

# HeartCry

MAGAZINE

## AFRICA

GOSPEL LIGHT IN THE  
DARK CONTINENT



## GREETINGS

My dear brothers and sisters, I hope this brief introduction finds you growing in your understanding of the person and work of Christ upon which the entirety of our hope and salvation rests.

You may know that it has been an eventful several weeks for my family and me. On March 20th, I suffered a heart attack in my home. Before the paramedics could transport me to the hospital, my heart stopped beating on three separate occasions. I do not remember the first several days in the hospital; when I finally became aware of my surroundings, I was told that I had suffered a heart attack. As a result, I had also suffered temporary loss of short-term memory.

The days in the hospital were painful, but I could not have asked for better care from the doctors and nurses who attended me. I also praise God that I was afforded nearly countless opportunities to share Christ and hand out gospel literature to all within my reach.

It is truly astounding how frail we are. I had been working out four times a week and was on a strict “heart-healthy” diet, yet I had a heart attack that could very easily have taken my life “permanently.” As my doctor reiterated: my lifestyle was “good,” my diet was “good,” but my genetics are “inescapable.” Almost all the men on both sides of my family have died of heart issues. As I continue to progress, I will rejoice in God’s special grace to keep me here a “bit” longer, and I will seek to submit to His common grace manifested in the wonderful doctors under whose care He has placed me.

After several more days in the hospital, I am glad to announce that I was able to return home, where I am now spending my days rehabilitating, reading, and writing. I have finally made my way through the sixteen volumes of *The Works of John Owen*, *Sermons of Robert Murray M’Cheyne*, Thomas Vincent’s *The True Christian’s Love to the Unseen Christ*, and Octavius Winslow’s *The Precious Things of God*. I heartily recommend them to anyone who wants to grow not only in their knowledge of Christ but also (and more importantly)

in their esteem and love for Him.

I have also used these days to simply “watch” my family and delight in them as a true gift from God. My wife Charo is like a tower of strength, even though she is “too” severe with my diet and will not let me stay in my study as long as I would like. My sons Ian (15) and Evan (13) watch over me like guardians. My daughters Rowan (9) and Bronwyn (1) are simply a delight to behold.

My family and I would like to express our deepest gratitude to all of you who have prayed for us and my recovery. Your kindness is a great encouragement. Thank you. I will return to the doctor in a few days to find out when I can return to the HeartCry office. I am afraid to stay away too long for fear that they will discover that they are better off without me! I know that even though I will be able to return to ministry, it will be a long and slow road before I am traveling to the other side of the world. Pray that God will give me the grace to use my “down time” for His glory. I will be dedicating most of my time to several writing projects, and as always I will be in need of grace. Again, thank you!

Your brother,  
Paul



# AFRICA

## COORDINATOR TRIP REPORT

### KAMPALA, UGANDA

In January 2017, I had the privilege of visiting our missionary Bill Issa and his family in Kampala, Uganda. Kampala and the immediately surrounding area have a population of almost four million; it is one of the fastest growing cities in Africa. This was my first visit to Uganda, and I would have to rate it fairly high among the African countries I have visited in terms of both friendliness and development.

I arrived late Saturday night, and Sunday morning I joined Bill's church (Reconciliation Baptist Church) for worship. Pastor Bill led the adult Bible study and preached during the morning service, then we shared a meal and visited through the afternoon. I closed the day by preaching the evening service. The church currently meets in Bill's garage, which is now overflowing with people. Please pray that they can find a larger and more public meeting place.

It is significant that Reconciliation Baptist Church (RBC) has grown to this size in just a few years. You see, the Prosperity cult, with their promise of miracles and physical prosperity, rules the religious scene in Uganda (as in much of the rest of Africa). They are considered the "true Christianity," while Baptists are considered heretics. Most Baptists in turn consider Reformed Baptists to be heretics. This places Bill's church among the least and the worst in the

eyes of his countrymen—not a bad place to be according to 1 Corinthians 1. Any church that truly believes, preaches, and practices Scripture is mocked and despised in Uganda, where almost everyone claims to be a "Christian." Bill knows this all too well, having spent many years in the Prosperity cult himself.

On Monday, we toured some of Kampala; then, that evening, I met with a group of young men that Bill is training in biblical doctrine and church leadership. I spoke with them on the importance of showing the glory of Christ to struggling saints. Brother Bill had already demonstrated this practice on Sunday morning. His sermon was from Matthew 10, where Christ sends out the twelve. I was thrilled as, rather than jumping immediately into the commands to those who are sent, Bill first looked at the Sender. Beautiful!

One of the men that Bill is training is named Asuman. His testimony is truly a remarkable story of God's grace. Asuman grew up in a Muslim family, and his father was a witch doctor. The ancestor spirits chose Asuman to be the successor to his father. Asuman, however, did not want to become a witch doctor and rejected his "calling." The following years were very difficult for him. During that time, he met Bill, who was a fellow schoolteacher. Bill shared the gospel many times with Asuman,



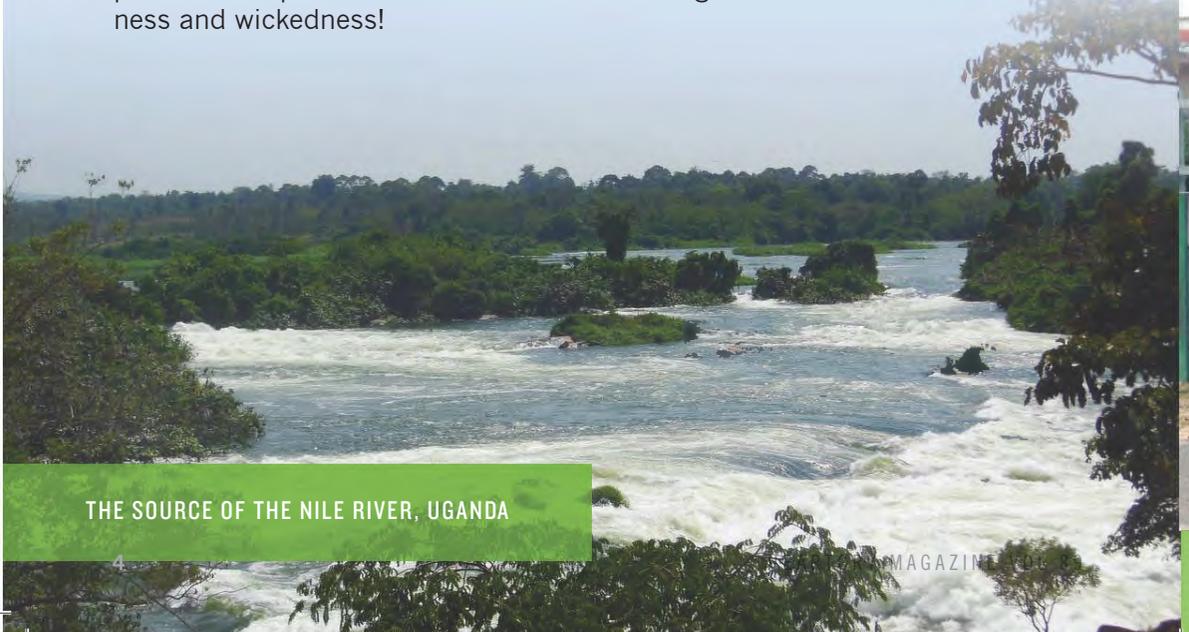
BILL ISSA WITH MEN'S GROUP STUDENTS

who strongly rejected the message and even threatened Bill with violence. Eventually, the Lord broke Asuman, and he trusted Christ as his Savior! This led to further problems, as his Muslim family now disowned him completely. When Asuman married his wife, his family refused to be part of the wedding. In a beautiful display of Christian love, RBC served as his family and took responsibility for arranging the wedding. Because Asuman refused to become a witch doctor, his father prophesied that he would never have children. However, in God's mercy, his wife was eight months pregnant when I visited; and just before writing this update, I saw the news that she had given birth to a healthy baby boy! God displays His power over spiritual forces of darkness and wickedness!

Before bidding farewell to the Issa family, we traveled together to Itanda Falls on the mighty Nile River, near its source, where it exits Lake Victoria. It brought back many memories of my beloved Zambezi in Western Zambia. What a precious family, and what a fun trip as we spent the day together!

Please be in prayer for the Issa family and for RBC:

- For a larger and more public meeting place.
- For growth in size and spiritual maturity.
- For godly men to join Bill in church leadership.
- For God to raise up more laborers to spread the true gospel in Uganda.



THE SOURCE OF THE NILE RIVER, UGANDA

# CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

I can still remember reading the first of Mario Maneville's reports when I returned to the role of Africa Coordinator over eighteen months ago. As I read accounts of his church's ministry to gangs, drug dealers, and prostitutes in the Cape region; I thought, "I want to see this for myself!" A year and a half later, that desire was finally fulfilled. After visiting our missionary pastor Bill Issa in Uganda, my next stop was Cape Town, South Africa. When many people think of Cape Town, images of beaches, mountains, and vineyards come to mind. This is not the case in the area where Mario lives and ministers. His community is one of the rougher neighborhoods in the Cape, a world that I had never seen firsthand. It was a violent and intimidating place for this American Midwesterner; but for Mario and his church, it's simply home.

