

HeartCry

MAGAZINE

GROWTH THE OF GOD'S Word



GREETINGS

Welcome to the Fall Edition of the HeartCry Magazine. Even as our world decays and hurdles headlong into darkness, it is indescribably wonderful to know that we serve the God of light, who never slumbers or sleeps and who is never taken by surprise!

It is easy in this fallen world to become downcast by the darkness that surrounds us. The weight of this life—the difficulties, the disasters, the despair—can often bog us down in sorrow. Perhaps you are disturbed by the news stories that have been pervading our media outlets of late. Or perhaps you are currently going through a deeply painful personal hardship that seems to have no end in sight. If so, may this quote from pastor and theologian Octavius Winslow (1808-1878) serve as salve for your troubled soul in thinking of the tenderness and control of our Savior:

“How unsearchable are the ways He often chooses to accomplish His purposes of mercy and His designs of goodness towards us! An event is, perhaps, cloaked in the deepest obscurity. The handwriting on the wall is entirely unintelligible....

“Is your God, beloved, dealing with you now like this? Perhaps His thoughts are like a great deep, His ways with you beyond understanding. The event is mysterious, the calamity dark, the blow crushing. You are awe-struck and, gazing in mute astonishment, you marvel at what He means and where the problem will end. But God is light. What is mysterious to your mind is a perfect whole to Him. What is obscure to your eye is perfectly clear to His. Gazing with mute wonder, lost in ignorant conjecture, we are confounded and silent, and yet God stands by and, smiling at our fruitless speculation, says, ‘Let there be light.’ In a moment, the whole scene is radiant with brightness; we see with what skill and harmony, wisdom and love, He was working all things after the counsel of His own will, and all things for our good.

“...All may be dark to you now—circumstances, providence—and your path may be draped with the deepest, gloomiest shadow. Let it be so. God is light, God is love, and God is unchangeable. If, in this time of dark providence, integrity and uprightness

are restraining you from any false step or from using any dubious means to relieve the gloom, then [this] precious promise...will be fulfilled for you: ‘Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness’ (*Our God*, pp.136-137).”

We want to thank all of you for your support of this ministry, both in prayer and in finances. The Lord has used so many of you—men, women, and children—to bless, strengthen, and encourage the staff and missionaries of HeartCry for close to thirty years, both through times of immense growth and through difficult trials.

In light of this reality and our gratitude to God for your continuous support, we wanted to utilize the remaining space here to highlight a recent need for which the Lord has provided because of your prayer and through your gifts. In September, missionary pastor Bill Issa in Kampala, Uganda, made us aware of an urgent health need for his wife, Priscilla. Multiple doctors were agreed in their concern over a pre-cancerous condition and recommended immediate surgery. Priscilla is the mother of six children. Because of your generosity as donors, we were able to fund the operation. Here is a note of gratitude she sent to Sean Reece, our Africa Coordinator:

“I greet you in Jesus’ name. This is your sister Priscilla, wife of your missionary in Uganda, Bill Issa. I want to use this opportunity to thank you, together with all the staff and donors of HeartCry, for being used by God to reach out to us with a love gift that was needed in order to save my life. I want also to inform you that I’m doing much better these days by the mercy of the Lord! I’ll always be grateful to the Lord for HeartCry’s staff and donors.

“Dear brother, please extend my gratitude to all the staff and donors of HeartCry. May the Lord bless you all!”

We hope that this one example, together with the rest of this magazine, serves to comfort you in these troubling times and to encourage you never to cease hoping in our sovereign Lord and serving Him with all that you are! Know that you are often in our prayers.

In His love,
Forrest Hite (Editor)

GROWTH THE OF GOD'S Word

The mission appears impossible. No, I'm not referring to a small team of secret agents toppling rogue dictators, but rather a paltry group of believers commissioned to proclaim the gospel to the remotest parts of the earth and to make disciples from all people groups! Honestly, the mission which Christ gave to his disciples was impossible—they were to proclaim the gospel in hostile territories, among racially charged ethnic groups, and to societies engrossed in base and idolatrous practices. In addition, the people unto whom Christ entrusted the commission were impoverished and often behaved cowardly; to further complicate matters, they had their own spiritual struggles with which they had to contend. Nevertheless, the Acts of the Apostles reveals that the word of God “kept on spreading” (Acts 6:7), “continued to grow” (12:24), and “was growing mightily and prevailing” (19:20). Shocked? Surprised? I failed to mention that the commission was given by the resurrected Savior, Jesus Christ. Also, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to empower them as witnesses to the remotest regions of the earth (Acts 1:8). When we consider that it was the Lord Jesus who gave the commission and the promise of empowerment by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the mission no longer seems impossible at all; rather, it was inevitable! The gospel was proclaimed in faraway lands, and the word of God that was proclaimed was effectual in converting and sanctifying multitudes of men and women.

THE CENTRALITY OF CHRIST

The focus of the messages recorded in the Book of Acts is upon the centrality of the gospel—Christ Jesus’ redemptive work through His substitutionary sacrifice and powerful resurrection. Peter preached in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost:

“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.” (Acts 2:22-23)

Later, Paul would proclaim in Antioch in Pisidia:

“And though they found no ground for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed. When they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb. But God raised Him from the dead.” (Acts 13:28-30)

The word of God that was preached announced Christ’s death as the means of satisfying the justice of God and securing righteousness for believers. The resurrection of Jesus Christ testified that God was satisfied with the work of Christ and that redemption was accomplished. Paul’s message affirmed that salvation was secured by Christ alone:

“Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39). Peter boldly announced that Christ was the only source through which God provided salvation: “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

THE PARTICIPANTS

The book of Acts records several sermons that were preached by the apostles Peter and Paul. However, the message of the gospel also expanded its reach as other ministers preached and as ordinary Christians, laymen, and believers who held no ecclesiastical office testified the good news. When persecution afflicted the saints in Jerusalem, the church was scattered abroad. However, persecution did not prohibit the growth of the word; rather, it intensified the proliferation of the message to other areas! As the saints fled from Jerusalem, they carried the message of the gospel with them and enthusiastically shared it as they traveled: “[They] who had been scattered went about preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).

Will Metzger observed: “In our world probably 99.9 percent of all Christians are not in the full-time ministry. Unless everyone engages in evangelism—praying, initiating and fervently speaking the gospel—not much will happen.” The portrait in Acts is one of radical obedience, as believers were speaking the word of God in every place and to everyone. For that reason, much was happening in the early church. Thousands of people turned to Christ by faith; new converts were baptized and were edified and strengthened by the ministry of the word. God’s kingdom was expanding through the glorious message of redemption through Jesus Christ and the practical implications

that accompanied sound doctrine (Acts 2:41-47).

Are you a participant in the ministry of the word? Pray that the Holy Spirit will ignite a passion in your soul to hear God’s word as the elders of your church faithfully exegete the Bible weekly (Acts 17:11). Also, participate in ministry by sharing God’s word in the sphere God has placed you and among the relationships God has providentially provided.

HOME AND ABROAD

Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared unto many of the disciples. A personal encounter with Jesus and the subsequent blessing of receiving the Holy Spirit resulted in the city of Jerusalem being filled with the doctrine of the Lord (Acts 4:28). The gospel was neither to remain within the city limits and suburbs of Jerusalem nor to be an exclusively Jewish religion. God’s sovereign purpose was for the word of God to fill Jerusalem and overflow into the other nations of the world and among the Gentiles. Persecution drove believers from Jerusalem, and they heralded the word of the Lord as they settled in other localities. But it was not just persecution that drove men abroad—there was also an overarching passion to have Christ exalted above all gods and philosophies. Consider Philip, who journeyed to Samaria, where long-standing racial and religious prejudices segregated Jews and Samaritans. Nonetheless, a burden for Christ’s glory and a radical obedience to Christ’s commission transcended the sinful barriers raised by men. When he arrived in Samaria, Philip preached Jesus to them; and the result was great joy, as Christ was received (Acts 8:5-8).

God can be observed throughout the book of Acts orchestrating gospel encounters as the word of God is sent forth. Philip is directed by the Holy Spirit to join a chariot that is carrying an Ethiopian eunuch who was reading from Isaiah 53. Philip responds to the inquisitive eunuch’s question

by opening his mouth and preaching Jesus unto him, after which the eunuch professed faith in Christ and was baptized. In Acts 10, Peter was providentially brought to the house of a Gentile named Cornelius. As Peter carefully articulated the gospel, Cornelius and those gathered with him believed in Christ and were baptized.

