

HeartCry

MAGAZINE



What Does the Church in Africa *Need?*

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

UPDATES FROM

NAMIBIA, GERMANY, NEPAL, RUSSIA, PERU, VIETNAM, AND MORE

GREETINGS

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of the *HeartCry Magazine*. We hope and pray that you are encouraged as you read two articles (one missiological and one devotional) from African missionaries as well as mission updates from across the globe. We've also included a "Mission Snapshots" section in this edition to try to give a small glimpse into the daily lives of several of our supported missionaries.

Additionally, we'd like to bring your attention to a new HeartCry publication, a booklet entitled *Mission & Methodology*. Longtime *HeartCry Magazine* subscribers may recall that we have previously published Mission & Methodology special editions from time to time; however, we thought it would be helpful to produce a more lasting version. *Mission & Methodology* is a comprehensive overview of the ministry of HeartCry Missionary Society—our history, our convictions, or strategy, and more. The booklet was written with

two primary goals in mind: (1) to explain the purpose and vision of our ministry for the sake of clarity and openness; and (2) to communicate truth and encouragement to believers and churches regarding global missions today. If you haven't yet received *Mission & Methodology* and are interested in obtaining a free copy, you can request one via the "Contact Us" page on our website (heartcrymissionary.com/contact-us).

We are tremendously grateful for your every prayer on our behalf. As always, we hope that what you read in the pages of this magazine will help to inform that prayer and to spur you on to greater and greater service to the Lord.

In His love,
Forrest Hite
General Editor

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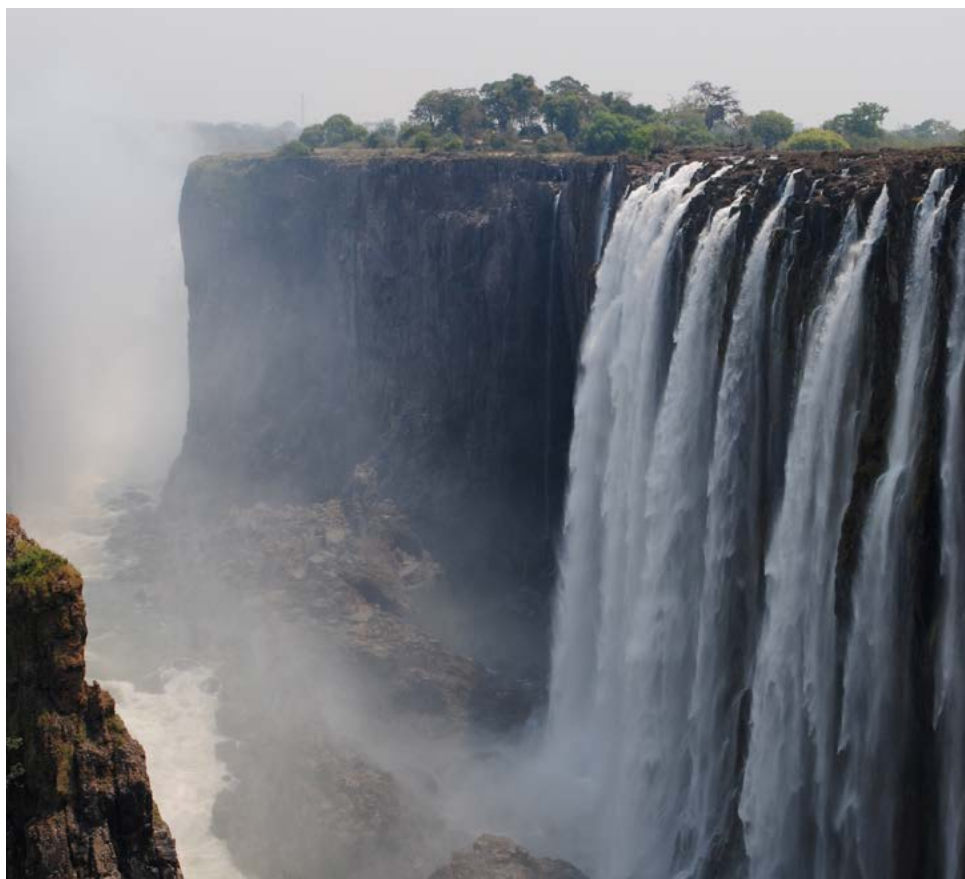
"They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand." - Romans 15:21