Mario grew up just a block from where he and his family now live. When he left years ago, he never

wanted to return. But the Lord had other plans. Mario's brother Quinton planted a church there, and eventually Mario returned to help him. Together they shepherd Reformed Faith Mission Community Church.

Through Mario, the Lord showed me a whole new depth to the word "indigenous," which is the strength of HeartCry's ministry. As Mario drove me around his neighborhood, the assault on my mind and emotions intensified. "So-and-so was stabbed to death on this corner," he'd say; "So-and-so was shot and killed right here after we shared the gospel with him. This guy buys women's daughters as his slaves for a few dollars per month in exchange for drugs." As the descriptions went on and on, my heart was grieved, and I felt nauseous. Finally, I asked, "Mario, how does your family cope with such unrelenting wickedness?" He replied, "What? It's just life, man." That's indigenous! Not just any South African who speaks the language could live



STREET EVANGELISM IN CAPE TOWN



MARIO WITH MEN FROM THE CHURCH

and minister where Mario does.

After my tour, we met for men's book study on Thursday night. They are studying a book on shepherding their families.

I have to spend some time telling you about these guys. I'm sure their wives are just as remarkable, but I spent time mostly with the men. One of the men was a major drug addict who beat and robbed the elderly, stealing their pension money to buy drugs. He is now known as the biggest "hugger" in the church, and to hear him speak tenderly of his love for his wife and kids with tears in his eyes was a testimony of grace I will not soon forget. Two of the guys were some of the most feared gangsters in that community.

They spent more time in prison than out of it. I didn't ask what horrible crimes they've committed—I didn't even want to know, because it's hard to even imagine now. The love and joy of Christ shines from their faces! They went back to finish their secondary education in their 30's—so they could study theology! They are enrolled in a local Bible school, and I was told that they are some of the top students.

But there was something else beautiful that I witnessed in this church. Along with former gangsters and drug dealers, you will find in this body of Christ university students and business professionals who would rather serve God in hard places than be comfortable. They too have the love and courage to walk the streets and share the gospel with the worst of society.

Speaking of that, I found myself in the deep end of difficult ministry on Friday night, way out of my comfort zone. It is regular practice for Mario's church to hold open-air meetings and preach in the streets. A drug dealer was stabbed and robbed on the very street we were to hold our meeting, only an hour before it began! People wandered in and out of a drug house directly across the street as the gospel was



QUINTON AND MARIO MANEVILLE



REFORMED FAITH MISSION COMMUNITY CHURCH

preached. After the preaching, Mario and Quinton and the men took me along to walk the streets and witness to gangs. We shared the gospel with one of the most notoriously violent gangs. I was amazed as these stone-cold killers stood meekly and listened to the gospel. Along with fear, I felt pity. They know they are wicked, but they have no concern for their soul.

On Sunday morning, the church met in a local school for worship. I enjoyed every moment of the rich doctrinal teaching, believing prayer, and enthusiastic singing. People in that area look down on churches that must meet in school rooms, and Reformed Faith Mission would like to remove that stumbling block if possible. They've been looking,

but there is just nothing that has come available to this point. Please pray that the Lord would provide a more suitable place to meet (preferably one that is on "neutral turf" for the gangs). Sunday night, we met in the home of Mario and Quinton's parents for Bible study.

Please keep the Manevilles and Reformed Faith Mission in your prayers. Their evangelistic efforts are exhausting, and it is genuinely dangerous work. They never know when they might find themselves in the midst of a gang war or when some drug addict might respond violently. Pray for their safety, for supernatural strength, and for the power of the gospel to be seen in the transformation of lives that many would consider hopeless. ■



MARIO AND HIS FAMILY

# TAKING TRUTH TO SUDANESE REFUGEES

BY NAPHTALLY OGALLO

*At the urging of Paul Washer, we encouraged our Kenyan leaders, Sam Oluoch and Naphtally Ogallo, to investigate the South Sudanese refugee camp in their country; your generous giving funded their travel. Here is Pastor Naphtally's informative and entertaining account of their second trip to Kakuma Refugee Camp.*

Sam and I recently traveled to Kakuma Refugee Camp to visit the brethren of Unity Church. The first visit we made to the South Sudanese refugee camp was in November 2015. The purpose of this

visit was twofold: 1) to find out how they are doing and how we can further encourage them; and 2) to see Babale Mamchoko, a young man we had earlier earmarked for theological training.

## DAY 1 DAY 2 DAY 3 DAY 4

We took a taxi early in the morning to the Eldoret airport and then boarded a flight arriving in Lodwar around 10:00 AM. Once in Lodwar, we took a taxi to Kakuma. There was untrustworthiness on the part of the driver who, after we paid, began to load seven adults and children in the boot of the car, plus other luggage! The three hours on the bad road provided us with opportunity to witness to the very talkative driver. By the end of the journey, he was full of

apologies and begging us for forgiveness for having gone against hiring regulations. He promised us that if we should hire him on our return leg that he would “compensate” us—or at least adhere to the rules!

Upon arrival, the accommodation booked for us included malfunctioning fans. We were robbed of sleep that night, both by the heat and by the 4:00 AM Islamic “call to prayer,” which was followed by a forceful Islamic preacher.

## DAY 1 DAY 2 DAY 3 DAY 4

After prayer and breakfast, we set off hunting for different accom-

modations. Upon getting a reasonable alternative called “Lokwan

Guest House,” we quickly relocated. The house is situated right next to Kakuma airstrip, which is used solely by planes belonging to the United Nations’ refugee program (UNHCR).

Unity Church is made up of three independent South Sudanese churches which came together in the Camp. These three are Presbyterian Church, African Inland Church (AIC), and Reformed Church. The majority of the members of Unity Church are from the Murle ethnic group of South Sudan. Babale Mamchoko is the only Murle we know who has secondary school education. He has a Diploma from a Bible institute in Kakuma. At present, he is taking a Diploma course in computers. Occasionally, he is hired by the UNHCR to translate for new refugees. An admission process had begun for him to join KReST (Kenya Reformed School of Theology, hosted by Sam’s church), but this stalled due to lack of communication from Unity Church. On

our part, we did not want to bypass the local church, so it was important for us to understand what was happening and how we could help them solve any issues.

We heard from a church officer that Unity Church would not recommend Babale Mamchoko due to his lack of commitment to church life and ministry. Babale admitted in our personal conversation with him that he had occasionally attended other churches when invited by his college friends. His church leadership did not see this in a good light. They felt that, since Babale is more privileged and informed than most, he should use his gifts and abilities in and for the good of his local church. Hence, they were not ready to recommend him for KReST studies. We agreed with both the church leaders and Babale that we all meet together the following day at the church building to try and help them sort through the situation.

## DAY 1 DAY 2 DAY 3 DAY 4

We traveled to the church meeting place and found the pastor, other leaders, and a few members already gathered. After greetings and prayer, we taught them briefly from 1 Timothy 3:14-16, pointing out that the church is God’s house; therefore, it must be run God’s way, with the central message of the church being the Lord Jesus Christ. We then spent some moments with Pastor Stephen

and two other church officers, Luka and John. Pastor Stephen was adamant that Babale’s current attitude to the church disqualified him for recommendation for studies. He told us that the church would instead recommend Luka and John for KReST. However, these two men were still finishing primary school and would only be qualified academically in four years’ time.

## (A PLEASANT TURN OF EVENTS)

At this point we need to interject and mention that, since our return from Kakuma, we have received a phone call from Luka that the church met again with Babale Mamchoko after a Sunday worship service, and they resolved all the issues that were hindering their recommendation of him. Later, Babale himself also contacted us and confirmed the same. We are deeply thankful to God for

this very mature and gracious move on the part of the church and humility on the part of Babale. We now expect to complete the admission process and extend an official invitation to Babale Mamchoko to join KReST. With this turn of events, we feel that our trip to Kakuma Refugee Camp and Unity Church was greatly blessed of the Lord.

## DAY 1 DAY 2 DAY 3 DAY 4

We left Kakuma by 8:00 AM in a taxi driven by a man who spoke very little to us and only answered our questions very briefly! So we were not able to witness much to him. The desperate condition of children and mothers along the Kakuma-Lodwar road was deeply disturbing, but all we could do was hand out a few bottles of water that we carried. We checked in on time for our Eldoret-bound plane, which ultimately failed to fly due to mechanical fail-

ure; so we were forced to spend the night in Lodwar. That extended time in Lodwar provided us with a unique opportunity to discuss and pray about the spiritual needs of Kakuma and Lodwar. We had left Kakuma with a conviction that was now solidified during our providential overnight stay in Lodwar. While the need to bring individual South Sudanese men to KReST for studies remains, there is also an urgent need for a church plant in Lodwar.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Lodwar is a “hub town” with many different ethnic communities and many different non-government organizations that serve Kakuma. It is a three-hour drive from Lodwar to Kakuma (though it is not even a hundred kilometers away). To our knowledge, there are no biblical churches in or around Lodwar. If we found a mature man to plant a church in Lodwar, he could more frequently and meaningfully visit Kakuma to

teach and encourage the South Sudanese refugees. Please pray with us toward this end.

Though we had some health challenges, our joy to be found in the Lord’s work far surpassed those momentary discomforts. Thank you for facilitating the journey and for showing us such kindness and generosity. We returned to our homes and found our wives and churches well.

