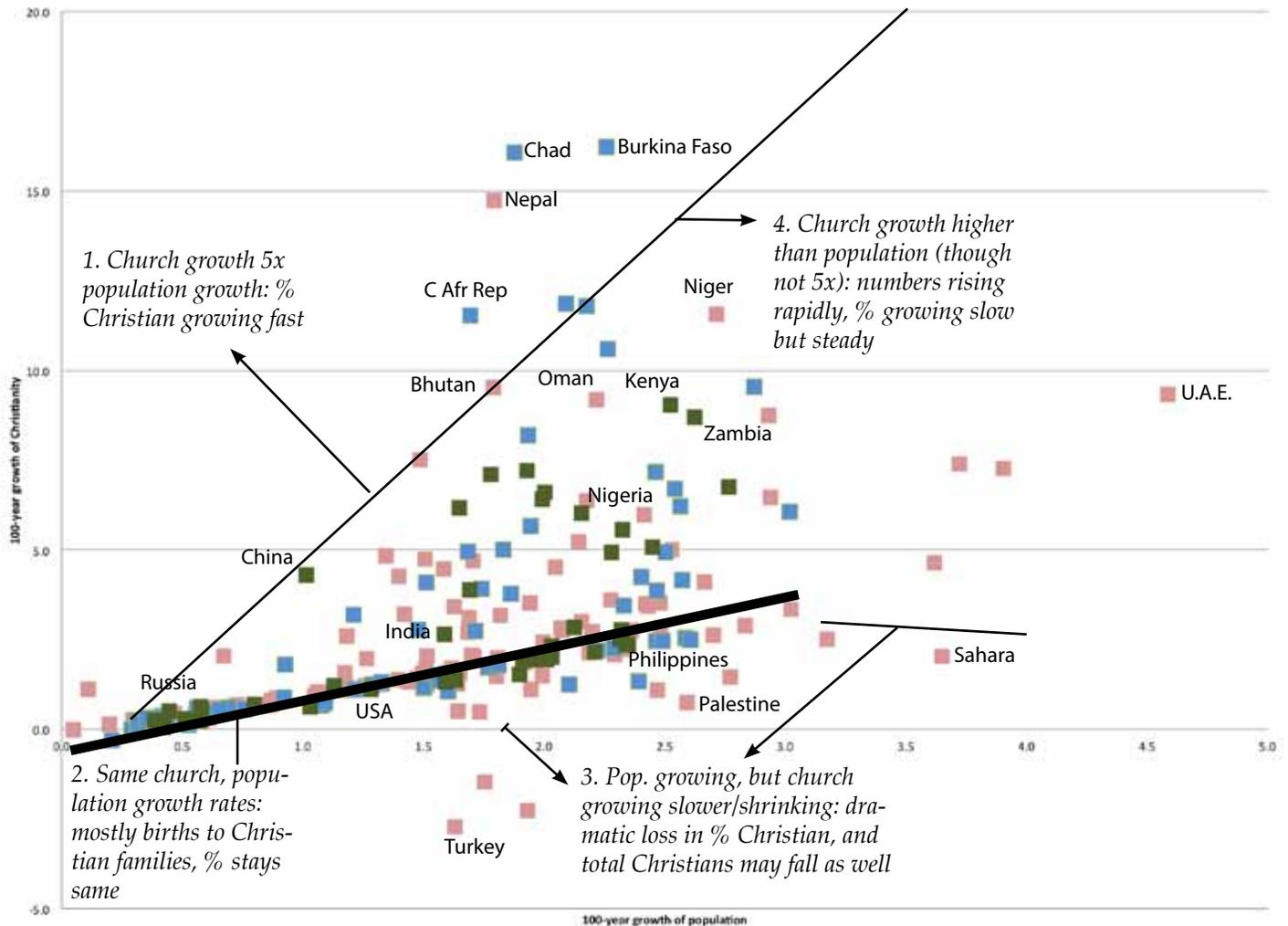


Global Diagram 3: Growth in Population and Christianity, AD 1910-2010

Vertical Axis: The 100-year growth of Christianity (Christians of all traditions). *Atlas of Global Christianity, 2010*, for the period 1910-2010.

Horizontal Axis: 100-year growth of the population (moderating much of the impact of migration), from the *Atlas of Global Christianity, for the period 1910-2010*.

Colors of dots: size of Christian population
 Red: under 100,000 Christians
 Blue: from 100,000 to 10 million believers
 Green: over 10 million believers



This chart looks at the growth of populations and the church over the past 100 years, and shows four general situations (any modern situation can be checked in *Operation World* and comparing the two growth rates).

1. *Rapid growth.* Nine countries saw church growth rates five times that of the general population. All began as very small populations; five grew to exceed 1 million in size (Burkina Faso, from no believers to 3.4 million). This speed is obviously not common.

2. *Stagnant growth.* 78 had church growth matching its population. Much of it was due to births to Christian families. American Christianity

grew from 84 to 257 million, but % Christian remained largely the same. This is common in majority-Christian populations, but can be true of tightly controlled Christian populations (e.g. Tajikistan grew from 6,000 to 100,000 believers, mirroring population growth). Births, deaths, migration and Christian expatriate pools factor in more than conversions.

3. *Decline.* 82 countries saw the church grow slower than the population (and some declined). In this situation numbers can increase but % Christian declines (Iraq, 170k/6.4% to 500k/2.5%—is it thus “less Christian?”) or both can decline (Turkey, 3.3

million/21% to 214,000/1.6%).

4. *Steady growth.* 63 countries saw church growth marginally faster than the population (although not 5x). Several grew from very small populations to quite large ones (Zambia, from 2,000 to 10.7 million), but population growth meant despite growth in numbers, % Christian did not grow as fast.

What does this mean? Consider the case of Nigeria: 2.2% population growth vs 6% church growth required a century to reach 45% Christian. Will another be needed to reach 90%? Some nations aren’t changed in a day. Don’t underestimate the time commitment required to reach the world.