



Of Brothers and Blessings

“I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord. The humble shall hear of it and be glad.” Psalm 34:1-2

This year I had the privilege of doing outreaches in the countries of Southern Africa: Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, Malawi, Uganda, and Kenya. This last year was very unique, as I met some very key people and had some great help along the way.

Right from the beginning we were running later than anticipated. To make up lost time, we raced across South Africa, driving for 19 hours straight, to arrive in Lusaka, Zambia at the happy hour of 2:30am. By God's grace, we experienced little trouble at the borders.

Keeping your commitments as a missionary isn't easy. There are so many factors that cause delays, necessitating prolonged exertion. This can lead to becoming tired and irritable, which is a very dangerous combination in the mission field. Most of what I do as a missionary rests on the relationships that I have with others, and the example that must be set through my attitude and activities. Stopping for prayer or reading God's Word is an absolute necessity to put things into perspective, and causes me to focus on the Lord, my only source of strength and vigor.



Delivering Swahili Bibles in Tanzania.



John Leach feeding hungry children in Zambia.

Having a competent, supportive teammate can also make a big difference. John Leach is the director of Waymakers, which runs a drug rehabilitation center in Cape Town. His presence made this mission trip up country much easier. His easy-going personality made traveling enjoyable and challenges bearable. He was a great partner in preaching the Word. With our combined efforts, we could preach and teach in seminars for 5-7 hours a day. Our different experiences and approaches to teaching created an ideal learning environment.

In Zambia we visited various seminaries and schools, as well as Bishop Peter Nglovu's orphanage and school. Bishop Nglovu and his team have established over 80 churches in the last 6 years. We also had the opportunity to do radio interviews at Christian Voice, one of the most widely heard Christian radio stations in Central Africa. In the evenings, we taught the students from the newly established Lusaka Bible College. Most of the students are full time pastors seeking further training. Over time we've helped these ministers establish themselves, and set up a library to supply the necessary resources for the community's church leaders.

While conducting Reformation Seminars and lecturing at Bible Colleges in Lusaka with Peter Hammond, we received an invitation to meet with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, General



School Assembly at Excellence Christian Academy.

Ronnie Shikapwasha. He shared his testimony with us, and we spoke of the many things the Lord is doing in Zambia and beyond. We left some books, audio CD's and literature with him to help his ministry. He was very grateful for them. To our surprise, the Hon. Shikapwasha arranged for us to meet President Mwanawansa a few days later.

Meeting with the President was quite something. We discussed with him the need to enhance the chaplaincy among the police and military and to establish a chaplaincy for the civil government in parliament. We also sought to persuade his government to provide Christian textbooks for the public schools. Pres. Mwanawansa received us well, but refused our proposals, nonetheless. However, I appreciated his honesty and willingness to discuss the matters openly. We left a number of books, CD's and literature with him. This included the *Discipleship Handbook*, *Biblical Principles for Africa*, as well as *Mind Siege*, by Dr. Noebel. I also personally gave him some of my favorite tracts, "Are You a Good Person?" and "The Million Dollar Question" published by Living Waters. I also gave the same evangelistic materials to the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zambia.



President Mwanawansa receives a "Million Dollar Question" tract.



Zambian Pastors respond enthusiastically to an evangelism outreach in Chipata.

Their response afterwards was amazing. One pastor said, "We've never done anything like this before." While another responded, "Yes we did, back in 1996." "No," replied the other pastor, "your church might have, but as a group from different churches we haven't." It was obvious that the enthusiasm among them had sparked a new movement for evangelism in the community.

Later that week we drove another 3 long days to Tanzania. En route, we were able to purchase 100 Swahili Bibles to distribute to a rural community near the Serengeti plains. We stayed in a tented camp near Nata, located in the Gremetti Reserve. As it was a game



Delivering Bibles to a Pastor in Tanzania.



Preaching at the Sunday morning service of a new congregation in the midst of completing their building.

reserve, there were no fences. Throughout the night we could hear the lions roaring in the distance, and the hyenas in the nearby bush. During the day I had to continually battle the Tsetse flies, especially when I wore black – they seemed to like that color- a lot. Tsetse flies can leave a nasty bite, from which sleeping sickness

can be contracted. Sleeping sickness is fatal if left untreated.

On Sunday we had a service with a small congregation of about 40-50 people. Elisha, who works at the game lodge as an accountant, interpreted for us, as his English is quite good. We handed over the Bibles to Pastor Joseph, a good friend of John Leach, who distributed them to various congregations in the area. The need for Bibles in this area is great. Bibles are expensive to the people and difficult to come by. There are few missionaries around; most of them are located in the urban areas near Lake Victoria. When we finished our ministry there, John flew back to South Africa. I then drove through to Nairobi, Kenya, from where I flew to the United States.



Timothy with Jason, who was recently married in Florida.

Over the next six weeks in the US, I was able to attend the wedding of my brother Jason and his new wife Jordan, as well as that of my cousin Tommy and his new wife Donna. I also attended my sister Amy's graduation from college and my younger brother Andrew's confirmation. I had the opportunity to preach at Emmanuel Covenant, my home church, as well as at many other churches and Bible studies. In addition, I was interviewed on radio a number of times.

By God's grace, my 13 year old brother Andrew was able to join me on my return trip from Nairobi, Kenya to Cape Town, South Africa.