Glory be to His name. ■



LUKA AND PASTOR STEPHEN



# STREET EVANGELISM AND A SURPRISING STORY

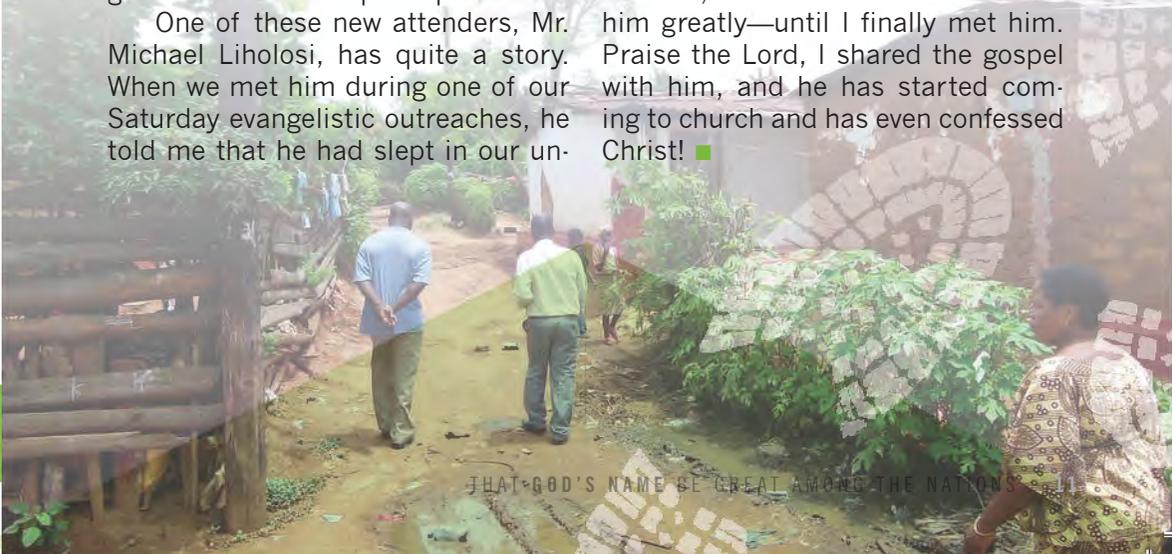
BY MARSHAL KASONGO

*Marshal Kasongo is pastor of Mapalo Reformed Baptist Church in Ndola, Zambia. In a recent report, Marshal tells of an evangelistic outreach where he heard a very surprising story.*

Our ongoing evangelism outreach is gaining momentum through church activities and good individual participation from the church members. We received twelve new regular attenders in our church meetings from July to October: seven women and five men. These people have shown some consistency in terms of attendance on the Lord's Day. We are doing follow-up visits with them, and soon I intend to begin one-on-one discipleship lessons.

One of these new attenders, Mr. Michael Liholosi, has quite a story. When we met him during one of our Saturday evangelistic outreaches, he told me that he had slept in our un-

finished church building for three months in 2001! He had come to the Copperbelt from western Zambia to look for employment. He found a job, but he had no accommodation. So he looked for the closest township to his new employer, which happened to be ours: Mapalo. He came here in the night and started sleeping in our unfinished church building. Mr. Liholosi slept inside our church building for three months, even after he had started receiving his salary. During this period of time, he did not have much peace, but he pledged to the Lord that one day he would come and be part of the church that provided him accommodation without their knowledge. Many years passed, however, and the devil hindered him greatly—until I finally met him. Praise the Lord, I shared the gospel with him, and he has started coming to church and has even confessed Christ! ■





BY MALAMULO CHINDONGO

# MALAWI YEAR-END UPDATE

*Mala is pastoring Antioch Baptist Church in Blantyre, Malawi, where he has been laboring since 2008. ABC began as a Bible study with the help of an American missionary and has since developed into the only reformed Baptist church in Blantyre. Mala and his wife Rachel have two daughters: Amelie and Claire.*

As the year 2016 comes to an end, our family would like to thank you for all your prayers and support for the work of church planting here in Malawi. The Lord has done more than what we could have asked in the last twelve months. Please re-

ceive our thanksgiving newsletter with joy in your hearts, knowing that your many prayers on our behalf were answered by our loving Father. I would like to take some time to highlight some of the things the Lord accomplished among us in 2016.

## CONVERSIONS AND BAPTISMS

I am grateful for this body of believers. Indeed, the Lord has done great things among us. As we look back, we are humbled by the work Christ has accomplished in this church. We have been actively engaging both our members' communities and the universities. We understand that churches don't plant themselves. We thank God for sustaining us and providing resources for us to be able to

go out and speak to people about the Lord Jesus. Some of our evangelistic activities have been fruitful, while some have not. We have seen the most conversions and baptisms this year—a total of twenty-two. Of these, fifteen were university students or had just graduated. They have joined the church, and we are seeing good growth in the Lord in their lives. We are truly grateful!

## DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION

Apart from these exciting events, we were also humbled by a church discipline case that occurred during the middle of the year. The two

people that are undergoing church discipline (a restoration period), seem genuinely repentant and are regularly coming to church.

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Among the many things we are doing is the training of qualified men to serve within our church as elders. We are thankful to have a good number of promising men who we believe

will serve our church in the near future. First in the line is our Brother Masa Elias, who has proven himself over the years. We are about to propose his candidacy to the church. ■

# MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

## JOSHUA LUNGU

KASAMA, ZAMBIA

*For many years, the Reformed Baptists of Zambia have desired to establish a church in Northern Province. That desire is finally being fulfilled through missionary pastor Joshua Lungu. Joshua is a native Zambian who spent the last several years in South Africa. He served in Mowbray Baptist Church in Cape Town while completing a degree in biblical studies and theology. Joshua then completed a pastoral internship at Kabwata Baptist Church (KBC) in Lusaka, Zambia, where he felt the call to go to Northern Province. KBC*



JOSHUA LUNGU

*overwhelmingly voted to send him to Kasama, the provincial capital; Joshua was ordained as their missionary pastor in December 2016.*

## JOSHUA'S TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

I was born on September 28, 1973, in Kitwe, Zambia. My mother passed away in 2007, and I have never met my father. I was born into a religious family; every Sunday, we would go to church together (the United Church of Zambia in Kitwe). I believed that going to church was what made one a Christian and had several other misunderstandings.

In December 1989, about a year after being baptized (though for wrong reasons), I went to a Youth Conference, where by God's grace I repented of my sins and placed my trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord and received His forgiveness. In 1990, I left Kitwe to do senior secondary schooling in Livingstone.

Unfortunately, I had no one to help or disciple me as a new convert. This led to backsliding and living a double-standard life.

Thanks be to God, in June 1992, God again opened my eyes graciously. With His help, I returned to Him wholeheartedly. I learned then that I cannot live a life of Christianity without totally relying upon God's grace and His love for me. When I comprehensively understood the true meaning of baptism, I was baptized by immersion in December 2001. I now live in dependence on divine grace to follow Christ and to serve Him forever in the fellowship of His Church as I eagerly wait for His second coming.

I studied church planting in 2001

in Mufulira. Having completed that course, I joined the Revival Christian Centre Church, where I served as an assistant pastor for the year 2002. The next year, I worked as a farm manager in Ndola. After receiving acceptance to study in South Africa in September 2003, I resigned

as farm manager and went to South Africa the following January. I spent the next ten years there, studying the Bible and studying for a master's degree in biblical studies and theology. I also served part-time with Mowbray Baptist Church in Cape Town, beginning in 2009.

## JOSHUA'S CALL TO MINISTRY

I sensed my calling after my second encounter with God in June 1992, as explained above. I had a strong desire to tell others of what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for me, like what Peter said in Acts: "For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." I used every opportunity to speak to my fellow pupils about Jesus Christ. Upon completion of my senior secondary school, I embarked on outreach and evangelism in my community in New Ndeke, Kitwe.

With God's help, we saw revival among the youths in our church, especially those belonging to the Youth Christian Fellowship. I worked with the Ndeke youth Christian fellowship for seven years, from 1993 to 2000.

It was in this group that I discovered my gifting in leadership, pastoral ministry, preaching, and teaching. I also found great delight in serving in the church in any other capacity I could. I preached in the church and at conferences, crusades, and camp meetings. As early as 1993, I had a great sense of calling for pastoral ministry. I wanted to go to Bible school right then, but my mother declined, as she believed I was still too young for ministry. As stated above,

I did not start my theological studies until 2001. I had to wait for God's timing for seven years.

I have enjoyed serving in the Christian ministry ever since I sensed the call in 1993. I have been convinced and persuaded that this is what God wants me to do, and I cannot do otherwise.

As soon as I first sensed my calling, I found it so amazing to note that many people (including my family members) confirmed this call in me. My mother and other people conferred a title of "pastor" on me before I even started pastoral ministry. Wherever I have gone and served in any capacity of Christian ministry, this calling has always been confirmed by my colleagues in ministry and by others. I strongly believe that none of this is about me; it is God's work in my life. All of it is because of His plan and purpose for my life. I agree with the Apostle Paul, who said, "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." I depend on the Lord Jesus Christ for present and future ministry, resting entirely on His divine grace for my spiritual walk and service in His Kingdom.

