

Men's Event Draws 250,000 in South Africa

✖ A Christian conference challenging men to become mighty men of God drew at least 250,000 men and boys to Greytown, South Africa, last weekend.

Hosted by farmer turned evangelist Angus Buchan, the Mighty Men Conference was the largest gathering at his farm, known as Shalom Ministries, since he launched the event seven years ago. Some estimate the attendance was as high as 300,000 during the meetings, which began Friday and ended Sunday.

"I have farmed maize. I've seen a lot of *mielies* [corn], but I've never seen a crop of people as big as this," said Buchan, whose autobiography, *Faith Like Potatoes*, was popularized in a 2006 film that released in the U.S. last year.

Through three days of evangelistic meetings often marked by signs and wonders, Buchan challenged men to become godly leaders in their homes and to rid themselves of such sins as adultery, fornication and hatred.

The event was centered on the theme "watchmen of the house," drawn from Ezekiel 3:17, which says, "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me."

"Angus preaches a simple faith," said South African businessman Bruce Winship told the national *Sunday Tribune* newspaper. "Potentially it lacks some detail, but the reality of Christianity is that it is a simple message to follow... it's about being down-to-earth, living an honest, wholesome life and correcting your priorities. I have seen the change that Angus has made in many lives, including my own."

A Zambian farmer of Scottish descent, Buchan moved to South

Africa in 1977 and became a Christian two years later. In 1980, he and his wife, Jill, established Shalom Ministries, based on the farm, with a vision to help fulfill the Great Commission, take care of widows and orphans and train Christians to reach the world around them.

Since he started the annual Mighty Men Conference in 2004, attendance has grown steadily from 240 men to 7,400 in 2007 to 60,000 in 2008. That year, the *Sunday Tribune* noted that to draw more than 60,000 men to a non-sporting, Christian event "is not just an achievement, it could be deemed a miracle."

This year's event had 60,000 participants registered before the gathering began.

Buchan said 2010 would be the last hosted at Shalom. But the events would continue to be held elsewhere, both in and outside of South Africa, with various leaders organizing the meetings.

"Jesus took 12 men and changed the world. I see hundreds of thousands of men in this place," Buchan said. "We need to seize the moment. The future of South Africa, indeed the world, lies in the believer, in your hands and my hands. God is asking you 'what are you going to do about it?'"

Next year's conference could be held in Soweto. Buchan also has announced plans to begin a television broadcast, *The Mercury* reported.