The Jewish leadership actively opposed Christians in Jerusalem and the surrounding areas of Palestine. They had at their disposal a hitman whose goal was to exterminate the “Jesus-sect.” His name was Saul. However, Jesus appeared to him, and grace transformed Saul into a believer of Christ and an apostle over the very church he sought to exterminate! The second half of Acts records the journeys of Saul (afterward named Paul) as he preached the gospel to the remotest bounds of the known earth. Paul would travel into present-day Turkey and Europe, teaching the message of God’s word and making disciples among pagans and infidels. The author of Acts notes the word of God’s growth and effectiveness through Paul’s ministry:

“Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and began burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.” (Acts 19:18-20)

Are you satisfied with the effectiveness of God’s word in your personal life? Are you burdened for Jesus’ name to be highly esteemed among the peoples in your community and in distant lands? Pray for God’s power to be exhibited in your life and for his glory to be known universally through the growth of the word of God. Consider this prayer of the missionary David Brainerd: “Lord, use me as thou wilt; do as thou wilt with me: but oh, promote thine own cause! Zion is thine; oh

visit thine heritage! Let thy kingdom come! Oh let thy blessed interest be advanced in the world.”

WITH GOD THE MISSION IS POSSIBLE

Opposition confronted the first disciples of Christ. Christians were persecuted from the beginning in Jerusalem: some were imprisoned, and others were stoned or beheaded. This opposition, however, did not deter or inhibit believers from passionately teaching the word of God; nor did it prohibit the growth and advancement of the word of the Lord.

Beneath the incredible growth of God’s word and the boldness to proclaim the gospel in the face of danger and death, God’s sovereignty and grace is the underlying means of growth and effectiveness. The church did not haphazardly proclaim God’s word or presume on God’s sovereignty; rather, Christians ardently and passionately preached, taught, exhorted, reasoned, convinced, expounded, testified, persuaded, and disputed with individuals and groups in order to disseminate the message of God. As Christians were preaching the word of the Lord, “the hand of the Lord was with them.” The fruit of God’s hand was that “a large number who believed turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:21). God’s purpose and power can be seen in the Lord’s opening of the heart of Lydia so that she responded positively to Paul’s preaching (Acts 16:14). God is further described as granting repentance, filling with the Holy Spirit, ordaining believers to eternal life, and granting boldness to the messengers. Metzger wrote, “The gospel shouts the scandal of sovereign salvation. God is blamed for salvation, in the sense that he is totally responsible.” God’s sovereignty was *never* viewed as having detrimental effects on evangelism or the growth of the word of God among the early saints; rather, it was the very catalyst that launched the church from Jerusalem to regions far beyond the borders of Palestine.

EXPLORING NEW TERRITORY

BY SEAN REECE

FIEL CONFERENCE IN MOZAMBIQUE

In July of this year, I made my first visit to the African country of Mozambique. This trip was initiated by an invitation from Dr. Charles Woodrow, a missionary doctor who has ministered in Mozambique for 26 years. The grace and wisdom of God at work in Dr. Woodrow is wonderful to behold, and his approach to medical missions is refreshingly biblical. During his years as a practicing surgeon in a government hospital, Dr. Woodrow shared the gospel with thousands of patients. Many of these patients were from Catholic backgrounds, living in a communist

country, and had never heard the gospel of grace through Jesus Christ. When a patient responded eagerly to the gospel, Dr. Woodrow was grieved by the lack of a biblical church to disciple new converts. So from 1993 to 2000, Dr. Woodrow's ministry expanded to include planting a church in his city of Nampula, a literature ministry in partnership with FIEL Publishers in Brazil, and an annual Pastors' Conference co-led by a former missionary to Mozambique, Dr. Karl Peterson. The rest of Charles' remarkable story will have to wait for another article.

DECADES OF LABOR BEAR FRUIT

Dr. Woodrow now has the joy of seeing over 300 attend the annual FIEL Conference. In two days of observation, I was excited by the leadership's wisdom in both the content and structure of the conference. After the four-day conference, Dr. Woodrow teaches a grueling, week-long systematic theology course. Sure, big conferences are nice, but

when everyone goes home from the encouraging week, is there a lasting impact? There is in Nampula! From the three-fold approach of the pastors' conference, the theology course, and literature distribution, a group of men has emerged. These men are contagiously zealous for Jesus Christ, His gospel, His word, and His church.

INDIGENOUS INITIATIVE

The spark of sound doctrine, both from Dr. Woodrow or the inter-

net, has ignited and spread in the lives and ministries of several key

Mozambican men. They have organized themselves into a fellowship called Mission Ekklesia. The leadership in Nampula includes Timoteo Bila, Ibraimo Hamido, Ernesto Valoi, and Andre Kizito. Timoteo is the founder and visionary leader of the group. He pioneered the organization of reading circles to read and discuss excellent classic and current works. Four or five groups read one book per month, then meet to discuss the book and its implications. Each member must contribute in the meeting in order to receive the next book. The list of books they have worked through include authors such as Owen, Bunyan, Spurgeon, Pink, Bounds, Tozer, Packer, Piper, Carson, Dever, and Washer.

In addition to the reading circles, Timoteo has written and published an 80-page Portuguese catechism on the Doctrines of Grace, and he also oversees the publishing of an annual journal titled *Meditai*. Ibraimo and Andre are bi-vocational pastors, and Ernesto is a philosophy professor at the local university with a strong desire to evangelize and disciple students. Together, these men also organize and lead two conferences per year – one is a doctrinal study through a New Testament

book, and the other deals with marriage and family issues.

Mission Ekklesia has big dreams for the future of the Mozambican church. They are creative thinkers and have not hesitated to invest their own hard-earned money into pursuing those dreams for the glory of Christ, the spread of His gospel, and the growth of His church. Timoteo and Ernesto took me to see a piece of land they purchased in an area where the city will grow and the university plans to expand. They hope to construct a library where students can access the same classic and current theological works that they have been studying, and eventually use the property as a conference venue.



MISSION EKKLESIA LEADERSHIP TEAM:
TIMOTEIO, ERNESTO, AND IBRAIMO

REFORMING THE CHURCH

Of course, reading and distributing good theological literature is an important work, but it is not enough. Everything Christ does in this world, He does through His church and for her good. The men of Mission Ekklesia are deeply concerned about the condition of the church in their nation. They are making strategic efforts to promote biblical doctrine among current pastors through their literature distribution, reading circles, and conferences. They are also planning to target university students and to prepare the next generation of pastors and church leaders.

Pastor Andre Kizito has brought

biblical doctrine back into his existing church, which is part of a well-established denomination. His desire is to reform the existing church from within for as long as they will allow. Timoteo and Ernesto would not claim to be church-planters, but Timoteo has constructed a shelter behind his house, and he and Ernesto have befriended several couples in their neighborhood and invited them to a Bible study there. It will be interesting to watch what happens with that Bible study in the future.

I had the pleasure of visiting Pastor Ibraimo Hamido's church in the village of Murrupula, about eighty kilometers from Nampula.

Ibraimo was sent to this village as a schoolteacher seven years ago; it was not long before he had a church gathering in his home. Two years later, Ibraimo bought some land and built a church building (with his teacher's salary). As I observed their Sunday-school and worship meetings, I marveled at what the Lord is doing in Faith Baptist Church.

Ibraimo is a gifted and dynamic teacher. He is leading the church through A.W. Pink's *The Attributes of God* during Sunday school, and there was a spirited discussion of God's sovereignty in salvation from Romans 9 on the morning that I visited. Later, during the worship meeting, he skillfully expounded the first six verses of John 15. Faith Baptist practices meaningful membership and church discipline, and they have two or three prayer meetings per week. Ibraimo is currently discipling four other leaders in the church, and together they are already planting another church forty-five kilometers away. I think you can see why

I was pretty excited! Any HeartCry coordinator would be thrilled to find such a church in their global region!

During my time among the men of Mission Ekklesia, I felt privileged to witness the early stages of what could become a mighty movement for reformation in the Mozambican church. Twenty years from now, could we see a movement equivalent to what we see today among the Reformed Baptists of Zambia? Let us pray to that end!

IBRAIMO PREACHING





BY SEAN REECE

THEOLOGICAL TRAINING DONE WELL IN ZAMBIA

DR. TOM ASCOL LECTURING AT CMC

“Would HeartCry consider helping fund another ministerial college in Zambia?” This was the question posed to me by Pastor Conrad Mbe-we during my January visit to Zambia. We were already partnering with Lusaka Ministerial College in their training of low-income pastors in the capital city and rural Lozi pastors in Western Province. Now Pastor Conrad was asking us to consider an additional partnership with Copperbelt Ministerial College in Ndola.