## NCHIMUNYA'S TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

My name is Nchimunya Nkholongo Lungu, and I was born and raised in a Christian family. My family and I attended a Baptist church in Bo-

tswana. As a Christian family, it was our practice to attend church every Sunday. My sisters and I attended Sunday school, and I enjoyed learn-

ing stories about the Bible and of Jesus Christ. When I turned twelve years old, a bully from my school began to attend church, and he was in the same Sunday school class as I was. To avoid the bully, I stopped attending church and Sunday school altogether.

When my mother noticed my lack of enthusiasm to attend church, she was worried and asked one of my Sunday school teachers to visit me and tell me about the gospel. My mum's friend asked me if I had received the Lord Jesus as my personal Savior. I didn't even know what that meant. I told her I would think about it, but I was not interested in attending church with a bully. Years passed by, and I always wondered what it meant to receive the Lord Jesus as Savior in my life.

While I was a teenager, my sister invited me to join her at a youth camp our church hosted in South Africa. I agreed to go with her, and I had an amazing time learning about Christ. On January 5, 2003, the pastor at the camp asked those who would like to receive Christ that night to come to the front. I realized at that moment that I was a sinner and that I had not given my life to Christ. I responded to the altar call, and the pastor led us in prayer to receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior.

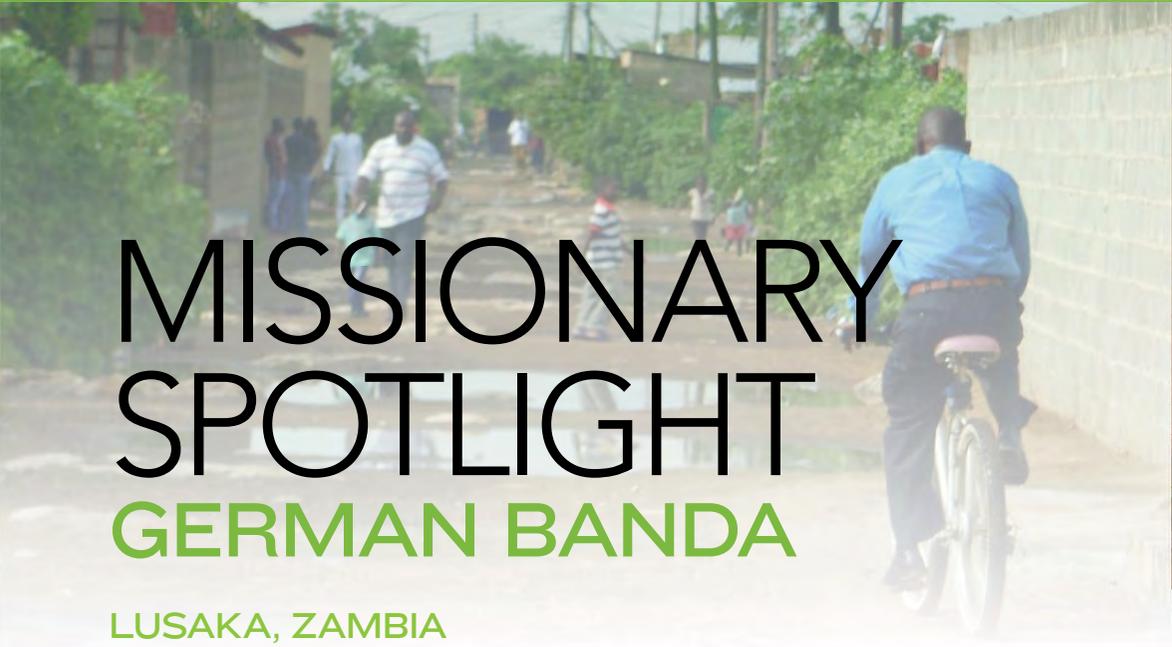
After that youth camp, my life was transformed, and I experienced the joy of accepting Jesus in my heart. I began to attend youth service at church, and the following year I began to attend baptism classes in obedience to God's Word and as a proclamation of my faith to the world. I was baptized on August 24, 2004. When I completed high school in 2005, I took a gap year and served in ministry at Youth for Christ Namibia. That is where my passion for ministry grew, and I dedicated my life to serving Christ and being a Christ-follower.

I then enrolled at a Bible college in Cape Town to get theological training as well as study psychol-

ogy and counseling in a Christian perspective. I believe that I have a calling to minister to others through my profession as a counselor. I met my husband Joshua Lungu when I worked at YMCA, and God blessed our union in marriage in 2015. I am pleased to partner with my husband in full-time ministry. It has long been my vision to serve the Lord in whatever capacity possible. ■



NCHIMUNYA NKHOLONGO LUNGU



# MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT GERMAN BANDA

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

*German Banda pastors John Laing Reformed Baptist Church in a poor and densely populated area of southern Lusaka, Zambia.*

## TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

I was brought up in a Christian home, where my parents took me to church every Sunday. I enjoyed going to church, but I did not understand its importance. What I did know, at least, was that almost everyone's tradition was to go to church on Sunday. I was involved in many wicked practices, however, which I did not realize were sinful at the time, because I was in darkness. I had heard of Jesus, God, angels, prophets, and pastors. However, I was unsure who Jesus and God were.

I heard the gospel preached at a funeral by Pastor Maxwell Nkhata. He preached from John 1:12-13 on the theme, "Who Is a Child of God?" From his preaching, I concluded that I was not a child of God, despite be-

ing a regular church attender. After the service, I followed the pastor to his home so that I could find out how to become a child of God. He told me to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Saviour. He read from Romans 3:23 and 1 John 2-9. I was then convinced that I was a sinner who deserved to pay for my sins. Thankfully, I was told that Christ's death on the cross saved me from eternal condemnation! On April 28, I repented of my sins and believed in Jesus Christ as my Saviour. From that time, my life has changed, all because of the grace of God. I now love the Lord and am able to worship Him. After completing a baptismal course, I was baptized by immersion.

## CALL TO MINISTRY

It is a mystery of God for a person to have a gift to serve Him; according to the doctrines of grace, no one can desire to serve the Lord if God has not placed that desire in him. Therefore, my calling

was decreed by the Lord Himself in eternity. It is by God's grace that the Holy Spirit gave me a gift to preach the gospel to the lost.

I sensed the call when I was still young in the faith, that I should serve



JOHN LAING-RBC

the Lord for the rest of my life. I read Isaiah 6:8 and 1 Samuel 3:10; these two passages convinced me that I was called to ministry. In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul explained that people are called to different ministries as the Holy Spirit enables them. In the Old Testament, people could hear God's voice,

but now He speaks to us through the inspired Scriptures. Therefore, the Scriptures are enough to convince me that I have been called. I will never use a different method to prove that God has truly called me, except through Scripture, from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

## RECENT UPDATE

Pastor Noah Mukubwe and I are both students of Lusaka Ministerial College (LMC). He is the pastor of one of the Pentecostal churches in the township of Matero. He is a very humble pastor, who really loves the Lord. He told me recently that, now that he has attended the college for the last two months, his church has already accused him of preaching like Baptist preachers! Because of this, he is worried that the church may decide to lay him aside as a pastor. Nevertheless, he has appreciated the theology he is getting from the college.

Pastor Mukubwe and I have become good friends. One reason I mention him is the opportunity that God has recently given him, which is preaching from one of our local radio stations here in Lusaka. This has helped him to preach across all of what we call the "compounds," where you find many churches con-

duct their services in vernacular (native) languages rather than English. After his thirty-minute sermon on the radio, he has another thirty-minute segment where people call in to ask various questions from his sermon and other doctrinal controversies. Out of this, they have begun planting churches throughout all the compounds, because people have appreciated his radio ministry. This has made me ask myself, "Where is a vernacular Reformed Baptist preacher on the radio in the compounds?"

Pray with me on this issue. I want to rise to my feet and preach to all the compounds in Lusaka through radio ministry. Perhaps this is why I was picked out from the village, not just to enjoy Lusaka, but to preach to all sinners and to refute the errors that are being imparted to the hearts and minds of the people here. So, please, pray with me strongly and faithfully! ■



# RAISED HANDS

BY JEFF S.

To be honest, I'm not sure what made me ask the question. It was at the end of the scheduled question-and-answer session, and there was an awkward pause—the well of questions had finally run dry. Maybe it was something mentioned in the previous question that brought it to my mind. I'm not sure. In any case, after I asked, in that humid room filled with more than eighty pastors, about twenty hands were raised. Some seemed to find it difficult, as if they were almost embarrassed to lift their hand; for as they did, their eyes naturally dropped toward the ground. Others stared directly at me without flinching, but it was as if they were not even looking at me at all; rather, it seemed the scenes of those memories were playing over and over before their eyes, as they relived those moments in their minds once more. Some of the leaders in the room took a quick look around and swiftly diverted their eyes forward once again, placing their elbows upon their knees, their hands coming together as in the spirit of prayer and deep meditation.

There was no laughter in the room; there were no smiles. Those who had not raised their hands

looked to me for some insight. But I had none. In fact, I had no words at all. It was as if the breath was taken from my body, and in those moments I could feel a fresh wave of sweat beginning to press its way forward on my head—and this time it was not because of the heat in the room. I felt like a small child whose hand had been caught in a cookie jar, and my inward nerves took control. I was overwhelmed with a multitude of emotions.