A large, leafless baobab tree stands prominently in a dry, open landscape. The tree's thick trunk and sprawling, bare branches dominate the upper half of the frame. At the base of the tree, a person is standing, providing a sense of scale. The ground is dry and dusty, and the background shows more sparse vegetation under a clear sky.

WHAT DOES THE CHURCH IN AFRICA NEED?

MALAMULO CHINDONGO | MALAWI

For centuries, the Western church has been working tirelessly to strengthen and address spiritual needs unique to the church in the Majority World. Over the last few decades, there has been a realization by many Western missionaries and mission agencies that the Majority World church has a leadership crisis. Most missionaries are convinced that this crisis is mostly due to a lack of theological training and resources among churches and pastors—which is indeed part of the problem. But it is not the only problem, nor even the primary one which the Church in the Majority World faces.



So what is the greatest problem facing churches in Africa and similar areas? ***Unconverted men and women in ministry.*** Particularly here in Africa, we do not just lack theological resources—we have a gospel crisis. Without addressing this gospel issue first, the African church will continue to go in circles, as it has been doing for decades, appointing unbelievers into leadership positions. Many factors have led to this practice, including the tendency among missionaries and local churches to seek to produce fast results. The temptation to rush and deliver results has probably been the main reason why the African church is filled with gospel-illiterate leaders. When missionaries are in a hurry to produce results, unbelieving local men and women end up in leadership positions.

How can the blind lead the blind? Most Western churches and training institutions are more concerned about theological famine (and we should be). But what about the salvation famine plaguing the church in Africa? What about the gospel famine that pervades our churches? Sixteenth-century Puritan pastor Richard Baxter captured a similar crisis in his day when he wrote: “Alas! it is the common danger and calamity of the Church, to have unregenerate and inexperienced pastors, and to have so many men become preachers before they are Christians; who are sanctified by dedication to the altar as the priests of God before they are sanctified by hearty dedication as the disciples of Christ; and so to worship an unknown God, and to preach an unknown Christ, to pray through

an unknown Spirit, to recommend a state of holiness and communion with God, and a glory and a happiness which are all unknown, and like to be unknown to them forever.”¹

Gospel-Focused Training

In many Bible training centers across the continent of Africa, immoral behavior characterizes its students. College administrations are continually having to deal with plagiarism, cheating during tests, polygamy, and other such sins. Such problems are matters of the heart, not just lack of good theology for pastoral ministry. Yet many missions agencies are more concerned

with knowledge. With the many problems the African church is facing, the last thing needed is local leaders who have much knowledge but little of Christ in their hearts.

This problem is also reflected in the courses and programs being used by Western-run institutions across Africa. Many young men attend these institutions to prepare for ministry simply because it is a job that will pay bills. Some of these young men will go a long way to lie about their testimony of faith in order to be accepted by the academy. We are thankful for those who come to the Lord during their years of training, but we must grieve for the Church at large when we think



with how many pastors they can graduate with certificates, diplomas, and degrees than they are with the quality of those very graduates.

Our pastors need more than pastoral skills; they need the gospel in their hearts!

The Western church should have the salvation of souls (including pastors) as its primary focus, not just filling minds

of the thousands who graduate and take up pulpits to preach a Christ they do not know. Western-led training centers tend to be strong on biblical interpretation, leadership skills, and preaching; but they are often weak when it comes to exposing students to the message of the gospel. Our programs must aim at convincing trainees of the gospel of Jesus Christ before laying a foundation for theological training.

¹Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, Chapter 1.