Of course, HeartCry’s financial priority has always been the direct support of indigenous church-planters as they evangelize the lost and establish biblical churches. However, we also realize that ministerial colleges can play a vital role in church-planting. We like to say at HeartCry that missions is a theological venture and that our work is not just sending missionaries but sending God’s truth through missionaries. Therefore, ministerial colleges serve multiple purposes in our Zambian church-planting efforts: they equip missionary pastors with a greater grasp of biblical truth and improve their ability to communicate that truth, and they also bring to light new like-minded missionary pastors with whom we can partner.

The staff assigned me the task of investigating Copperbelt Ministerial College (CMC) during my July visit to Zambia. On my trips to Africa, I truly enjoy meeting our missionary families, hearing about their

lives and ministries, and seeing the churches and communities where they faithfully labor. I was not overly excited about investigating a school. I happily confess, though, that my attitude quickly changed as I interacted with the school’s leadership. Why would I suddenly find myself excited about a college?

1) Their training philosophy.

The founders of CMC recognized a flaw often found in Africans who receive higher-level theological education. In pursuit of seminary training, many Africans attend school in the U.S. or U.K. Some of these students become accustomed to the comfort and wealth of life in the West and never return to minister in their home country. CMC was founded with the hopes of helping to avoid this problem. Utilizing five week-long block sessions each year, the school brings in top-level lecturers from Zambia, the U.S., and the U.K. to provide quality teaching *in the students’ own country*.

The week-long block sessions serve pastors well, as they remain busy caring for their flocks. It is, after all, a ministerial college; and the founders intentionally put that focus in the name – Copperbelt Ministerial College (not Bible College or Theological College). This is not a college for students who just want to study the Bible; it is a training institution for pastors actively serving in ministry. The leaders of the school are all seasoned Zambian pastors. The

lecturers are not just Bible scholars, but pastors who are also scholars – pastors training pastors, as it should be.

2) Their theological truth. All of the teaching is from a historic Reformed perspective. Many pastors, including some current HeartCry missionaries, came to CMC from varying denominations and left four years later with a very different theological framework from that with which they came. Some of these pastors have taken the biblical doctrine they learned back to their churches, rather than leaving their denominations.

3) Their personal care for pastors and their churches. When a pastor full of zeal for newly-discovered biblical truth returns to a church still functioning in unbiblical traditions, the result can be explosive. Here again, the wisdom of CMC's seasoned pastoral leadership shows. Practical mentoring is offered to the students. Whenever possible, the school's leaders visit the student pastor in his own church, observing

his ministry, noting particular challenges, and offering practical advice. They guide students in implementing biblical truth in a gracious manner to minimize church conflict.

Three missionary pastors supported by HeartCry are currently attending CMC. This Zambian school is also having an international impact. They currently oversee the theological school in Kenya (led by HeartCry-supported pastors Sam Oluoch and Naphtally Ogallo), and they have been asked to start an extension school in Namibia.

After a long day of meetings with CMC's leadership and staff, I traveled back to Lusaka even more encouraged about the future of the church in Zambia. I marveled at story after story of pastors and churches that were transformed and denominations that were impacted by the wise and faithful work of Copperbelt Ministerial College. It is truly an honor and privilege to partner with such ministries for the glory of Christ and the good of Africa.

GROWTH OF THE LOZI CHURCH BY SEAN REECE

In February 2016, Senanga Baptist Church celebrated their third anniversary. Senanga is Kabwata Baptist Church's first church-plant among the Lozi people in the remote region of Western Province, Zambia. This is the region where my brother and I, with our families, ministered from 2009 to 2011. During those three years as cross-cultural missionaries, we saw very little fruit. In contrast, HeartCry's first indigenous Lozi missionary, Poniso Kuyumbana, is seeing an average of 75-100 people at their worship service on a weekly basis after three years.

Pastor Poniso held his first meeting in Senanga in February 2013, with eleven in attendance. During the first year, Senanga Baptist Church attendance grew to twenty-

seven, and one man was converted. In the second year, average attendance remained around thirty. Another young man was converted, but much to the church's disappointment, both men moved away before being baptized. One very noteworthy step in 2014 was the sending of Isaac Bipanda to Kabwata Baptist Church for pastoral internship.

The church's third year, 2015, saw significant growth in attendance to seventy-five. A third man was



converted, but he too moved away for work before being baptized. Two women were also converted in that year; finally, on January 31, 2016, Senanga Baptist Church celebrated their first baptismal service. Also of significance, Vasco Kafuti was the second Lozi man to be sent for pastoral internship at Kabwata Baptist Church.

Mid-way through 2016, weekly attendance now averages close to a hundred. Another man was recently converted and is now preparing for baptism and church membership. Pastor Poniso is receiving several requests from around the region for more churches to be planted in

surrounding towns and villages. In fact, he is preparing to send one of the men he has disciplined to start a church in another town called Kao-ma.

Many years of prayer for the Lozi people by HeartCry supporters are now bearing visible fruit. Pastor Conrad Mbewe is very excited about the progress of the church plant in Senanga. Please pray for them as they seek to construct a church building and continue training more men to spread the gospel and plant more churches among the Lozi of Western Zambia.



RAINY SEASON IN WESTERN ZAMBIA

CHRIS MNGUNI - HEARTCRY'S NEWEST SOUTH AFRICAN MISSIONARY

Chris Mnguni is a graduate of Christ Seminary in Polokwane, South Africa, and is Zulu in ethnic heritage. He and his wife, Happy, have been sent out by Crystal Park Baptist Church in Benoni to plant a church in Daveyton, a township in Johannesburg. Chris is part of an exciting, growing wave of township church-planters laboring to build biblical churches on the strong foundation of the true gospel and sound doctrine.

TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

I was raised by a single parent. My goal in life was to live for myself and be a better man. I sought for satisfaction in sports, friends, and girlfriends. My mom took me to a 12 Apostolic Church, which was a cult but I did not know that at the time. I was taught that I must work for my salvation and my ancestors. I labored day and night, recruiting people to work for their salvation. It was during my zeal of recruiting people that the Lord led me to the home of some Jehovah's Witnesses. My intention was

to recruit a young man to be one of my followers, because we were taught that we must have disciples.

One day, his mother asked me to read Luke 22:35. This was a troubling verse to me, having been taught that the reason 12 Apostles do not read and teach from the Bible is because Jesus told His disciples they must not carry a money-bag, which was interpreted to mean the Bible. The truth of this verse shed some light for me. I thought there must be an answer to my question. I went back to the 12 Apostles leaders about this verse, but they insisted that I was not supposed to read the Bible. Their answer troubled me further, and it seemed clear that they were hiding something. I decided to seek the answer from the Bible anyway. The more I read, the more I saw that many things we were doing as a 'church' were clashing with the Bible, and I was troubled even more.

All my hope of getting the salvation for which I had worked so hard started to disappear. It was during that confusion that a friend invited me to a Pentecostal church. The pastor who was preaching that day an-



CHRIS MNGUNI

swered all my questions in one sermon. My eyes were opened. My sins were exposed. Christ was presented as the answer for all the questions of life. I was captured by the preacher's argument! I learned afterwards that the senior pastor was not there, and I was asked to come back. It was in my second visit that Christ was preached as a sinless Man who died in my place in order for me to be saved. It was my first time to hear that Christ did the work that I could not do, that He paid the price that I could not pay! It was after such truths were revealed to me that I trusted in my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

CALL TO MINISTRY

When He saved me, the Lord opened my eyes to see that many people were still in the dark. I started asking myself, "What if my friend had not invited me to church?" I would have died in my hopeless situation! I started wondering how many people were still in that same position.

Therefore, the Lord gave me a desire to tell others about the way of salvation. I started refuting the teachings of the 12 Apostles cult by pointing out that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8). During my busyness in calling people to repent from their sins and trust Christ who died on their behalf, the leaders of our church recognized the gift that God

has given me. They encouraged me and gave me opportunities to preach as well. That is where I sensed the need for further training. I discussed this with my pastor, and he told me about the cost of being a preacher of the Word. I was so afraid to take the next step, but there was a joy in my heart that I would be suffering for the good cause. I started seeing that many preachers were not doing justice to the Word of God. I was afraid that if I was not well trained, I might end up leading many people astray. It was in the midst of such fears that the Lord led me to an organization that was training young people for ministry (Jesus Life Ministry).

