, just like every other window that has opened and closed in history.

Implications are huge...

- The new potential epicenter of missions advance is outside our door
- The new center for theological influence (good or bad) is outside our door
- The future is in the hands of those among whom we live
- The future is in the hands of our children
- They are not ready

Personal Observations

- Africans have the zeal that is necessary
- Africans are resilient and have the ability to live in the hard places
- Africans have the heart
- Our churches do not yet have the theological and logistical capacity to complete the task.
- Some churches are going to the nations, but many are more inwardly focused.
- Aberrant theologies are impeding the African church's progress.

Challenges facing the advancement of Baptist TE institutions in Africa...

- Lack of shared vision (Inward Focused)
- Lack of cohesion in Strategy and Purpose (Not sure about what, how or why)
- Theological integrity crisis (Liberalism, Neo-Pentecostalism, Prosperity Gospel)
- Transition from Western to African and the issues that accompany that:
 - Support
 - models and forms
 - Pragmatism
 - Pedagogy
 - buy in from National Bodies

Questions that keep me up...

- Will Africa and can Africa go to all the world?
- When we go, what gospel will we export?



A Re-Visioning of TE

- Comprehensive (all levels and missional focus)
- Cohesive (Interrelated and connected)
- Collaborative (across sub-Saharan Africa)
- Contextualized (flexible and local)
- Committed (accountable and aggressive)
 - Accountable to our Conventions
 - Accountable to each other
 - Accountable to the word
 - Accountable to the world and church at large

I Have a Dream...

- In this dream I see African Baptists writing the next great theological works
- In this dream I see a return to biblical orthodoxy in Africa and African Baptists leading the way.
- In this dream I see Africans leading at the round table of theology, and shepherding the West back to biblical roots and revival.
- In this dream I see Africans covering the planet in gospel witness, and leading us to finish the task.
- In this dream I see it starting right here, right now

How lovely on the mountains...

ARE THE FEET OF THEM...



WHO BRING GOOD NEWS...