Biblically Qualified Leaders

If we are going to build healthy churches in places like Africa, we must address a double standard when it comes to leadership qualifications in the ministry. Somehow, it has been accepted by many that church leaders in the Majority World do not need to meet the same standards as church leaders elsewhere. But there is no such thing as a “third-world leadership standard.” There is only one standard for church leadership, for every time, place, tongue, and nation—the Bible’s standard. Only God has a right



to dictate such a standard! There is a massive difference between contextualization and watered-down ministry training and qualification. In some Western-run training centers across Africa, the men who graduate could not even make it through an internship within the same ministry back in the West. Some of these training centers have adopted a tailor-made standard for African men and another for their churchmen back home.

Many of the African pastors appointed to the ministry by churches, missionaries, and mission agencies seem only to

be required to “qualify” to serve their fellow nationals. But if one of these African pastors were ministering in the West, would the Western missionary or instructor who taught him take his own family to that church? If not, how has he deemed him qualified for a local African church? I understand that not every pastor is the right fit for every church for many other reasons—we need, of course, to consider issues of context, language, and some social aspects of ministry. But this is no excuse to give the Majority World church sub-standard pastoral training.

We must strive to produce church leaders who fulfill biblical qualifications, NOT tailor-made third-world leadership qualifications. Training centers should not compromise biblical qualifications for elders. What Paul writes to Timothy (I Timothy 3:1-7) is inarguably true, regardless of context. When the biblical standards for leaders are compromised to the point that sin is given a pass, this is not patience or compassion; it is a blatant replacement of God’s standards for ours. The church in Africa does not need watered-down qualifications for our church leadership. Our churches need biblically qualified elders—not perfect leaders, but works evidently in progress.

If the church in the Majority World is to be transformed, we must persuade pastors of their need for the gospel before their need for ministry skills. If the church in Africa is to make progress, we need more than gospel-preaching pastors—we need gospel-believing men in our pulpits.

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A photograph of several antelope, likely topi, running across a dry, grassy savanna under a clear sky. The animals are in the foreground, moving from left to right.