All I wanted to do at that point was remove myself from the room and from the sight of those men around me. My lips clenched together, my eyes dropped, and my breathing became shallow as I tried to calm my nerves. I didn't know what to say. It was a new experience for me. Sure, I knew the theology, and in times past I have discussed it openly with brothers back home. But in these moments, my tongue was as a dead man's, unable to move. **A doctrine discussed was now a reality revealed.** Gravity won the battle, and my head leaned forward toward the ground. From that position, I looked to my right at my translator, who had also dropped his head. All I could muster was a slight nod. I hoped feebly and desperately that he understood. He did. Raising

his head once again, he said, “Let’s pray and take a break.”

The prayer was in Telugu, so I had no idea what was being brought before the throne of God. All I knew was that I needed to get out of there immediately. I needed to escape. I needed a refuge before I burst. As soon as the prayer ended, I was out the door, down the hallway, up the stairs, and at my hotel door. The coolness of the air-conditioned room could not temper the heat stirring within my soul. I sat down on the corner of the bed, buried my head in my hands, and wept.

The question that seemingly slipped out of my mouth? **“How many of you have been physically assaulted for your faith in Christ?”** It was not a question I had planned to ask at the beginning of that day. Nevertheless, it was a question that would have a profound impact upon my soul and upon how I view my brothers in India. In those moments, these village pastors—many of whom struggle to understand some of the foundational truths of the Christian faith—now became giants of the Christian faith in my sight. “I am not worthy!” pierced my thoughts. “Who am I to lead these men in training?” Questions kept pounding in my head. “How can I come back for the next session? Should I not be the one learning from *them*? What man is adequate for such a task?”

It was that last question that caused the brakes of my out-of-control freight train of thought to be applied, bringing my swirling emotions to a halt. “Who is adequate for such a task?” It was a familiar question, one I had heard before,

one that the Apostle Paul himself asked in 2 Corinthians 2, where he explained to the church the reasons why his visit to them had been delayed but how through this delay the Lord was still producing a triumph in Christ. Though the original plans of man had been redirected, the Lord was still using Paul and his band of ministers to be a “fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life.” At this point, he has a grand realization of the position to which the Lord has called them; and he, seemingly overwhelmed at the thought of the task, asks the question, “Who is adequate for these things?” (2 Cor. 2:15-16).

It is not until the next chapter that this question is answered, “Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants...” (2 Cor. 3:5-6). It was this sobering thought that picked me up off that bed. No man is worthy. No man is adequate. *All that I have* and *all that they have* has been gifted by the same hand. **I need these brothers as much as they need me.** Their fragrance, in following in the footsteps of our Savior, in pressing forward in suffering, is the aroma of life to life. No, they do not have the understanding of a seminary graduate, nor the tongues of angels. But their walk, in my view now, makes a deeper impression on the road as they make their way to Zion. What a privilege it is to aid these men, these giants of the faith, these simple children of the King! ■



BY BINH B.

## SEEKING TO PLEASE GOD IN VIETNAM

*Binh grew up in a Buddhist home, hating and opposing the Christian gospel. God finally broke through in 1995; after finishing Bible school in 2000, Binh began to pastor a church in Vietnam.*

**T**hank God that He has given my family health and grace to serve Him during this past month. First of all, I thank God for spiritual fellowship with Him. I have to say that everyday fellowship with the Lord is a great privilege that God has given me in the work of serving Him. God has greatly used my time of sermon preparation to bless me personally. Particularly, last month when researching II Peter, the Lord taught me to develop Christian qualities in order not to be deceived by false prophets and false teachers and to remain firmly steadfast in God's ministry until the end. Peter wrote: "I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me" (2 Peter 1:13-14).

I continue to serve the local church here—every day I take time to pray for the Church, to study the Scriptures, and to prepare to preach God's Word to His people. These are very important responsibilities! I also visit families in our church that need prayer and encouragement in the Lord. I remain quite busy with these and many other pastoral activities.

We are grateful to God that we have been called to return to the true teachings of the Bible. I believe this is the greatest blessing God has given me and my family, that we are not being misled by the wiles of the wicked. There are many here who are in what is called "The Power Church," which has many false teachers spreading false doctrines and practices throughout Vietnam. This is a problem we encounter often, with many people wondering: "Why do the other churches have the power? They are free to dance, sing, pray in tongues; they listen to pleasant messages with no mention of the problem of sin. If their doctrine is wrong and contrary to the teachings of the Bible, why do the majority follow them?"

As we persevere in prayer and concentrate on the work of the Lord, He will help us to expand and develop His Church. We are extremely grateful to the Triune God for His great grace and supreme sovereignty in every aspect of our lives.

We are grateful to the leadership of HeartCry for giving attention and help to us, as fellow workers, that we might serve in Vietnam, our homeland. We are grateful for you as well, the reader, for praying and supporting us financially for the Lord's work in Vietnam. ■



BY LUIS R.

# ENCOURAGING REPORT FROM JAPAN

SHARING BEFORE BAPTISM

Praise the Lord for blessing us with the miracle of salvation! In the midst of our human weakness and unworthiness, our precious Lord continues being faithful to work, transforming hearts and giving life to His called ones.

Eight years ago I met a fifteen-year-old Peruvian boy who was sent by his immigrant parents to an American-Japanese church every Sunday. He sat for years by himself listening—understanding none of the English and very little of the Japanese. He told me that he was a Christian and that he was baptized at the church but that he couldn't really understand things well. Because we spoke Spanish, he started attending our church. I began to learn about his interests; so, about five years ago, I started to give him a guitar lesson and then have a Bible study with him every week. When he turned twenty years old, he told me that he understood the gospel and God; however, he said that he did not want to do God's will. Instead, he wanted to enjoy things that the Bible calls sin. He left our church, he left his home, and he lived a very dark and dangerous way of life. Dur-

ing the next years, he only called me sporadically asking advice when he was at his lowest points.

Some months ago, he appeared at the church on a Sunday morning and sat in the back and stayed during the message. Now twenty-three years old, he told me after the service that he wanted to talk. Once he began, he just broke down in tears and couldn't stop saying that the Lord is merciful. He said that he did not deserve forgiveness but that he was sorry. He wanted me to help him pray for God to forgive his sins; he knew that God was being especially patient with him, and he wanted to surrender his life and live for God. He started citing the verses that we used to study when he was sixteen years old in our bible studies and couldn't stop crying and praising God for His forgiveness.

He is now the only young man in our church; he has been growing in love for God and in faithfulness and has been studying the Bible, serving, and sharing the gospel. Last Sunday he told me that he wanted to be baptized because he really believes now and did not when he was young. Praise God for His patience with all of us and for His care, gentleness,

and immeasurable mercy! Our Lord reigns and is the Lord of our salvation! Please pray for this young man while we study and prepare him for baptism. All glory to God!

Being an international church that is visited by people from many countries who profess faith in Christ and have varying backgrounds and foundations, we wanted to go back to the basics for a month, so we recently focused on studying that there is only one true God and the warnings against the sin of idolatry. We have had many reactions from the waves of guests who are becoming regular attenders. The fruit is that some families have started bible studies concerning the person of God. We have others who are struggling with syncretism—participation in cultural visits to Buddhist and Shinto temples fit perfectly somehow in their Christianity. Now that we have considered in depth the clear teaching of the Bible, please pray for these new attenders, many of whom are now focusing on God and not just on His gifts, on the Creator and not just on His creation. Pray also for the new guests to repent of their syncretistic practices, recognizing that Buddhism and Shintoism cannot bring any benefit to the Christian gospel.

Praise God for His favor in our homeless ministry “Iesu Sama Kara.” Since we started providing meals, drinks, clothes, and heating pads, we have seen a growing receptiveness, despite some initial hesitance due to our being foreigners. Our last monthly visit was especially a blessing, because after we finished giving out the gifts, one homeless elderly man came almost running towards us saying, “I am homeless too.” Praise God we had one more set of meals and warming pads for him. Please pray for them, because most of the homeless are elderly, and now it is very cold for these people, who are living in cardboard boxes outside. Also pray for the relationships that we are trying to build with them so that the gospel

can be preached.

The Bible is clear about the order of how we should distribute and arrange our giving and service towards others. We need to start serving and providing for our own brothers and sisters in Christ first. Matthew 25 tells us about God welcoming to heaven some because they supported and cared for “His little ones.” We want to please God more in our giving as a church. Here in Japan, outside of our church, we couldn’t find Christians in need or poverty; this is why we are supporting the homeless as an outreach of love. We are praying God leads us to support other brothers in Christ that are living in poverty and need. Please pray that God would lead us soon to help brothers and sisters in the faith. “So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).

Please pray for our church to continue to be focused on Christ and on our mission of preaching the gospel to all men everywhere. We want neither our cultural backgrounds nor their established traditions to pressure or change the firm and biblical foundations on which our church stands. All glory to God!

Please pray also for an American brother and his family, who just had their fifth child. Last week, he was informed that he will be deployed again abroad for seven months. (We have been ministering to and supporting American military families for the last twelve years.) It is a very hard situation, emotionally and spiritually, for the family that is left behind. It is also very difficult for the man who will have to face many challenges while living far away from his family in a hostile, tense, foreign, and dangerous place. It is very common to hear about such tragedies as suicide and divorce in the American military base next to us. Please pray that God would intervene with His hope.