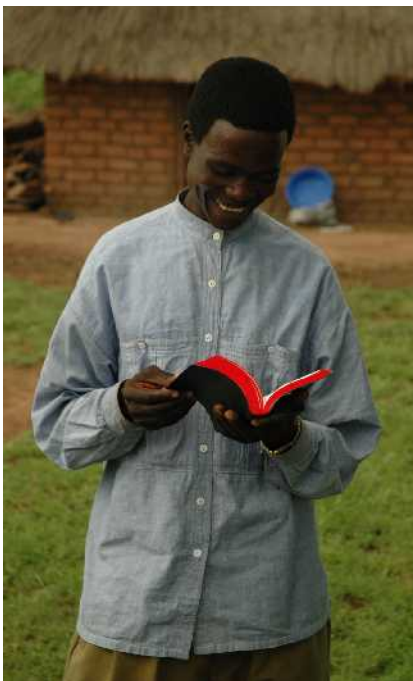
When we arrived in Nairobi, we picked up the vehicle and had it repaired for the long journey ahead. Being Andrew's first trip to Africa, many things were still new to him; things that I'd long forgotten or had gotten used to. For example, the road conditions; we had a 300 km pothole massage on the first leg of our trip. Cyclists could often be seen holding onto the back of semi trucks, while being pulled up the hills. Most of the vehicles on the road were extremely overloaded. I doubt if many of the drivers had a license, or even knew what one was.



Andrew experiences Malawian salesmanship.

Every time we stopped, our vehicle was surrounded by mobs of solicitors. Pollution in the cities left a nice residue on the skin, and in various crevices, and needed to be washed off in the evenings. Bathing facilities in many areas were a simple cup and a plastic basin of sometimes-hot water. Functional, flushing toilets were a rare novelty, and clean toilets were few and far (sometimes hundreds/thousands of km's) between.

One of my chief desires while in the United States was to raise enough money for another 100 Swahili Bibles. My plan was to distribute them upon our return through the Mara province of Tanzania. The response from the Saints in the States was such that I was able to purchase 200 Bibles! In addition, I was able cover the traveling costs of the return trip to Cape Town. Please receive my sincere thanks for your faithfulness.



On Sunday morning, Andrew and I were able to give greetings at Pastor Joshua's church in Tarime, Tanzania. While giving greetings, I mentioned that I had brought 50 Bibles for their congregation. The whole congregation burst into elation. I could have told them that I won the lottery and was donating all the money to them, and I don't think they would have applauded as much as they did when I told them I had brought them Bibles. In the evening service, I was given the opportunity to preach and there were many in attendance.

A joyful Christian receives his own copy of the Word of God.

With the help of two other Pastors, I was able to distribute the remainder of the Bibles. On our way back through Nata, I stopped to give Elisha the study Bible that I'd promised him. While in the States, I purchased a New Geneva Study Bible, the study Bible of choice, from Ligonier Ministries. I receive many requests for study Bibles; sadly the demand far exceeds the supply.

Andrew and I drove back across the Serengeti and the Ngorogoro Crater, where we gazed at the wondrous spectacle of God's creation. There were about 1.5 million wildebeest on the plains, and there were also countless zebra and giraffe among them. We even saw a male lion up on one of the rocks. This was the first time Andrew and I had ever seen a male lion in the wild. Only Andrew saw it on his first trip, while I've been on many trips before without ever seeing one.



The king of the beasts surveys his domain.

We drove, for the next couple of days, back down through Tanzania and Malawi. We had a bit of a delay though; the front bumper almost fell off. Our pothole massage sessions had shaken off all but one of the bolts holding it, and one of the bolts had actually snapped off and had to be tapped out later.



Andrew hands over Swahili Bibles in Tanzania.

We met up with Ps. Joel Kapasa again in Chipata. On Sunday, we had a Bible study and I preached during the main service. Over the next two days we held a Seminar in Chipata, and we stayed with Pastor Joel at his home in the township. Pastor Joel informed us that one of the churches that attended the evangelism seminar I held on my prior trip had continued to evangelize in the market every Saturday since.

After a 5am prayer meeting, we continued our journey south. We stayed the next night with the Dutch family that owns a coffee plantation near Lusaka. The next morning, we met with the

owner's son Jesper and another South African missionary for a prayer meeting. Afterwards, we continued our journey to Livingstone, where Andrew was able to see spectacular Victoria Falls for the first time.



Excellence Christian Academy students preparing for the day.

We drove through to Johannesburg, where we arrived around the happy hour of 4:00am. I managed to sleep at a gas station on the side of the road for an hour or two. On Sunday, I gave a testimony about our trip during a service we attended with some friends. The next day I took my truck in for a service because the timing belt light had come on. It took them the whole day to fix it. Good thing it hadn't come on earlier, as we would still be stranded in the bush on the side of the road. We left bright and early the next morning for Cape Town. We arrived late that night after driving the last 1,400 km (870miles).

Although my journey was over, and Andrew had returned home safely, my adventures had only just begun. Proverbs 18:22 says, **“He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord.”** The Lord has indeed given me favor. On Tuesday, September 12, 2006, with the blessing of her father, I asked Ashley Hilde from Tucson, AZ to be my wife. And, believe it or not, she said, “Yes.” But that's another story for another day.

Thank-you for your continued prayers and support as I am involved on another mission trip during October and November.

Pro Rege,

Timothy Keller

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**"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all
in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to
God the Father through Him."**