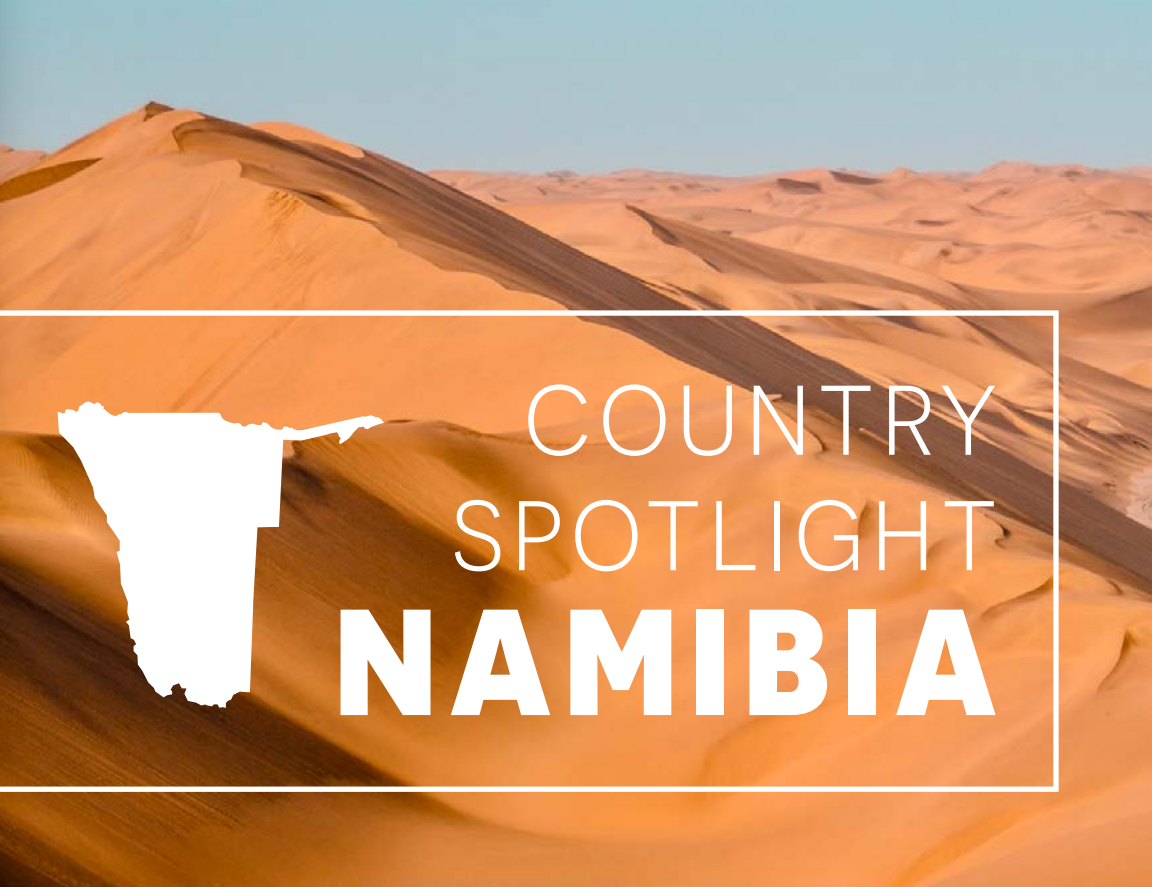
NAMIBIA

OUR NEWEST AFRICAN FRONTIER



HearthCry is pleased to announce the newest African nation where we are partnering with faithful gospel work. Namibia derives its name from the vast and beautiful Namib Desert, which makes Namibia one of the most arid and least densely populated nations in Sub-Saharan Africa. Eastside Baptist Church in the capital city of Windhoek is one of the oldest, most well-established Reformed Baptist churches in Namibia; they are sending Uaundja Karamata and his wife Christabel to Otjiwarongo, where Uaundja will become the first church planter they have sent into the mission field.

Uaundja graduated from Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary and completed a pastoral internship under Pastor Conrad Mbewe and Kabwata Baptist Church in Lusaka, Zambia. Uaundja is the first missionary pastor to be supported by HeartCry in Namibia, as Eastside Baptist Church sends him to start a church in Otjiwarongo, a small city around 160 miles north of Windhoek.



COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT **NAMIBIA**

BY JOACHIM REICK,
PASTOR OF EASTSIDE BAPTIST
CHURCH IN WINDHOEK

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN NAMIBIA

Namibia was a German colony between 1883 and 1915. Subsequently, it was ruled by South Africa until its independence on March 21, 1990.

The first missionaries to arrive in Namibia were Abraham and Christian Albrecht of the London Missionary Society (LMS). Coming from South Africa, they crossed the Orange River in 1806 and established a mission station at Warmbad, in the deep south of Namibia. This happened some thirty-five years before David Livingstone set foot on African soil in March 1841. In 1814, Johann Heinrich Schmelen established an LMS mission station

at Bethanien—a strategic base from which other mission stations were planted. Other early missionary endeavors stemmed from the Wesleyan Missionary Society as well as the Rhenish and Finnish Missionary Societies.

The early labors of German and Finnish Lutheran (and then Anglican) missionaries gave birth to large denominations. The work of Martin Rautanen (1845-1926), a Finnish missionary, was a great example of a faithful, Evangelical pastor. The work of his mission greatly contributed to the fact that Namibia today has a large Lutheran population—in fact, most people in Namibia would call themselves Christians. Patrick Johnstone,



co-author of *Operation World* says, “Namibia for long had the highest percentage of Christians for any country in Africa.”

The influence of European Liberal Theology has unfortunately eroded that spiritual heritage; true discipleship and holy living are now in short supply, while nominalism is widespread. There has been a noticeable turning away from Christianity and a lack of openness to the gospel.