Thank you always for your prayers and support! All glory to God! ■

# A LIVING SACRIFICE NEPAL

BY SARVAJIT G.



Warm greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the land of Nepal. By God's grace, my family and I are doing well. My whole family has suffered a couple of weeks physically, but God gave us mercy, and we are now healed. His grace is sufficient for us. Let me share how God has used us the last couple of months for His gospel work.

God has called me to teach and preach. I have been teaching and preaching three times each week. I have been teaching from the Westminster Shorter Catechism at the Saturday weekly meeting in my local church. We have been studying this material since 2014 and have finally come to the end. Q/A 1-38 explains what the Bible teaches us to believe about God, man, and salvation. Q/A 39-107 summarizes the Bible's teaching about how we are to obey God. These are very basic truths, but they are also very important doctrines concerning our Christian walk in obedience. We desire to glorify and enjoy Him forever. The goal of this teaching was to grow in personal and intimate knowledge of God and to learn how to walk in holiness. This brings forth real worship and an aroma that pleases our heavenly Father. The bride of Christ was very much blessed and has grown in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ through this series. Now I have started preaching from

the book of Romans, which is a very doctrinal book. The very heart of the gospel is found in this book. My sincere prayer: let the saints not merely know the whole idea about this book, but may this series of preaching help them live how Christ wants them to live; as a holy, living sacrifice unto God (Rom 12:1-2).

Also on Saturdays, I teach the youth. We are continuing to work through Paul Washer's workbook, *The One True God*. We have been learning from this book for more than a year. We have studied many attributes. A couple of weeks ago, we finished Chapter 11: "God Is Creator and Sustainer." It was wonderful to meditate on the truth that every breath we take comes from Him. Everything depends on Him. Now, we have started on Chapter 12: "God Is Lord over All." God is immeasurable and incomprehensible. This is very hard to understand with our limited mind; nevertheless, as children of God, we ought to know God from His written Word as He has revealed Himself. Eternal life is to know the true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent (John 17:3). The Lord has been working among the youth group, by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the teaching of the living and active Word. May the Lord cause someone to be born again by the imperishable seed which is the gospel (1 Peter 1:23).

A new fellowship in Kapilvastu Province has been meeting for nine

months now. I am thankful to the Lord that He has given me an opportunity to serve among these new needy souls, as they desperately need healing. God has given them a hunger for the gospel, and He has been healing this small group of people through preaching and teaching. I have lately been teaching on the theme, "Who is God?" May the Lord encounter them through His living and active Word, and may the work of the Holy Spirit mold them and make them more like Jesus Christ. I am thankful to the Lord for this opportunity. I am encouraged by His people. The more we know Him, the more we can serve Him biblically.

Apart from this, I am also able to do personal evangelism. God has given me an opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus Christ to a group of Hindu people who have been living in the middle of the jungle. They have a Hindu temple, and many go there to pray and get a blessing from a Hindu god. When they inquired about us, I told them that we believe in the one true God and that we are Christians. Then the Hindu Guru (Pandit) started telling us about the Hindu god and his works-based salvation. I was able to share with them who God is, who man is, who Christ is, and how they should respond to this information. I proclaimed that God is the Creator—perfect in holiness, righteousness, justice, love, and kindness. I told them about man's deepest problem (bondage to sin). Then I spoke about Christ being man's only hope, as He was a perfect lamb, a perfect sacrifice, and

the perfect Mediator between God and men. Then I told them to repent and believe in the gospel, explaining that if one repents and believes he would inherit eternal life, but that if he doesn't repent and believe in the gospel there is a judgment of God and an eternal punishment—hell. As I was proclaiming these things, the Hindu group was listening very seriously. It is my sincere prayer that the Lord would cause someone to be born again as His Word is preached.

The Lord has also given me a burden to minister more specifically to our elders. As I considered how our men can grow biblically, I realized they were in need of more training. Another way that our elders can be helped is by solid biblical materials. Nepal is one of the poorest theological countries in the world. The majority of Evangelical churches are preaching a very weak and false gospel (the health and wealth gospel). We need more solid materials, which will help us to equip men for His gospel work. Recently, we have received the Nepali version of a solid book, *Living by the Book* by William D. Hendricks and Howard G. Hendricks. This book is about hermeneutics (the study of interpretation), so it has encouraged us to study His Word better. Our elders are blessed by this book and continue to read it. We have also received a Bible dictionary and a concordance, which are very helpful tools. We are looking forward to having a series books from 9Marks in Nepali as well—



*Expositional Preaching* should be available soon and should prove to be a tremendous blessing to us. We need more reformed publications here in Nepal. I encourage you fellow brethren to pray that God supplies every need for the advancement of His kingdom here in Nepal!

This coming week, Brother Dul and I are going to have a training conference on how to prepare expository sermons. We will spend our time together sharing basic biblical principles about how to interpret

the Bible, and we will consider some helpful suggestions on sermon delivery. We also plan to have a workshop. Please pray for us, that we can help these men be blessed and equipped.

We appreciate your prayers and your financial support and the solid literature that has been made available, as we minister together with one mind and one heart—for the good of His people, for the advancement of His kingdom, and for the glory of God alone! ■

# MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

## YESUDAS Y.

### SOUTH INDIA

*Yesudas is the pastor of a church plant in a small village in the southern region of India, and he also travels weekly to teach and conduct prayer services in a church plant thirty miles away.*

## TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

I was born into a family that had some Christian influence, since my mother was a believer; but it was also difficult, because my father was not a Christian. From a very early age, I used to regularly attend a local Baptist church, and I assumed that by attending this church, I was automatically made a Christian. This is the way that most people in my village viewed the Christian faith. It was just assumed that good people go to church and that bad people do not.

However, as the Lord worked in my heart, I began to see that my per-

spective on Christianity was not correct. I came to understand that simply going to church does not make one a Christian, and I understood that one can only be a Christian if he is born again. Apart from being made a new creation, no one can go to heaven. One Sunday in 1994, as I listened to the preaching of the Word, the gospel became very clear to me. The Lord moved in my heart during the message, and I became convicted of my sins. I confessed my sins to the Lord and asked Him to forgive me, and I trusted in Jesus as my Savior.

## CALL TO MINISTRY

After my conversion, through the study of the Word of God, the Lord began to show me that I was called to serve Him in ministry. As I was reading Luke 4:18, the Lord gave me a burden to preach His gospel to many people. Soon after He had given me this conviction, the Lord opened a door for me to begin studying at the Baptist Theological Seminary in southern India. I studied there for two years and received a certificate in theological studies.

When I finished at the seminary, I was sent to work at a church in a small village. Soon, there arose the need for me to also preach in another village about thirty miles away. Thankfully, the Lord has provided a motorbike, which I am able to use to travel between the two villages. I am now working in both of these churches, and the brothers and sisters are growing through the fellowship, the preaching of the Word, and the prayer services that we conduct in the churches.

## RECENT UPDATE

Greetings to you all in the matchless name of our Lord Jesus. I am glad to report about what God has done in the ministry of our village.

I give thanks to the Lord, who enables me to guard His Church; and I thank you all who are praying and supporting me in His work. God has helped me to reach out to another nearby village with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in 2017. This village is situated at the border of a forest. Due to the lack of transport facilities, no one had reached this village with the gospel of Jesus until now. God has placed the burden in my heart to spend some time in this village. So, after praying, we went there and did street evangelism, which brought a lot of opposition from the local people. In this village, all are tribal people and idol worshipers. No one came to receive the word at first, but slowly they started to come and hear about Jesus while we preached. Now, as they hear and receive the gospel in their ears, it seems to be making an impact in their hearts. It even seems now that a few people are standing for the Lord.

I want also to share about a

brother named Yali, who troubled us very much for a while. He was an opponent in the beginning and bothered us a lot. One day, however, while the evangelism camp was happening, a brother came to us and asked if we would pray for Yali, as he was suffering from sickness. So we visited him after the service. He was in bed and was not able to rise. We took advantage of the opportunity to share Jesus, and then we prayed for him. In the following week, I went to see him at his home again, but I heard that he had been hospitalized. So we went to the hospital the next day and shared with him once again the reality of the gospel, the purpose behind Christ's coming to earth, and the consequences of not believing in Him as Lord. Afterwards, we prayed. We noticed tears in his eyes while we prayed. Finally, he asked me, "Can Jesus forgive me?" I told him that He could. He desired to receive Jesus, and has now made a confession of faith. Please pray for him, the rest of his family, and the rest of the village! ■

## ADVANCING THROUGH ADVERSITY IN UKRAINE

BY ILIE HLUSCAC

*Ilie pastors a church in Rosa Stanca that has had an impact in the suburbs of Cernauti. He is also an itinerant preacher among Ukrainian, Russian, and Romanian churches in Ukraine and travels each year to visit three churches he planted in the area of Ulan-Ude, Siberia, Russia. Ilie and his wife have three children. Ilie has related to us that their church was plagued by the flu this winter. However, he was able to adjust his ministry in such a way that he maintained the pace of his service. He reports, "Eighty percent of our church members had the flu in December, so I had to adjust my plans. Still, through God's mercy, I managed to maintain balance. My family and I have avoided the flu this year."*

Two years ago, a group of nearly twenty refugees came to Chernovtsy from the church in Pervomaisk. They came from a church with three hundred and fifty members. Their church building was burned by the Russian Orthodox fundamentalists, and they had to flee, leaving everything behind. They were sheltered for a year in the Romanian Bible Center in Chernovtsy. Then they decided to go to Ternopol, where they planted a church in a neighborhood where there had been no Baptist church. They focused on reaching out to street children and young people from difficult families. We decided to visit them in order to encourage them in ministry and propose a long-term partnership. We wanted to leave on November 27, but our driver got sick with the flu, so we had to postpone the trip. Then almost all the members of our group got sick. But we finally managed to take the trip on December 11. We also met another group in Ternopol that had come from Jitomir. The Lord brought all of us to-

gether to strengthen each other in the faith and to praise His name. I gladly preached the Word of God there. We are thankful to the Lord for using us for His glory. In the evening, we had fellowship in the home of the church's pastor, who is also a refugee.

