African Proverbs: Build Bridges

Local truths make powerful friends for the Gospel

Local & Vivid Expressions

It is the white man who sells scissors, yet his head is overgrown with hair.

—Kwame Nkrumah

The gas passed by the woman you love, does not smell.

—Bulsa, Ghana

Equally humorous, profound, and unforgettable!

Powerful Truths

Your friend’s mother is your mother too.

—Digo, Kenya

The heart that does not decide is an enemy of its master.

—Oromo, Ethiopia

To stay a long time in the water does not make you clean.

—Sukuma, Tanzania

If two brothers have only the head of a fly, they will divide it equally between them.

—Setswana, Botswana

If you want to dig an evil pit, dig according to your height.

—Kambari, Nigeria

You may be the victim of what you planned for someone else.

—Sukuma, Tanzania

Flexible as Gospel Bridges

If you follow the path of the elephant through the tall grass, you do not get soaked with dew.

Traditionally, this meant that youth should follow the path of the elders. Now Christ is our "elder" or "elephant."

Are you using local wisdom to create bridges for the Gospel?

• Praise God that He has not left Himself without witness in any culture but has embedded much of His wisdom in all cultures.
• Thank Him for the memorable, instructive, clever sayings of African sages.
• Praise that all the wisdom of Africa will be brought into the service of God’s kingdom and the kings.
• Choose an African proverb above or at www.AfrProv.org as your own focus for a day or week. See what God says to you through it, and when you can share it.

Africans find security in ambiguous arrangements, plans, and speech.

The 35th of 90 proverb-like statements David Maranz coined as the framework for his intriguing book, African Friends and Money Matters.

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