NAMIBIA TODAY

The modern spiritual situation in Namibia has been influenced by four developments:

1. Mainline Protestant churches have mostly succumbed to theological liberalism. True Evangelicals in these churches are few.
2. Roman Catholicism has made significant contributions to hospitals, schools, and social action, but not to gospel preaching, personal evangelism, or true conversions.
3. The Dutch Reformed Church, in tandem with Afrikaner nationalism, once pursued the doctrine of "separate development" (apartheid) in its missionary activities and in its churches. This church's credibility in the gospel has been severely undermined as a result, although there are exceptions. Following the demise of apartheid, a number of Dutch Reformed missionaries are doing an excellent work in rural communities.
4. The Pentecostal/Charismatic movement largely (with exceptions) has produced many unruly and undisciplined splinter groups. Dreams, visions, and spurious prophecies have dominated their

proclamation, robbing the gospel of its true power. Namibia has struggled with the influx of so-called prophets and healers from Nigeria, Congo, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere. These enrich themselves at the expense of those Namibian people who appear to be gullible and are easily drawn to prosperity teaching. This has led the Namibian government to become very wary of the new sects and churches which are springing up everywhere.

The net effect of these four influences has amounted to one outcome: the authority and sufficiency of the Bible being undermined in each case. This has gone hand in hand with a lack of expository, Christ-centered preaching, along with a lack of emphasis on true repentance and discipleship.

EVANGELICALISM

Commitment to biblical preaching and the authority of Scripture has been in steep decline since the 1930s. Solid Evangelical denominations and churches are rare.

Since the 1960s, some denominations historically known as strongly committed to the Evangelical cause have commenced work in Namibia. Sadly, frequent missionary turnover and lack of perseverance, coupled with a lack of consistent teaching and incarnational living, have yielded poor discipleship practices and biblical living among Namibian Evangelicals. It is evident that many current Namibian Evangelical churches lack the marks of true biblical churches.

THE NEED FOR REFORMATION

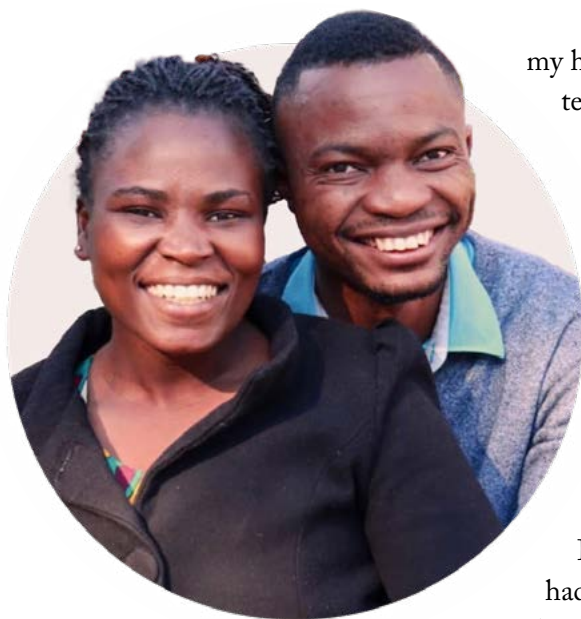
The Namibian church is in dire need of reformation. The principle of Sola Scriptura (“Scripture alone”) must find renewed conviction among us. Flowing from this is a dire need for a reform of the practices of the church.

A sound ecclesiology needs to take hold of our churches. This relates to biblical pastoral leadership, biblical church discipline, biblical expository preaching, biblical evangelism and missions, and so on.

We are thankful that there is a small but growing Reformation movement found across the nation. Pray that God would continue to raise up courageous leaders across the land!