Another evangelistic opportunity arose when we had to get approval for heating the church building. We need to get this approval every year; and it takes a lot of time, money, and patience to get it—we had to get eighteen signatures from eighteen different offices! During my visit to the first office, the Lord kept me from getting angry for all the lost time and instead led me to preach the gospel. When I first got there, a man started asking me all kinds of questions about the Bible and about faith. I talked to him for about an hour. So I understood that the Lord was wanting me to use these opportunities, and I preached the gospel in almost all of the eighteen offices! May the Lord open their eyes! Please pray for those people! ■

# MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

## XHEVAT

KOSOVO

### TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION

My family background is Muslim. As a child, I began to go to the Muslim mosque in my village because my family and my friends were going there. I learned to recite some of the Muslim prayers, but I was not really a dedicated Muslim. At the age of twelve, some of my friends from the village started to go to a church in town. I began to go with them, just to see what they were doing. When I went there, I saw a lot of young kids doing different activities, and I wanted to keep attending so that I could have a good time with them. In addition to these fun things, we also had some meetings with a missionary, who was leading Bible studies.

Even though I did not understand a lot about Christianity and was not a believer yet, people started to call me a Christian because I was going to church. I was not bothered by it—I actually liked being called a Christian. I began to identify myself as a Christian and really wanted to believe in Christ as my Lord and Savior; but I had a hard time understanding how Jesus, as a man, could also be God. However, I did not ask anybody to explain that to me. I had many discussions with my brother about this, because in Islam they only believe Christ to be a prophet. As I was struggling to understand this, I began to believe

more of what my Muslim brother was saying—especially when I read in the Bible that Jesus Himself said, “I am sent by God.”

Because of this, I did not go to any church meetings for a time; I thought that Christians were wrong about Jesus. Then one day the pastor of the church came to my village and invited me to come to church for a youth program that lasted a month. After this program was over, I continued going to church again. I also began to read the Gospel of John. Still, in my view, Jesus was just a prophet and nothing more.

Then I read John 8:58, where Jesus said, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” This statement made me think. How could Jesus, a prophet, exist before Abraham, who lived long before Jesus? This began to change my thinking about Christ. Then, in John 14, Philip said to Jesus, “Show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” And Jesus answered, “If you have seen Me you have seen the Father.” This convinced me that Jesus was more than a prophet—He was God in the flesh. I believed that. I asked the missionary to come and show us all the verses in the Bible that talk about Jesus being God, and he did. So we understood who Jesus really was.

Then I began to think about my sin. How could I be forgiven before

God? As a Muslim, I had believed that God is merciful, and if we try to live a righteous life and are good at it, then we might be forgiven. But the Bible was saying that the wages of sin is death. So I understood that if my sin was to be forgiven, somebody has to die for it. Then I began to think about the things that I had heard earlier about Jesus dying on the cross. I finally understood that the reason He died was to be an offering for sin, to pay for sin. This is

when I repented and began to believe the gospel; and it did not matter to me what my family thought about me changing my faith, even though it was not something that they liked or appreciated.

I began to learn more about the justice of God, how He cannot forgive the sinner unless His righteousness is fulfilled. I learned that it was Christ who did just that. It now made sense to me why Christ is the only way to salvation.

## CALL TO MINISTRY

As I understood that Christ is the only Savior for the world, I began to feel a burden for my family and my friends. I wanted them to know Christ and be saved. As a young believer, when one of the guys from the church was doing a Bible study with us in a field in my village, I was thinking to myself, *When can I be doing what he is doing, leading others to Christ? When can I start discipling other people?*

Two years ago, I finally had the privilege of leading a Bible study with some young people in that very same place. It was a great thing for me. It was there that I understood

that what I would like to do with my life is preach the gospel. I see a great need for the gospel to be preached in the villages around us and for churches to be planted, and I see a need for helping the church with clear teaching of the Scriptures. I feel like I have a calling to do that.

But, most of all, I have a passion to see others come to Christ and be saved. I want people to worship Christ, who alone deserves to be worshiped. I love Christ, and I want Him to be praised by Kosovars. I also love people, and I want them to be saved from hell.

## RECENT UPDATE

The church has been doing well. We are continuing all our regular meetings during the week. In September, we started to meet with some people in my village, and we are trying to start a Bible study there. We are praying that God would provide a place for us to meet.

God has really blessed our children's meeting in our church; we have many kids coming. We sing, pray, and share the gospel with them.

We have also visited a very poor family in another village about twenty kilometers away. There is only the

mom and two girls, whose dad died in war. The mom was very sick, so we took her to the hospital and paid for her medication. We also prayed with her. They are not believers, but we pray that God will open their hearts to the gospel.

In the middle of September, I started to attend the Southeastern Europe Theological Seminary, which is part of The Master's Academy International (TMAI). I am really enjoying it. We are learning Greek and reading a book on hermeneutics and also translating different passages of Scripture from Greek into Albanian.

At the end of September, we sent three girls from our church to a small Bible school in Albania, where they will spend time studying the Word and focusing on their relationship with Christ. This is a six-month term, and they will be back in April to help in the church.

We have also had some evangelistic opportunities that I want to mention. On Friday evenings, we have an hour-long prayer meeting. After the meeting, some of us usually walk down to the park to share the gospel with people. There are typically a number of high school students in the park at this time, as they are waiting for the buses to get home. We did this during September and October, and we had some good fruit come of it. Now that the weather is cold, people do not hang around the park very much, so we don't get out as often as we do during the warmer months.

In the beginning of October, I went to get a haircut, and as I was waiting, another customer asked me what I do for a living. That started a conversation about the gospel which lasted over half an hour! He seemed interested in the gospel and really liked the conversation that we

had. We plan to meet with him again sometime.

I have just recently had a good talk with my family about the gospel. I live with my parents, my older brother, and my younger sister. My sister seems to be somewhat open to the gospel, while the others don't want anything to do with it. My new support from HeartCry has initiated many conversations with my family and with others.

The village where I live is about seven kilometers away from the town where our church is located. There are some young people in my village who have made a profession of faith in the past and have been in the church sometimes; but due to their jobs and family persecution, they can't come to church. My desire is to meet with them in our village to read the Bible and pray together. I have already done so with one person recently; he says he wants to come to church, but his dad won't even allow him to talk to them about the gospel. Although we have not seen any conversions, some have promised us that they would come to the church meetings, though they have yet to show up. ■

XHEVAT



KOSOVO



Iglesia  
Familia  
de la  
Gracia

# A DRAMATIC CONVERSION ARGENTINA

BY NICOLAS SERRANO

It appears we have another case of a conversion among us: a young Brazilian man who is in Rosario studying medicine. He came to our church as a result of the personal evangelism of one of our members. He is a professing Evangelical, the son of a former pastor, who believed at least to a degree the historical gospel and the basic doctrines of the Reformation and sovereign grace. After a little while, it became clear to us that he was not really born again. Because of this, I began to engage him directly, and we started to study the gospel in a systematic way.

After about a month, while we were together at a cafe, I explained to him again about the doctrines of regeneration and the security of the believer in the most practical and concise way that I knew how. At this point, he confessed that he did not love Christ. In fact, he did this in an undeniable way, with many practical examples to illustrate his lack of fear of God, his love for the world, and his hypocrisy toward us. I confronted him with the most terrifying truths that I could use at that moment. Then I talked with him in the most

tender way possible about the love of God in Christ. He broke down and sobbed right in front of the people in the cafe, exclaiming that he did not want to be an enemy of Christ and that he did not want to perish in hell or continue to be a hypocrite (I did not know what to do about all of the people around us!). Finally, I told him there was nothing else I could do for him and that he should seek God until he found Him. Then we left one another.

He left our meeting in tears, and I went to a meeting with a group of people I was discipling. Very late that night, I began to receive voice-mail messages from him. Altogether, these messages added up to about thirty minutes of audio. He had not gone home after our meeting at 5:30 PM. Rather, he had gone to a large park, and he was still there at 11:00 PM. The following is a summary of what he shared with me.

He spent several hours sitting on a bench staring into nowhere, without being able to think or knowing what to do. Then he came under strong conviction of sin and was “carried” to the cross. He understood the truths

of both the wrath and the love of God in a way he never had before. Then he again broke out into sobbing and poured out his heart before God as he sought reconciliation. He spoke with a rapid tone (on the voicemails he left me), and he told me dozens of times, I believe, with great conviction, "I am going to follow Christ! I am going to follow Christ!" He told me that day (and since then) some

very experiential and specific things that happened to him (things which accompany regeneration), such that I have no reason to doubt the genuineness of his conversion.

