

# DOCTRINAL CLARITY FOR MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

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## CASE STUDY:

### THE GREATER MAVUNO BAPTIST PARTNERSHIP

Greater Mavuno District is a rapidly growing region in East Africa marked by vibrant church planting, increasing Baptist identity, and growing theological confusion. Three Baptist churches desire to work together to reach 18 unreached villages near the mountains. Their pastors agree that cooperation could multiply gospel impact—but as discussions deepen, serious doctrinal and ecclesiological differences surface.

### THE CHURCHES

1. **GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH** (Church A)
  - Confessionally Baptist and Scripture-centered
  - Strong emphasis on expositional preaching and discipleship
  - Holds firmly to the sufficiency of Scripture and the headship of Christ over the church
  - Concerned about prosperity teaching and unbiblical leadership models spreading in the district
2. **KINGDOM INCREASE BAPTIST CHURCH** (Church B)
  - Self-identified Baptist but strongly influenced by prosperity theology
  - Teaches that faithfulness and giving lead to guaranteed material blessing
  - Senior pastor functions as unquestioned authority, often referred to as “the anointed man of God”
  - Limited emphasis on elder plurality or biblical qualifications for pastors
3. **NEW LIFE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH** (Church C)
  - Baptist in name and practice, emphasizing evangelism and community impact
  - Strongly promotes the autonomy of the local church and the priesthood of the believer
  - Resists external accountability structures
  - Hesitant to submit to shared doctrinal statements or mission oversight

### THE PROPOSAL

A respected regional Baptist leader proposes:

“Let us form a unified Baptist mission team—one message, one strategy—to reach every village with the gospel.”

The vision excites everyone. Plans are drafted. Teams are suggested. Funding is discussed. Then the questions begin.

### TENSIONS EMERGE

- What exactly is being preached as the gospel?
- Is prosperity teaching compatible with biblical Baptist theology?
- Who has authority over the mission team—local churches or a central leader?
- Are all pastors involved biblically qualified according to Scripture?

**CASE STUDY continued:**

- Does the mission operate under the headship of Christ or under dominant personalities?
- How much doctrinal agreement is required before cooperation is wise?

At the final pre-launch meeting, one pastor asks quietly but firmly: “If we are all Baptist, but we do not agree on Scripture, leadership, and the gospel itself—are we truly partnering in Christ’s mission?”

Silence fills the room.