Missionary Spotlight

UAUNDJA KARAMATA



Uaundja's Testimony

I came to know the Lord personally in the later stages of my high school years. I do not really remember the date, but I know it was somewhere between 2009 and 2010. I was raised in a Christian home, with good morals and Christian parents, so I always thought that I was a good Christian. But I never gave my life to Jesus, and for a long time I was a legalist. I always thought that my deeds—like saying the “sinner’s prayer,” raising

my hand in Sunday school when the teacher asked who is a Christian, or obeying my parents—meant that I was a Christian. My life continued like this until I started to realize the work of the Holy Spirit in my life. I remember that, for the first time ever, I started to be truly sorrowful about my sin; I repented from it and put my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I did not really understand what had happened to me at the time, but the Lord was busy transforming me. Despite the transformation, I struggled with assurance of salvation—I remember talking to many people about it because I was so bothered by it. I remember once being in my room, frustrated and crying out to God, asking if He had really saved me. This went on for a long time. Sometimes I would be very sure about my salvation (knowing that I had trusted the Lord Jesus and repented of my sins); but sometimes the doubt would come very heavily, especially when I had sinned.

When starting with a discipleship training group for youth leaders, I had to go through the discipleship manual by Pastor Conrad Mbewe. While preparing to lead the first topic on “Assurance of Salvation,” God used it in my life! It suddenly became evident to me that He had saved me. I began to understand clearly how God had transformed my life, and everything started to fall into place.

I saw that I loved the Lord and His people genuinely. My motivation for going to church had changed from a simple desire to please my mom to a desire to hear God’s Word and be with other believers. I remember the radical change in my hunger to read the Bible, to pray, and to serve the Lord. It is just amazing to consider that God the Holy Spirit was busy transforming my life inwardly. For me personally, Ephesians 2:8-10 is the passage that makes me greatly appreciate God’s saving work in my life.

Uaundja’s Call to Ministry

I first began to feel a call to ministry when I went to study at the University of Namibia in 2012. During that year, I served as a youth leader at church, and God used that to give me a passion for people.

I had so much love and concern for the youth members, I would send them a text message every Sunday evening asking how I could pray for them.

At the same time, God was also using campus ministry to give me a passion for ministry. As we were doing evangelism and discipleship and being mentored by campus coaches, I started having a conviction that this was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

In 2013, the Lord placed a burden upon my heart to preach the gospel on a full-time basis. He also gave me a burden for theological studies so I would be equipped for gospel min-



istry. Initially, I wanted to finish my university degree before advancing in theological studies. I remember negotiating with God and trying to convince Him that I could serve Him where I was at that point in my life, but God had greater plans. I began to speak to a mature brother in the Lord who also studied theology, and he encouraged me to go ahead and study for a bachelor’s degree in theology. I decided to accept the call. The next

challenge was to let my family know. I first spoke to my mother, and she graciously said that if God had called me she could not stop me. My dad, on the other hand, did not buy into the idea. I told him that I wanted to be a missionary and to study theology, but he said I should finish my studies at the University of Namibia. I went with my dad's idea in 2014, but I knew clearly that this was not where God wanted me to be.



So, I had to decide whether to obey God and study theology or my dad and continue my studies at the university. I remember attending a Saturday outreach trip with the youth ministry at church to a small village close to Windhoek. That weekend, it became very clear to me that this was what God wanted me to do. That Sunday evening, I told my dad that I would obey God over him. Monday morning, I went to our faculty officer and

resigned from the university. That day, I remember telling my friends from campus ministry that, even though I was confused, I had peace that surpassed all understanding. I knew that I had done exactly what the Lord wanted me to do.

About three months later, in July of 2014, I started my studies in theology at the Namibia Evangelical Theological Seminary (NETS), a conservative Evangelical seminary. By God's grace, I finished my studies in June of 2017. God has used my studies to help me understand Him better, to know the gospel, to build my character, and to equip me for ministry.

Christabel's Testimony

I was raised in a Christian home, and my parents were very committed believers. We had regular evening devotions and attended church every Sunday. I was generally a well-behaved girl—I did my best to obey my parents and other elders, I memorized my Bible verses, and I did what I thought was expected of me as a child coming from a pastor's home. But I was also a liar and a thief, among other things, stealing money from the house and sometimes even from friends at school. Deep down, I knew that stealing was wrong. I knew that God hated it, but I did it anyway. I was a captive to my sins.