During my time of training in



PASTOR MNGUNI WITH THE BRETHREN OF GB-DAVEYTON

this organization, I met a young man who was an expository preacher. I longed to handle the Word of God like him. By God's grace, he gave me application forms for seminary. It was in seminary that I realized how many people in churches are being misled by false teachers. My desire to work in the vineyard of the

Master grew more and more. During my seminary years, I was asked to be part of a church-plant in an area forty-five minutes away from my home. I stepped out in faith, trusting that the Lord would make a way. That is how the Lord called me to be on mission with Him, calling the lost to believe in Him and Him alone.

HAPPY'S TESTIMONY

I was born into a Christian family. During my childhood, I was exposed to the gospel both at home and at church. I remember hearing the gospel when I was around eight years old, and the only thing that stood out to me was that if I did not believe in Jesus Christ I would burn in hell forever and ever. That really troubled my soul. I was really scared of this hell, and I wanted to be in heaven with my parents. So it was then that I trusted Christ with my life, just for the hope of escaping hell, and not because I saw myself as a sinner in need of a Saviour.

I grew up like any other child from a Christian home. I was obedient to my parents, always seeking to please them. Most of my life revolved around the church. It was only when I reached high school that my life took a different turn, and everything I believed was challenged. The sinner in me



was revealed as I started living a double life. I was a prideful, immoral, self-centered sinner by day at school; and I was a humble, obedient, selfless saint by night at home. I mastered the switch between those two roles like a charm for the first two years of high school.

My life's pursuit was to do everything I possibly could to belong to my group of friends. Yet the more I tried, the less I felt their acceptance and love. I felt alone and confused. I compromised everything I believed in and even forgot about the hell of which I was ever so scared just to be accepted and validated by them, yet that still never happened. During that

time, my conscience was troubling me, because I knew the truth.

In the midst of all my confusion, loneliness, and guilt for my sins, the gospel became real to me. I truly saw myself as a burdened sinner in need of rest. I realized that God was not happy with me and that Christ is the only way to reconciliation with God. I saw myself as filthy and undeserving



ANDREW ZEKVELD

of His grace. It was at this point that I truly surrendered my life to Christ, trusting Him as my Lord and Savior.

From that day on, the peace of God flooded my soul. I experienced freedom from the bondage of sin. My life's pursuit changed to loving God with all of my heart, mind, and strength. Since that day in September

of 2009, He has been faithful in my life. He has been growing me in loving and knowing Him. Now I am not only secured of going to heaven one day, but I also experience the joy of walking with my Saviour in this life and becoming more and more like Him every day as I prepare to meet Him.

AUTONOMY!

BY SEAN REECE

After December 2016, HeartCry will end support for missionary pastor Andrew Zekveld. If this statement stood alone, thoughts might tend toward the negative: "Why is HeartCry ending his support? What has he done?" Actually, in this case, ending support for Andrew is one of the most positive and encouraging steps we can take—it is cause for great rejoicing in our faithful God!

You see, HeartCry's intention never is to support a missionary indefinitely. In order for a work to be truly indigenous, that church cannot remain dependent upon foreign support. As a part of Christ's body helping one another, your donations assist new indigenous churches until they can stand on their own. The goal is always biblical, mature, financially independent churches.

The Lord has brought Living Hope Baptist Church in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, to this level of maturity with uncommon speed. Living Hope Baptist Church began just over three-and-a-half years ago, in February 2013. Dave Webster, a seasoned and well-respected pastor, labored to lay a solid foundation. In the first two years, attendance grew to an average of forty, and the Lord added two more elders, Gavin and Les. In the period of March through June of 2015, Pastor Webster handed over pastoral leadership of the church to Andrew Zekveld. Over the next year, average attendance grew to fifty, and

finances strengthened significantly. In October 2016, the elders decided, by faith, to take the step of financial independence from HeartCry. Here are segments of the letter I received from Pastor Zekveld:

"The Lord is doing far more abundantly than we can ask or think.... Another blessing that has caught us completely off guard was in terms of our finances, which leads me to following up on the funding that we receive from HeartCry. When we set our budget for the new financial year, the elders planned to pay my full salary starting in January 2017. This was done partly in faith that God would provide and partly with some frugal adjustments. Since then (June), the Lord had decided to open His storehouses.... It feels like robbery now to receive the funds from HeartCry when the Lord has been so gracious to us. Knowing the ministry that HeartCry does, we are confident that the Lord might have much better uses for the money that comes our way each month.

"Therefore, the elders and congregation of Living Hope Baptist Church, Pietermaritzburg, would like to express our deep gratitude to HeartCry for her faithful financial and prayer support since the Lord had started this good work here. We are confident that He will build His church, and His hand is already clearly visible in our finances. We covet your prayers, but trust you can use the financial resources elsewhere in the New Year."

BICYCLES PROVIDED FOR PASTORS IN MYANMAR

BY JAMEY T.

HeartCry Missionary Society was privileged to provide bicycles for missionaries in several remote towns and villages of Myanmar. The missionaries were traversing on foot to evangelize and minister to the churches they serve. HeartCry is deeply appreciative for your prayers and support so that we can provide tools to help the indigenous men serving Christ throughout the world. The following are the missionaries' testimonies expressing their love to you for your generosity.

Zaw Kyaw: "On foot, I could not go too far to meet with the people for outreach. Now, with my bicycle, I can go four or five miles for outreach and can confront more people with the gospel. I am really overjoyed for this bicycle! Praise the Lord that He provided

it through HeartCry! This is an answer to my prayer."

Lawn Saw: "Now that I have a bicycle, I can go to different houses easily, and I can meet and share the gospel with more people. I can meet with more than twenty-five people per day now, whereas before I could meet with only six or so people per day. Also, it was quite tiresome on foot; so the bicycle has been very useful! I thank God for the bicycle."

"Then [Jesus] said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest'" (Matthew 9:37-38). Please continue to pray for the men God has raised up in Myanmar, and pray for more laborers in this land!



ZAW KYAW ON HIS NEW BICYCLE

WAR ZONE D

War Zone D was the location of fierce battles in the Vietnam War and an area where Christians, along with anti-communist forces, were exiled by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) following the Paris Peace Accords in 1973. War Zone D was also targeted by the herbicidal war program (Agent Orange) that defoliated leaves, killed the root systems of most plants, and destroyed the agricultural productivity of the lush region. Following the war, all that remained of War Zone D was barren land, exiles of the NVA, and the remaining tribal people living in the territory.

Barren regions and lands have not and will not, however, prohibit or prevent God from producing spiritual awakening and renewal! In fact, the inception of spiritual transformation always occurs where natural productivity is beyond hope:

"I will open rivers on the bare heights And springs in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water And the dry land fountains of water." (Isaiah 41:18)

In light of God's grace and purpose manifest even in wastelands, HeartCry Missionary Society was given the opportunity and privilege to fund the publication and distribution of *Examining the Great Doctrines of the Faith: Practical Christian Theology* by Floyd H. Barackman in Vietnamese—in the area known as War Zone D! The majority of the local pastors with whom HeartCry shared Barackman's book do not own a theological library; in fact, most of the men do not possess a theological work besides the Bible. Therefore, providing the ministers with a systematic theology in Vietnamese,

though a colossal undertaking, was also an incalculable blessing.

The translation of the thick volume, consisting of almost 1,000 pages, was performed by the arduous labors of Pastor "John." Pastor "John" and his family were among those exiled to War Zone D. They were taken from their home and dropped off at the edge of the aforementioned area; the clothes they were wearing were their only possessions. Pastor "John" came to Christ while in the jungle and has served the Lord for four decades. This devoted servant has a network of pastors that he has discipled and mentored during these forty years and to whom books are being distributed. One thousand copies of Barackman's book were printed and are being placed into the possession of Vietnamese pastors throughout Vietnam and Cambodia.

The pastors we visited in War Zone D suffered horrendously in the decades following the Vietnam War. Starvation, exposure to the elements, sickness, wild beasts, and persecution for their faith in Christ were always present in the life they lived and experienced. In this location, however, faith germinated and survived; and we were able to meet with and encourage (and be encouraged by) men who survived the dreadful ordeal. In fact, not only did they survive, but God also brought them to faith, and they are now pastoring churches in the "land of exile." The men were delighted to receive a copy of the book and left with gratitude for the resource that was provided to them.

