



The 2nd Annual Gala Dinner of the Global Fund for Christ

**Mogoeng Mogoeng, Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa 9
March 2012**

Programme Directors

Servants of God and Leaders of the Broader Faith Based Community

Bishops Abrahams and Mutula

Mr Siphon Mseleku; Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Global
Fund for Christ

Members of the Board of Governors and Trustees of the Global Fund for
Christ

Chairpersons of the Global Business Roundtable

Honourable Obed Bapela, Deputy Minister in the Presidency

Honourable High Commissioners and Ambassadors present here tonight

Dr Molefi Oliphant – Deputy President of the Confederation of African
Football

Fellow South Africans

Good Evening

It is a great honour and a privilege for me to address this prestigious gathering tonight. And I thank the Board of Governors of the Global Fund for Christ who invited me to this auspicious occasion. I am particularly grateful for this opportunity because I am very passionate about the need, and supportive of efforts, to mobilise and re-conscientise Christians, the world over, about our duty to rise up to the challenges of our times and be counted in the pursuit of the well-being of humanity, and the restoration of dignity to our people and the peoples of the world.



My passion derives from the scandal-free, selfless, and relevant Christianity that shaped and moulded my life as a boy growing up. For, we all behaved ourselves when mention was made of a Servant of God, and even more so when we saw one. The role of the Body of Christ was of profound significance in the moral state of my village and the country as a whole, I dare say. That influence and relevance has either been lost or severely neutralised. Why? Lack of unity in the Body of Christ, the loss of moral high ground probably as a result of our perceived inability to deal decisively with or speak appropriately against greed, immorality and unlawful practices in our midst.

We must recapture our relevance as the Body of Christ, our value-based moral high ground and our influence which only, the Christ-like love, caring and lifestyle can deliver. This Gala Dinner and the realisation of the objectives set out to be achieved by Global Fund for Christ, and many other initiatives already underway, are the way to go. It is time for the united and powerful voice of the Body of Christ to be heard. And the time to deliver help to the helpless by Christians is now.

Let me point out right from the onset that, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa guarantees to everyone, freedom of religion; belief and opinion. In the exercise of that right, I have fully and joyfully embraced the Christian faith. This does not, however, detract from my respect for the right of others to affiliate to Religions, Faiths and Beliefs of their choice.

In this regard, let me hasten to say that love and caring is not just God's preserve, but is also an obligation to be carried out by those who serve Him and represent His Kingdom. It was in recognition of this primary



responsibility that rests on the shoulders of His servants that the Lord Jesus Christ said:

“For I was hungry and you gave Me no food, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome Me and entertain Me, I was naked and you did not clothe Me, I was sick and in prison and you did not visit Me with help and ministering care.”
(Matthew 24: 42-43)

If we look at the world today; it continues, unabatedly, to cry out in pain because of war, famine, disease, poverty and injustice. Day and Night, in a constant cyclical manner, the Media is awash with episodes of human suffering, not only here in Africa, but throughout the world.

Amid this helplessness that God’s people are mired in; we have to ask ourselves – what role we can and should play to restore hope and human dignity to these situations of dire need.

To further elucidate this fact; let us look briefly at the circumstances in our country. In the 2011 United Nations Report on International Human Development Indicators; South Africa was ranked at 123 out of 183 countries; with a life expectancy at birth of 52.8 years. This means that the average South African is not expected to live beyond 53 years. Also; out of a population of 50 million people; 17% of South Africans live on less than \$1, 25 a day (roughly estimated to be between R10 and R12, 50 a day). All of this occurs in a country that is richly blessed with mineral resources, with a Constitution that guarantees freedom, dignity and equality – in the context of the guarantee of socio-economic rights.

All this also happens, in a country where 80% of its population, is estimated to be Christians. People who know, or at least ought to know,



that during His earthly ministry, Christ demonstrated compassion for the hungry by, on two occasions, feeding thousands with fish and bread. His love and compassion did not, and could not allow Him to stand idly by, and leave people to continue to suffer from hunger, sickness and disease until they died. He also loved education so much so that, at the age of 12 years, He was found in the midst of law professors debating complex legal issues with them; and He also spent his life imparting skills and providing quality education to the people. Christ was loving, relevant and influential. And so should we be.

If Christians allow the state of destitution to remain unchallenged; then they allow others to question, legitimately, “where is their love and caring?”, and in African terms, “where is their *Ubuntu*?” For, indeed, if we fail to demonstrate love and caring, we have failed to serve the Lord and have turned our backs on Him.

Aren't we fortunate that God has, through this Gala Dinner, granted us yet another opportunity to answer His call? Like Samuel, we should say “*Speak Lord for your servant is listening?*” (1 Samuel 3:10) We should also, liken the role of Global Fund for Christ, and this Gala Dinner to the voice of the Lord saying to us, in relation to the plight of the poor, the sick and the destitute, “*Who shall I send and who will go for us?*”, and accept that none of us has any choice but to say in response, “*Here I am, send me.*” (Isaiah 6:8) And we are being sent to be difference-makers in the lives of the less privileged.

It is time we wake up from our slumber and begin to act in harmony with one another; relying on the Lord's guidance and power, as we restore hope in situations of hopelessness, and dignity where there is suffering. It can



never be too late to offer ourselves to the World and say, as God said to Moses: “*We have heard your suffering and have come down to bring you up out of your misery.*” (Exodus 3: 17)

In responding to this call; we must be mindful that “charity begins at home”, and that truly, *Motho ke Motho ka Batho ba bangwe!* Although these sayings are often dismissed as hollow-sounding and overused; they are, however, highly instructive in our quest to find answers about where we went wrong and how best we can right those wrongs. Our pre-occupation should not be with fame, money, catching up with the latest developments and practices in the western world. It should rather be about recognising that our continent and certainly some pockets of the world; are poor and have needs that require extra-ordinary interventions.

In this regard, we must begin to engage in simple practical solutions that demonstrate that we have been created in the image of God; caring for each other, our families, neighbours, communities, society and for the world. It is for this reason that I commend the work done by all Servants of God using various platforms in the Public and Private arenas, raising awareness about the goodness and relevance of the Lord, by word of mouth, through their deeds and a lifestyle founded on integrity and morality. May God Bless You All and grant you strength and abundant wisdom as you continue to make a difference in the lives of others.

I also pay special tribute to the SABC for allowing itself to be used as a vehicle for the restoration of hope and dignity to the most destitute through such projects as Touching Lives. These and similar ventures must be supported and strengthened for the continued restoration of hope and people’s faith in God’s love and the notion of *Ubuntu*.



My dear Brothers and Sisters at the Global Fund for Christ, under the stewardship of Brother Sipho Mseleku; once more, I commend you highly for the initiative to set up this noble movement, which seeks to alleviate desperate situations in our health, education and housing systems. We appreciate your much needed intervention.

Dr John C Maxwell says, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care”.

Leadership and caring is not to be found in powerful and yet empty speeches, which never translate into tangible benefits for the destitute. It is more about demonstrable love that bring about a positive change in their lives. It is never about how good your plans are. It is always about what you have done for the less privileged when you had the opportunity to do something. I trust that the latter is what Global Fund for Christ will continue to do. One wise man said: “It does not matter how well you begin in life. What matter the most is how well you finish.”

I am confident that through the collective wisdom gathered here today and with the prayers for strength and divine intervention; going forward, we will come up with effective strategies that will help eradicate general human suffering and bring hope to the hopeless and thus answer God’s calling for us create a better world for us all.

May God Bless You all.