I had thought about salvation many times before, but had never seriously considered giving my life to Jesus. I thought that I was young and probably had enough time to do it later in life. One day a friend from my Sunday school class confronted me about my

salvation, asking me if I was born again. I told him I was, but something about my answer did not convince him, and he kept insisting that I give my life to Jesus. I told him I would, but afterwards did nothing about it.

As time passed, attending church became a matter of simply going through the motions for me. I attended because there was no choice. When in church, I would entertain myself by filling my mind with imaginations and thoughts that had nothing to do with God. I did this Sunday after Sunday, year after year, until one Sunday when I was twelve years old.

It was January of 2006. A guest preacher had been invited to preach at our church that morning. I did not even care much to know his name at the time, and I do not recall much of his sermon—I was absent-minded and paid no attention to any of it—until something he said caught my attention.

He was preaching from the book of Philemon, and at a certain point he talked about death. He spoke about how death comes suddenly, not only to old people but also to children—like I was at the time. Having lost my mother as a young child, death was

something both familiar and frightening to me. The preacher explained that anyone who died without Jesus would end up in hell and that Jesus, the Giver of eternal life, was the only way of escape from eternal death.

The message went straight to my heart. I knew I had been living sinfully, as if I had never heard of Jesus before. My heart was troubled, and I knew I was guilty. After the sermon, the song leader encouraged anyone who needed more help on the subject of salvation to stay behind and talk to someone. I knew I should have done it. But I tried to push the feeling of guilt away, thinking it might pass. It did not.

That afternoon, after the service, I gave my life to the Lord. I confessed my sins and repented of them, and He saved me. After that, I began to experience more love for God and His Word. Attending church was no longer a matter of fulfilling a duty. Jesus was now my Savior and my Friend, and He continues to be so today. I was later baptized into the church membership of Bethel Baptist Church in Kabwe, Zambia, in May 2010.





FORGIVEN MUCH, LOVING MUCH

TOBIAS RIEMENSCHNEIDER | GERMANY

Beloved brothers and sisters, all the saints from the Frankfurt Church send you greetings. We thank our God for your prayers and support. It is my pleasure to give you an update on God's work here in Frankfurt. By God's grace and the gracious support of HeartCry, I have been privileged to serve full-time as a pastor alongside my fellow pastor and former HeartCry missionary, Peter Schild, since May of this year. Please pray that the Lord would have mercy on us, that we might serve Him faithfully for the edification of His Church as salt and light for our nation for the glory of His name.

Severe restrictions on church services have now been in place in Germany for over sixteen months. Even though the number of infections is currently decreasing significantly with the rising temperatures, and though the government has decided to ease some measures, there has been no letup for church services so far. This means that church services may officially still only be held with social distancing and masks and without congregational singing.

We published a statement a few months ago in which we evaluated the state measures concerning worship services from a biblical perspective



and called on Christians to be faithful, even if this means obeying God rather than men. Since then, we have received many emails from brothers and sisters from all over Germany, Austria, and Switzerland who have suffered greatly from the fact that all government restrictions are followed uncritically in their churches—and that they have not seen the faces of their brothers and sisters or sung praises to the Lord for such a long time now.

Please pray that the Lord would continue to protect our church from disruptions of our worship services by the state. Pray that Christians in Germany would be comforted and encouraged to be faithful to God's commandments. Pray also that the current crisis may soon come to an end so that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. We especially thank our God that He is building His Church and adding people even during this crisis.

A few days ago, we were able to baptize three brothers and one sister in

the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Due to the restrictions in place, we had to meet for this in secret early on a Saturday morning at a small lake. Thanks be to the Lord, we remained undisturbed. The next day, we were able to receive the four persons baptized, together with three other brothers and sisters, into church membership.

I would like to relate to you briefly the story of the sister we had the privilege of baptizing. She grew up in a nominally Christian family which unfortunately lived in great ungodliness. Her parents divorced on the grounds of adultery when she was seven years old; for many years after that, she suffered from her parents' constant changes of partners and many relocations, so that she went to six different schools within four years. To escape the bad conditions at home, she eventually took refuge in a life of fornication, parties, alcohol, drugs, and pills. Of course, all this did not help, and she plunged into deep depression and anxiety disorders, hurting herself and wanting to take her own life several times. The many



The changes we have seen in her—particularly her great willingness to serve others in humility—are evidence of a supernatural work of God’s grace.