Examining the Great Doctrines of the Faith is also being distributed in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). Ho Chi Minh City is the largest city in Vietnam with a population (including

the urban area) of approximately ten million people. The city's population, much like the rest of the nation, is largely lost and unreached. The streets of Ho Chi Minh City are filled with motorbikes and choked by traffic. Many tourists converge on the city to sightsee and, sadly, to indulge in the immoral activities of the profligate nightlife that is associated with Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries.

In order to be inconspicuous, we met briefly with small groups and distributed the books. Even though the Vietnamese government sanctions churches and permits them to meet, the sanctioned churches are often prevented from teaching the whole counsel of God. The men

with whom we met operate “underground” and have suffered for their faith in Christ. However, they have the freedom of conscience to preach the gospel and proclaim the word of God.

The pastors in War Zone D and in Ho Chi Minh City labor for Christ in a nation where spiritual darkness is prevalent. HeartCry is thankful that we have been given the opportunity to encourage and assist the pastors in their understanding, so that healthy churches might grow and flourish. HeartCry also would like to thank all of you who contribute to this ministry in order to provide us the opportunity to minister to local pastors in many regions and nations throughout the world.

INDIA

GANGES

BY JEFF S.

It is an assault on the senses. As we walk down the narrow streets littered with trash and discarded food, the air is filled with the aroma of burnt corn, mixed with the waste of free-roaming cows. Every turn provides both a familiar smell and an unrecognized odor. Temples, idols, and creatures that appear to belong in a Hollywood horror film stand guard at the head of every street, their shadows growing longer with the setting of the sun. Each of these weather-beaten idols is decorated with freshly cut flowers from their faithful worshipers. The sounds of drums, chants, rhythmic bells, and high-pitched moaning give our

ears no rest. Our feet try to remain stable on the uneven, cobbled, and well-worn street. Our sense of direction is confused by the masses streaming to and from the market place. Monkeys gather around in search of a free hand-out from the people making their way to a sacred destination. Truly, all of our senses are thoroughly engaged.

A tight corridor between two buildings gives way to a set of steps, which in turn lead to a raging river. We have reached our destination: the river Ganges. This Hindu holy site is visited by millions of desperate people each year seeking after the enlightened state of *moksha* (or *nirvana*)



and the forgiveness of their sins. It is said that the gods created this river so that the ashes of men in the past could be carried away to a peaceful afterlife. Those who visit this site hope these myths hold true even today.

I have heard stories of what takes place in areas such as this—how bodies are burned on piles of sticks and then dumped into the waters. And, if one is poor and cannot afford the body of his loved one to be burned by the Hindu priests, the remains are simply thrown into the river as is, allowing nature to run its course. Those who are sick, those who are feeble, and those who are nearing the end of their lives come to get close to the seemingly magical stream. All the while, men and women bathe in it, drinking its waters and stirring within themselves a behavior that could be likened to the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:26).

These things I expected to see; however, on this day, they are absent. Instead, I witness a muddy, raging river whose banks are overflowing because of the monsoon season. On this day, the water is a coffee-colored flow and is littered with debris, trash, and other items that have been churned to the point that their former purpose is no longer recognizable. People stand on the steps, hypnotized by what their eyes are witnessing, yet not brave enough to go down into the water and wash themselves. The power of the river is evident—anyone who leaves the safety of the shore will easily be swept away, as a piece of paper in a tornado. The place of life, according to the Hindu tradition, is on this day a threat to life; and no one dares approach it.

This, however, does not stop the activities that surround this part of the city. Merchants still seek to make their profit by selling trinkets that rust and corrode. Young children approach those who have congregated in hopes of convincing them to purchase a small wreath made of flowers to toss into the river as some sort of spiritual sacrifice. Drug addicts use this hallowed place to jus-

tify their use of narcotics, all in the name of a spiritual experience. Men who look like they have not combed their hair for years sit on the street corners in drug-induced stupors, staring into some unknowable oblivion. Westerners stumble around the marketplace, using this occasion to escape the monotony of their everyday lives as they try to forget personal disappointments through exotic travel or the gratification of the flesh. Though no one has confidence in his or her own strength to brave the flooded Ganges, on its banks, there is nothing new under the sun.

Such was my experience on my recent trip to India. In those moments, standing by the riverside, my heart was deeply saddened and somewhat overwhelmed. “Darkness” was my prevailing thought. Pity was my prevailing emotion. All five of my physical senses, formerly overrun by the madness around me, had given way to a sense of the spiritual reality of these people. The spiritual stupidity, the willful ignorance, and the delight in darkness were undeniably clear. In these moments, I realized that I was standing in the heart of this land, the centerpiece around which the entire Indian culture is built, the Ganges being like a vein of darkness that pumps its blackened waters throughout the land.

There was a greater reality on display here. All of the activities, the myths about this river, the trinkets, the moans, the temples, and the idols find their origin in one place: the heart of man. Ecclesiastes 9:3 states, “the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil, and insanity is in their hearts throughout their lives.” The insanity of man’s heart was visible as far as the eye could see: men convinced that this dirty river could atone for their sins, that spiritual experiences could be found through the indulgence of the flesh, and that decomposing stone idols—which had not even the ability to defend themselves from pigeons relieving themselves on them—would plead their cause. Pure insanity.

Darkness lays hold of India because man's heart is dark. In fact, there is no darker place in the entire universe than the heart of man. No matter where you are in this world, this truth is evident. Whether you are on the banks of the Ganges, or in the back alleys of the red-light district in Bangkok, or in the abortion clinics of the United States, or in the war-torn villages of Africa, or in the Lebanese offices where ceremonies for Islamic contract brides are held, or in the Tibetan temples where monks perform their hidden practices—the sin that breeds in man's heart is clear. The fruit may vary in shape and size from place to place, but the content of the fruit is always the same: darkness and death. The core of man is full of it.

Such a reality should have left me hopeless and in despair on that day; but it did not. For I was reminded in those moments of the Light—the Light that dispels the darkness and neither moves nor changes. This Light is steadfast and unshakable, and it is the only Light power-

ful enough to reach and dispel the darkness that pervades the being of man. It is the Light that transforms hearts and causes men to come out of their dwellings of darkness. This Light is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, who is the "Light of the world" (John 9:5). He is the only Hope and the True and Living Fountain that washes away sin. The gates of hell cannot stop His Kingdom. One day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess His lordship, as He drags the darkness into the light.

What a privilege and honor it is to take this message into the nations! "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes," to the Hindu priest on the edge of the Ganges, or the "john" in Bangkok, or the broken in America, or the villager in Africa, or the Muslim in Lebanon, or the monk in Tibet (Rom. 1:16). Who will carry this Light to the nations? Who is willing to pay the personal cost? Will you go? Will you send? Will you pray?

THE LORD HEARS THE PETITIONS OF HIS PEOPLE!

BY SAMUEL B.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: on March 4, 2015, an update was given on the Asia blog entitled, "One Baptism Observed and Another Hindered." (It was printed in Issue 82 of the Heart-Cry Magazine). It spoke of a young man (who we called "Daniel") who had been attending the church for

the past two years, showed great evidence of faith, and was scheduled to be baptized. However, his family, displeased with his actions, prevented the baptism from taking place. Our request for prayer was then made:

"To this day he has been struggling within and without, though never

missing a Sunday morning service or a Wednesday evening prayer meeting. Will you please lift him up before the Throne of Grace, that God Almighty might have mercy on him and give him the courage to take up his cross and follow Christ and Christ alone? Pray that this would be an opportunity for his whole family to witness true Christianity!"

The Lord has heard the petitions of His people! After months of struggle, Daniel was baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit this morning. It was such a

joy to welcome him to the fellowship of Reformed Baptist Church. Much prayer has been offered on Daniel's behalf, not only before his conversion, but also in response to the hindrance of his baptism. I thank you all my dear friends who have interceded on his behalf relentlessly. *Soli Deo Gloria* (To God alone be the glory)! What Krishna Pal was to William Carey (Krishna was Carey's first convert), Daniel is to us. He is such an encouragement to the church!

Please pray that God would continue to use him for His glory.

MIDDLE EAST

LUCAS A. NEW MISSIONARY TRAINING PASTORS IN A CLOSED COUNTRY

Earlier this year Lucas A. became the first HeartCry-supported missionary in the Greater Middle East region (Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, and Afghanistan) after he was forced to leave his home country and ministry behind in 2015. He currently

trains pastors and church leaders who still live there. His ministry consists of translating biblical resources into his native tongue, corresponding regularly with church leaders, and organizing training conferences for pastors. He and his wife have three daughters.

TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

I was born and raised in a war-torn country under control of an extremist group. I attended a religious school, where I sought God – trying to find answers to my prayers and to encounter Him. I was fasting and praying five times a day in the mosque beginning at the age of twelve. As I was learning at the religious school and learning the law of Sharia, I saw that few could actually observe all of these regulations. I saw many rules but no joy there. As I finished school, I changed subjects due to family pressure and began attending a university to study medicine. I was done with religion and wanted to live my life and enjoy however I pleased.

As time was passing, I met a couple from a different nation;

they were the first to share with me about Jesus. Although I was anxious because of the bias I had toward Jesus, I thought it would be worthwhile to listen to them and to check what they said. I decided to read the Bible; after only a few months, I had read it from Genesis to Revelation. My understanding about followers of Jesus and my hatred toward them changed as I began to see their lives. As I was reading through the Bible, John 10 captured my attention and I began meditating on it. I started to believe, but it took me a long time to truly believe in Jesus as God and Savior. After my conversion, I was baptized and later married my wife, who also believes in Jesus.

CALL TO MINISTRY

We were some of the first believers (to our knowledge) in our country to be called to the ministry. In 2010, we started our ministry, but I was put in prison later that same year for preaching the gospel. By the grace of God, I was released from prison, and we resumed our ministry in 2011. During those years, we saw great fruit and planted a number of

home groups. As we started to become well-known for our ministry, we began to face persecution and had to leave our home nation to reside in a nearby country. From there, we continue to support the ministry that we started. We translate biblical resources, talk regularly with church leaders, and organize conferences for them across the region.

RECENT MINISTRY UPDATE

We had a calm and quiet summer, as most of our friends were out for vacation. In our family devotions we are studying the book of Joshua in the Children's Bible, and the kids are enjoying it.

August was a busy month for me as I started teaching evangelism for the local context and had around eighteen participants from China, Korea and Taiwan. We had a great time of learning together how to share the gospel and the need for local, healthy, gospel-centered

churches. I have also been meeting regularly with my friend Hamid, who is eagerly seeking after God. This month we have been going through the book of Genesis, talking about Noah and the flood as well as Abraham's life and calling. Please pray that he would repent and believe in Jesus and share this news with his family members, who have not heard about Christ for generations.

This month I continued my Skype training with pastors back home, teaching about elders and how to

shepherd a local church. One of the house church networks there has been able to appoint five new elders who are committed to serve and care for their local congregations! Later in the month, I was able to visit them to conduct a week-long series of teaching from Romans. They are looking forward to having Brother Paul Washer come teach them in the fall.

I recently finished working on a series of audio Bible teachings in my language for illiterate people. After I finish editing them, I will post them on our website. I also worked with my wife to plan and prepare for a three-day women's conference that will be taking place in our home country at the end of September. She will be traveling there to lead it and teach from Ephesians. We are expecting about forty participants from around the country.

Finally, please pray for our plans to bring more men from my home country here for training. This fall begins our new seminary class for pastors back home. They will fly here quarterly for two weeks of classes at a time. I recently interviewed the candidates for the upcoming fall class. In addition to the seminary classes, we are praying for a young man named Benjamin R. to get his visa approved for a nine-month internship at the church here. His desire is to complete a seminary degree and go into pastoral ministry.

We are happy to have our pastor back with us, as he was traveling this summer, and we are excited about the upcoming fall. Thank you so much for your prayers and support for our family!

NEW MINISTRY SUPPORTED: MIDDLE EAST STUDENT FELLOWSHIP

HeartCry began supporting five new missionaries this year who are working with Middle East Student Fellowship[†] (MESF), a university student ministry in an undisclosed country in the Middle East.

MESF was launched shortly after September 11, 2001. They are active on about twenty campuses across the country, sharing the gospel with students from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. Their aim is to establish indigenous fellowships of students on the campuses, supported and led by an indigenous staff team, all of whom bear witness to the Lordship of Christ Jesus.

MESF places a strong emphasis on the importance and centrality of the gospel message in the Christian's life and ministry. They believe that "to assume the gospel is the first step to *losing* the gospel." For this reason, their primary ministry strategy is to expose students to God's

Word. They also hold a high view of the church, and they partner with several like-minded local churches. Several members of the staff team are elders and deacons at these partner churches, and Christian students are encouraged to become active members.

MESF has been blessed with tremendous growth, largely due to its success in developing and deploying a strong team of staff members to advance the work. Since there are many unreached people groups represented on their campuses, they believe their ministry has the potential to bring revival not only to their own country but also to other closed countries where students will return home after their time in university.

[†] *The name of this organization has been altered for security reasons.*



SUMMER UPDATE FROM THE NETHERLANDS

BY JACQUES BRUNT

We are grateful and happy to be able to once again report of the work that we have been doing over the past few months. The mere fact that the Lord is willing to use weak people in His divine hands is astonishing to us. I am reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:21: "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."

Our family stayed in Israel during the first two weeks of May. Along with an older brother, I had the privilege of leading a tour group of about sixty Dutch brothers and sisters. Several people from our congregation traveled with us. During the trip, we toured the country and learned much of its history, while I also was able to teach Bible studies in many places. That was really a great privilege.

Personally, I had already been to Israel, but for Annette and our three boys it was the first time (plus, they had also never flown). All in all, it was quite the experience for our children. We as a family had a very precious time for which we are very grateful to the Lord.

After we came back from Israel, there was a lot of work waiting for

us. During various meetings in the Netherlands I shared what the Lord had shown me from His Word concerning Israel and its history, but above all with regard to the Messiah who came forth from the Jewish people (Rom. 9:5). It was a precious time.

I was able to help during several evangelistic campaigns this summer. Amongst other things I spoke at a tent meeting in Oldebroek. During this meeting, I preached from John 5 about the healing of the paralytic at Bethesda. This message was used by the Lord to convert a woman who approached me in the days following the meeting. It was so encouraging to hear this! We serve a living God who calls people, even today, out of darkness into His marvelous light!

The work within our own little community here in Alblasserdam is also progressing, and we are very grateful. In June we had a baptism service during which I talked about the spiritual legacy of Paul (from 2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Then we went to the river with our congregation, and another brother and I were able to baptize two sisters after they had given their testimony. It was an encouraging day, not only for them but also for the community as a whole. The Lord builds His church, and it is wonderful to witness it.

In June, two young couples were married in our church. I had the privilege of officiating at both weddings. The focus of the first wedding was around the words of 1 John 4:16. During the other wedding service, 1 John 1:5-7 was central. Just like prior to the weddings, we as a church now guide and support these newly married young couples. These were precious wedding days and meetings.

Here in the Netherlands, there is a community of deaconesses who put their lives in the service of God. Under the motto, "Receive and pass on to others heart and hands," they

leged to share something about the character of God, which ultimately is the foundation of our faith.

Recently, I completed several Bible series. In September we will pick up again with Bible studies in different parts of our country. Meanwhile, summer vacation has started in the Netherlands. That also means that campsite evangelism work has started. Numerous campsites will be evangelized in the Netherlands, and "Bible Weeks" are organized at different campgrounds. It is a great blessing for us to be able to contribute to this. Our family has been invited to two dif-



offer hospitality to people who need peace and rest. They carry out their work from biblical principles. They also hold annual meetings on Sunday evenings several times a year. I usually speak at two or three of these meetings. It is always very impressive to see and taste how these sisters give their lives for the cause of the Lord and His service to poor and needy people. It was a privilege to serve alongside with them in June through the sharing of the Word of God.

On July 3, the Lord gave a wonderful opportunity to share the Word in Ridderkerk, a nearby town in our region. The special thing about this meeting is that it took place outdoors in the village center. This meeting was an initiative of several different churches. There was a lot of interest. I spoke on the theme, "I'll Be There," from Exodus 3:14 and Hebrews 13:8. The afternoon on which I wrote this report, I was privi-

ferent campgrounds this summer.

The one campsite is in the northern part of Holland in the province of Groningen, and the other campground is toward the southwest, in the province of Zeeland. The intention is that I teach from the book of Nehemiah at both campgrounds this summer. The special feature of these meetings is that they are visited by people from all different denominations. It is a blessing to study the Word with such diverse company and to listen to what the Lord has to say to us. In recent years, we have witnessed God's work through these gatherings and meetings there. Our prayer for this year is, "Lord, show us your glory" (Exodus 33:18). We left for the first campsite late last week and will stay a total of three weeks on the two campgrounds.