Currently, he is growing in Christ and is preaching to many of his religious but unconverted friends. He is about to move in with some of the other single men of our church, who want to help him follow Christ.

# MISSIONARY SPOTLIGHT

## JOSE LUIS SIANCAS

SULLANA, 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 different sections of the theological education by extension program in several different locations.*

### TESTIMONY OF CONVERSION AND CALL TO MINISTRY

I was born into a Christian home, and from a very young age I was involved in all of the activities in our church. I knew about God, sin, and some other things from the Bible; but I did not have any conviction of sin or any desire to repent and believe the gospel. When I began high school, I started to imitate the behavior of my friends. Without my parents or church knowing about it, I started using foul language, getting into fights, and participating in other sinful things. I lived an empty and meaningless life.

One afternoon, I was reading a Bible as I stood by a window at my house. I began to see the reality that

I was lost. I was reading texts that my parents and my Sunday school teachers taught me about sin and how to be saved. It was at that time that I prayed and asked God to forgive me. I began to cry, because I realized what I was at that time: a rebel, someone who had lived as a hypocrite and had pretended to be a believer. I was grieved by my sin and by the fact that I had offended God. I understood the reality of my situation without God, but I was also able to see His love (in John 3:16) demonstrated toward me in the death of Christ. It was then that I asked God to save me by His grace and mercy, and He did!

Since that time, my relationship with God has been like that which a son has with his father. He is my Father, and I enjoy spending time with Him. During my second year of high school, I began to share the gospel with the same students that had seen me behaving before like a child of the devil.

I now have a hunger for the Word of God, and I am zealous for sound doctrine. My aim in life is to proclaim the Word of God, being obedient to the Great Commission.

After I was saved, I became very

involved in evangelism through our local church. Then, without really thinking too much about it, it seemed right for me to get prepared for the ministry. So, I began to study in seminary. When I finished seminary, my church sent me to Tumbes (in northern Peru) to begin a new work. I served there for about one year doing evangelism, helping with a Bible institute, and training others. After that year, I returned to Mallaritos (just outside of Sullana) to help as a co-pastor of the church there.

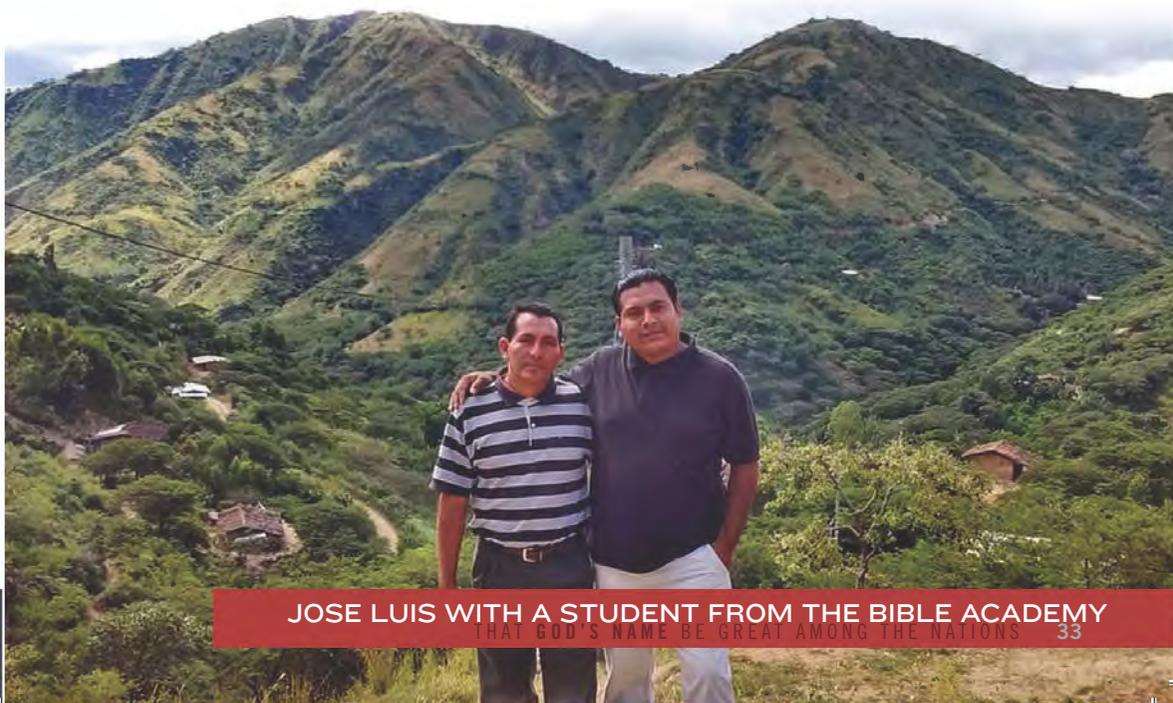
## RECENT UPDATE

This month, I have been visiting people who, in one way or another, have shown an interest in the gospel. God has led me to these people in need and in this way has answered one of my most fervent prayers. For the love of His name, I have presented the gospel to each one of them.

One visit that stands out was my visit with a man named Fermain. I shared previously about his terrible fall and how he had survived, though his health is still somewhat delicate. Nevertheless, my primary concern was to see that his profession of faith was genuine. I visited him twice, and we talked extensively about the gospel. Since he still is

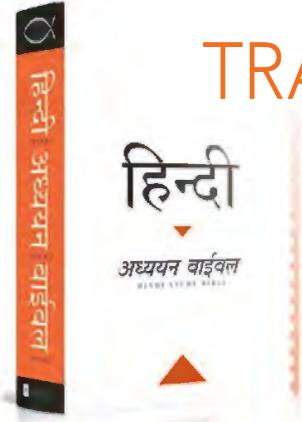
barely able to move, I have taken him some audio Bible studies. After I visited him, Fermain was taken to Trujillo to continue his recovery. Our church is praying for a quick recovery and that he will be a witness of the grace of God to his family.

Another memorable visit was to a man named Mr. Gutierrez. He is related to a member of our church. Our visit changed his perspective about right and wrong. We looked together at the Law in Exodus 20. He was amazed when he became aware of his own sin. Then I presented the gospel to him. This led to our beginning a Bible study together. I praise God for the way he is working in his life. ■



JOSE LUIS WITH A STUDENT FROM THE BIBLE ACADEMY

# ASIA TRANSLATION PROJECT TIMELINE



ESV Hindi Study Bible contract signed March 2017  
Estimated completion date: 2020

## ▲ 2018-2020

○ *Gospel Assurance and Warnings*  
Translated and printed – Hindi (March 2017)

○ *Justification and Regeneration* by Charles Leiter  
Translated and printed – Hindi (March 2017)

## ▲ 2017

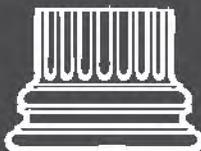
○ *The Gospel Call and True Conversion*  
Translated and printed – Hindi (November 2016)

Second Gospel booklet  
Translated and printed – Telugu (July 2016)

○ *Gospel Power and Message*  
Translated and printed – Hindi (April 2016)

*Gospel* booklet in Telugu  
Republished 1,000 more copies (March 2016)

## ▲ 2016



# BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



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Knowing the Living God - AVAILABLE NOW

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Understanding the Discipline of Fasting - COMING SOON

Studying the Holy Scriptures - COMING SOON

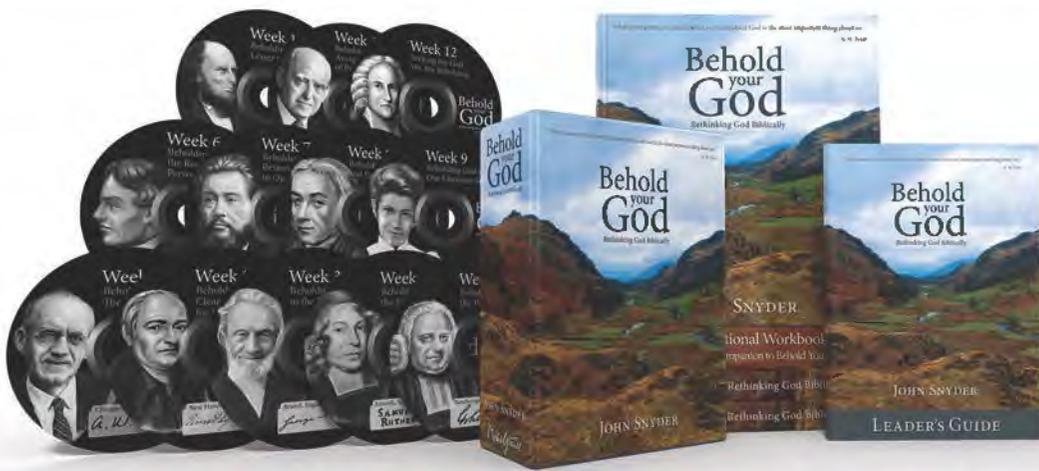
Download the first chapter of Book One, *Knowing the Living God*, for free here:

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“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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