During the summer period, I have fewer speaking engagements, and we will enjoy our vacation time



PREACHING EVENT IN THE TOWN OF RIDDERKERK

with the children. We are grateful to the Lord that we were able to do a lot of work recently. We are grateful that God has been faithful to give us strength and health for our work each day.

Our prayer is with Moses in Psalm 90:17: "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us; And confirm for us the work of our hands; Yes, confirm the work of our hands."

BY MARTIN RIZLEY

SEPTEMBER UPDATE FROM MÁLAGA, SPAIN

In looking back over our first year in Spain, I am thankful for the advances that we have been able to make in establishing our home and initiating our work here. I am also excited about plans for the coming year. Here are a list of motives for thanksgiving and prayer:

In a space of less than a year, the Lord has sustained us through two major moves, each of which involved an incredible amount of mental and physical labor as well

as countless hours of paperwork. The whole process of establishing a home base in Spain has been very stressful from the start, but the Lord has strengthened us through it, for which we are very thankful.

While we have been engaged in all the practical labor of moving, we have also been quite busy with the work of the church. Paola and I have gotten to know the various members of our local church well and have developed good relationships with

them. As a result, I feel that I am in a better position now than at first to know what the needs of the various members are and to minister pastorally to the flock by the grace of God. I am thankful to have begun a regular preaching-and-teaching ministry after a relatively short time on the field. In addition to preaching on Sunday mornings and teaching a home Bible study on Sunday evenings, I have also had the opportunity to preach at other churches in the area, both in Málaga and in the town of Almuñecar. Recently, I was also asked to preach at a "family conference" held at a Christian campsite less than an hour away from Málaga. I preached a single message from Matthew 24:12 on the danger of "love growing cold" in the days leading up to Christ's second coming, and I was later told that a teenage girl who was at the camp and who is not a Christian was impacted by the message. Praise God for that!

During the summer months, we have also further developed our plans for evangelistic outreach to the surrounding community. Recently, I went with a friend to an open-air market near our church building, and the two of us preached to a group of people who were gathered there. Most of the hearers were from a Gypsy background, but some were Muslim. (Some of you may know that a number of Gypsies in Spain are not Roman Catholic, but belong

to a group of churches known as the Philadelphia churches, which are evangelical in character, although many of them are doctrinally weak). There was a very positive response from the Gypsy hearers, who afterwards approached us and urged us to come back in the near future to continue preaching at that very spot. "We need the Word of God in this neighborhood," one man said to me. "We have too much of the devil's work going on here—drugs, prostitution, violence. We need the Word of God!" It goes without saying that his earnest words greatly encouraged me, and I do hope to return in the near future, Lord willing, to continue open-air preaching in that neighborhood.

Another area of evangelistic interest is the town of Loja, about an hour from Málaga in the province of Granada. A couple from Loja has been attending services in Málaga with their three daughters for several months now. They are quite open to the possibility of beginning an evangelistic Bible study in their home, to which they could invite friends and neighbors. This is an exciting prospect, since (to my knowledge) there is no Evangelical church in Loja apart from the local Gypsy church—and it is a town of some 21,000 inhabitants. Pray for God's guidance in undertaking this evangelistic initiative in the interior of Andalucía.



This summer, I was also able to take care of some pressing administrative issues, such as the renewal of my Spanish driver's license and the renewal of my residence visa for another two years. Please pray that Paola will also be able to obtain a Spanish driver's license soon. The international driving permit she has been using expired at the end of August, and the Spanish government will not simply exchange a Texan license for a Spanish one. It appears, therefore, that she will have to take a driving exam to get her Spanish driver's license, and that will involve a sacrifice of time and a considerable amount of study to prepare for the exam. Pray that God will strengthen her to jump through the necessary hoops to get her license as soon as possible, so that she can drive once again in the near future.

Pray that the Lord will guide me and the other elders of the church as we meet together regularly to discuss the ministry of the church and to pray for various members, some of whom are going through an especially rough time in their lives. One young man who regularly attends our Thursday night Bible study is experiencing difficulty at work (he works as a waiter at a café) and is feeling pressure from his boss to resign from his job—something he is

loathe to do, because of the present economic crisis and the need to support his family. Pray as well for a woman in our church who suffers with depression because of the many physical ailments she has to endure. Pray, too, that Rafa will be able to find a job—lately, he has been making frequent trips to the town of Almería to preach at a church that is currently without pastoral leadership. His aspiration is to serve one day in the pastoral ministry of a local church; pray that he will pursue that aspiration by preparing himself diligently in every way for an eventual call to a church.

Pray, as well, that God will give me grace and wisdom to find the proper balance between devotion to my missionary work and devotion to my family. Paola does a great job keeping our household up and running; I could not do the work I am doing in Spain without her faithful support; but I want to make sure that she herself feels well-supported by me. To that end, I want to make sure that I am devoting the time needed to lend a helping hand and to build good relationships both with Paola and with my daughter Melody, rather than becoming so absorbed in my work that I end up neglecting my family (which is always a danger on the mission field).



MARTIN RIZLEY PREACHING

BY EDUARDO ARICARI

MISSIONS UPDATE FROM HUAYCAN, PERU

At the beginning of 2016, HeartCry began supporting Eduardo Aricari in his church-planting efforts in the city of Huaycan, located about an hour outside of Lima. In addition to pastoring, Eduardo also trains pastors and church leaders with a local seminary in various regions of Peru.

A young man that I have been discipling, named Yoel has had to travel to the mountains for his studies. The Lord put it on his heart to share what he had been learning with the people in the high regions of Huancavalica. He tells me that people have been very accepting of the teaching, so much so that he fears he that he cannot lead them, as he is new in the faith. For this reason, he has asked me to accompany him there, and we are now praying about making a two-day trip along with another brother from the church to visit the village. In the towns in that region, there are no churches. Each village has about three hundred inhabitants.

We are praying that if the Lord in His grace is awakening people to the gospel, He would also help us find people from other churches to go and build up the work there. That region has an extremely cold climate, and there are very few people who are willing to travel there. Yoel is now traveling back to our town every two weeks to be further trained before going right back to the mountains. Truly, we need your prayers that the Lord would give us wisdom with regard to how to help these brothers.

A couple weeks ago, a man of Ashaninka ethnicity providentially visited us. He lives in the Mazamari region of Peru, and he came to ask for help with pastoral training of the men in that area, since he is president of the association of pastors of the native communities there. He is concerned because there is not much training available to the men; many of them are sent out as pastors into their villages after only two weeks of instruction! I am meeting with several other pastors to see if together we can begin going to those places, alternating our visits so that we can train and help the brothers at least in a small manner.

I now say goodbye, thanking the Lord for such a great privilege of serving Him and asking you to pray for my family and myself—that the Lord would strengthen us and continue pouring out His grace on our lives and that the church would be used to give all the glory to our God and Savior Jesus Christ, faithfully carrying out His will for us!

AN EVANGELISTIC RADIO PROGRAM AND A GROWING EVANGELISTIC BURDEN

Esteban is one of the pastors of Family of Grace Church in Rosario, Argentina, which he and Nicolás Serrano began planting five years ago.

This month we have had some new people visit our church meetings on Sundays. The most interesting case is the father of a young member of our church, who started regularly attending the church services a few weeks ago. It is interesting because this man has always been hostile to the gospel. Nonetheless, according to the testimony that his son gave about him, he is interested for the first time in “the things of God.” We are praying for him, hoping that the Lord will open his heart through the preaching of the gospel.

Another important event in the life of the church is that we began filling a time slot on the Christian radio Monday through Friday. It is the most listened-to Christian radio station in Rosario. In the providence of the Lord, the doors were opened for us to meet the owner of the radio station directly, and he offered us the time slot on the radio at a very low cost—less than half of the original price! It was not within our reach economically to pay for it at its full cost, but we can now that the owner lowered the price so much. We had been praying for several months for an opportunity to spread the gospel through such means, but we had not had the resources, so we are very happy to see how the Lord has opened this door.

Now we are transmitting sermons centered on the gospel, from both Nico and me, as well as from other preachers. Please pray for this project. There are literally thousands of people that listen to this

radio station. We are encouraged in believing that the Lord will bless this work and that many people will be saved.

Personally, a great burden that I have had as a pastor in these past months is that we have for some time had only a few conversions. Few things cause more pain in my heart than seeing that few people are being effectually called. The church is growing, at a slow rate, and this is precious in many ways. But we are in a very large city that dwells in darkness, and I cannot keep from growing sad when I see that there are so few people that are entering into eternal life. My heart is saddened and burns to see my city given over to so many forms of idolatry.

Thinking about this and seeking the will of the Lord with regard to what more could be done for the extension of the kingdom of our God, I decided to devote more time to being in the streets, seeking to reach as many lost people as the Lord allows me to reach. Of course, I am always speaking with non-believers that visit the church and am discipling new converts; but I also believe that it is time to make a greater effort in search of those that might never otherwise come to our church meetings. Given my responsibilities to study, pray, disciple the brothers and sisters in the church, and care for my family, I do not have a lot of extra time; but I am going to make the greatest effort possible to devote some more hours during the week to publicly preach the gospel. Please pray for this new evangelistic effort and also that the Lord would provide other brothers and sisters to accompany me in this work.



THE LORD'S PROTECTION FROM ASSAULT

BY DARIO SARA

Dario Sara is pastoring a congregation in the district of Villa el Salvador, Lima. The following report is an example of the increasing crime rate in Peru. Please continue to pray for the safety of the missionaries and their churches.

This month, we survived an attempted robbery just as we had finished one of our services. Some brothers and sisters had already left, while others were enjoying a time of fellowship. The children were running around the door of the church building when we saw two motorcycles go by with four men aboard. All of sudden, two of them got off the motorcycles and put a gun to the head of the six-year-old son of one of our church members and forced him to enter the church building. The other guy fired a shot into the air and said, "Give us your cell phones and other belongings!"

I had been talking with one of the brothers near the door. When I turned around, I saw the children on the floor, along with my youngest daughter. I approached the armed man and asked several times, "What are you doing?" The man fired another shot, which passed very close by my ear. He then hit me with the handle of his pistol, but I was able to forcefully close the door on him. The first man fell and ran off, and the other (who had the gun) followed him.

One of the gunshots hit the ankle of one of the sisters, who had been sitting down with her one-year-old daughter on her lap. After everything happened, we realized that she was bleeding profusely and that my head was also bleeding. So, we took her to the hospital, where she was admitted and is recovering. My wound has also healed. We thank God for having spared us from something worse. I plead with you to pray for our church and that the Lord would forgive and show grace to the men who did this.



BY JOSE LUIS SIANCAS

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR PASTORS AND CHURCHES IN NORTHERN PERU

Jose Luis is the co-pastor of “Jesús es la Puerta” (Jesus is the Door) Baptist Church in Mallaritos, just outside of Sullana. He also helps teach and lead the Bible Academy for pastors in the mountains of northern Peru.

God is leading us in the preaching of His gospel and in the work of making disciples in Mallaritos and in Las Palmeras. We are organizing house visits in order to continue with the work of discipleship here in Mallaritos, and we are also going out every Saturday with members of the church as a single body to preach in the parks and in the streets. This month, the Lord blessed us with fifty Bibles to use with new believers and discipleship. We are thankful to HeartCry for helping us with the purchase of twenty-five of these Bibles, while the local church purchased the other twenty-five.

Also, we are continuing to support the formation of a new work in the nearby town Las Palmeras, where Jonathan Siancas

is a missionary. We preach publicly every Wednesday, and every Friday we visit the people in the community, evangelizing and discipling. These first months, we have been sowing the seed of the Word of God, and by His grace we wait to reap the fruits.

Now, I would like to inform you all of the recent trip that I made to the mountains. On the 20th of June, we traveled to San Luis, Pacaipampa, in order to teach the third module of the Ministerial Bible Academy. On this occasion, Pastor Rafael Alcantara from the Dominican Republic accompanied us and taught a course on the Doctrine of Salvation. In addition to that course, Carlos García also taught a course on the Doctrine of Man and Sin. We also had devotionals together each day in which we were blessed by the Word of God.

We are thankful to HeartCry for supporting the work here and helping the pastors of this region. On this occasion, the pastors received the books *Created in God's Image*

by Anthony Hoekema and *The One True God* by Paul Washer. Also, USB drives were provided for the pastors, along with radios that are compatible with the USB drives. Each of the drives was filled with expository sermons. I am grateful to HeartCry for the donation of these materials for the spiritual benefit of the pastors in the mountains.

We also handed out more than a hundred Bibles provided by HeartCry to the pastors that are beginning a new work in a secluded region of Pacaipampa called Huan-

cabamba, so that they can begin to disciple the new believers there.

Beloved brothers and sisters, we beg the Lord of the Harvest that His work might continue to grow here. We long for the brothers and sisters here to be further conformed to the image of Christ Jesus and that those who are destined to eternal life would be gathered through the preaching of the gospel.

EURASIA

RUSSIA RESTRICTS RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

BY HOLDEN BARRY

On July 6th, Russian president Vladimir Putin signed a law restricting a wide range of missionary activity. This directly and significantly impacts all of the pastors and missionaries that HeartCry partners with throughout Eurasia. For this reason, we have disabled the portion of our website where their information was listed. We appreciate your patience as we seek to protect their identities. We are now in the process of rebuilding the Eurasia content of the website and will seek to continue to update you on the work there in the near future.

The article below has been

included to help better inform you of what exactly has happened and what the implications are moving forward. We ask that you pray more fervently for the church in Russia, especially for the HeartCry pastors, church planters, and evangelists who continue their labors for the sake of Christ and His gospel. Pray that they would remain faithful, steadfast, and confident in the Lord as their all-sufficient Help and Guide.

The following article was written by Joe Carter and is used here with permission from The Gospel Coalition. Originally published online at: <http://bit.ly/hc88-01>.

THE STORY:

Under the guise of implementing “anti-terrorism” measures, Russia has adopted new laws that restrict religious freedom and criminalize missionary activities.

THE BACKGROUND:

According to the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), Russian President Vladimir Putin signed into law measures that redefine “missionary activities” as religious practices that take place outside of state-sanctioned sites. The new law will ban “preaching, praying, proselytizing, and disseminating religious materials” outside of sites officially designated by the state. Citizens can also be fined up to \$15,000 for engaging in these activities in private residences or distributing unauthorized religious materials through “mass print, broadcast, or online media.”

Foreign missionaries also must prove they were invited by state-registered religious groups and must operate only in regions where their sponsoring organizations are registered. Missionaries who fail to comply face harsh fines and deportation.

USCIRF also notes that current anti-extremism law allows targeting of religious groups that have never threatened or used violence. “Extremism” charges can include the peaceful promotion of “the superiority of one’s own religion,” and have resulted in religious texts being banned and its members imprisoned. The new anti-terrorism measures will increase prison terms under the current extremism law.

WHY IT MATTERS:

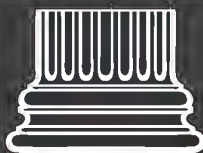
Russia, one of the top-ten most populous nations on the planet, contains a large number of unreached people groups. According to the Joshua Project, about 13.4 million people (9.4 percent of the population) are unreached, and only 1.2 percent of the population is Evangelical. The new law will impede the spread of the gospel and threatens to curtail the expression of our Christian brothers and sisters in that country. For this reason alone we should strongly oppose the totalitarian policy.

The promotion of religious liberty should also be a primary domestic and foreign policy objective of the United States. The joint freedoms of religion and conscience constitute the “first freedom” and deserve protection both in our own country and abroad. As Nebraska Senator Ben Sasse recently said, “This Russian law would be an affront to free people everywhere—at home and abroad—who believe that rights of conscience—the rights to free speech and to freedom of religion—are pre-political.”

“Governments do not give us these rights and governments cannot take them away,” said Sasse.

“These rights of speech and religion and assembly belong to every man, woman, and child because all of us are image-bearers of our Creator.”





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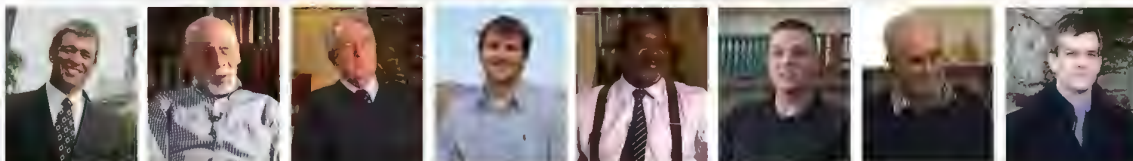
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Go or Send

"The world lives in a time of crisis. Christians alone are in a position to rescue the perishing. We dare not settle down to try to live as if things were normal."
– A. W. Tozer

"If by excessive labor, we die before reaching the average age of man, worn out in the Master's service, then glory be to God, we shall have so much less of earth and so much more of Heaven!"
– C. H. Spurgeon



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