She reminds me of the sinful woman of whom Jesus spoke in Luke 7:47: “Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much.”

scars that mark her body will remind her all her life of the distress and torment of sin from which the Lord has graciously saved her.

A year ago, the Lord brought her to our church. We talked to her and pleaded with her to leave her wicked boyfriend and her old life of sin behind and to walk the path of life. She confessed to us with tears that she wanted to do this—but she could not do it on her own, and so she did not at first come to church again. But the Lord did not let her go! He went after His lost sheep and brought her back to us, and we were allowed to witness how she was sanctified by God’s Word.

It pleased God not only to save her from deep depravity and darkness, to give her eternal life in His Son, and to add her to His blood-bought Church, but also to show her His kindness by allowing her to now be engaged to a beloved and faithful brother from our church and to look forward to her wedding. We praise the Lord our God for His great grace and goodness, which He gives us in His Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thank you again on behalf of the entire church for all your continued prayers and support. May the Lord bless and reward you abundantly!

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HARD TIMES, GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

SARVAJIT G. | NEPAL



Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As you all know, the world is suffering from the coronavirus, especially in India and Nepal. In this second wave, thousands of people have died in our region of the world, and there are many who continue to suffer. I have gone through many trials and sufferings myself during this time.

On April 25, our local government announced a lockdown. After the announcement, we were not able to meet for public worship—everything was closed. On April 29, I began to feel exhausted and gradually felt more and more physically weak. By May 2, I was

totally bedridden and struggling with body pain. On May 5, my COVID test result came back—positive. The next day, my wife—one-month pregnant at the time—and younger daughter also tested positive. For this reason, we were unable to go to my wife's scheduled pregnancy check-up.



In the midst of all this suffering, God is still God and is still merciful. Everything He allows is for the good of His people (Romans 8:28-29). This suffering was for my sanctification and for His glory. During the period of time that I was sick, the COVID death rate in India and Nepal was high. On social media, death reports were being broadcast constantly. As I lay on my bed, I thought often about death and the great eternal hope I have in Christ Jesus. I remembered that two weeks before the lockdown, in a small Bible study group, I proclaimed that the gospel is the great hope of our salvation. My statement was, “We should be ready to die.” This truth was a great encouragement for me in those moments. In Him alone is my great hope and the forgiveness of sin. God’s grace and peace comforted me during this time. He gave me boldness and strength during my suffering. Praise God! Many brothers and sisters were praying for me and my family; slowly, we recovered from COVID.



After getting negative COVID test results, I took my wife to the hospital for her baby checkup. After her ultrasound, we got a report that she had miscarried. It was very hard to hear the report at that moment—it was a rush of pain for my wife and me. This is her second miscarriage. Still, in all these suffering and difficulties, God is God, and He is a loving and merciful God. He allows us to go through all the trials and suffering for the good of His people and for His glory.

Shortly after this, my brother contracted COVID, which resulted in all his family members testing positive. My brother was seriously sick. My sister-in-law, who has suffered from



kidney failure for the past two years, had been going in twice a week for dialysis. Since everyone was infected, there was no one there to help her. It was very hard for all of us to know what to do in the moment. We prayed and waited for God to open the door for us to travel to help my brother's family. Because of the lockdown, it was very hard to make the seven-hour trip. I went to the Central District Office and submitted an application for travel, showing them all the documents. On June 2, I was able to travel. After I reached the hospital where my sister-in-law was admitted, we decided to take her back home for treatment. I had gone through experiences with COVID and was able to buy medicine for my brother, sister-in-law, and their two children to help fight the disease. Their health improved little by little, and they eventually started to eat more. My sister-in-law was supposed to go in for her kidney dialysis, but the government hospital was very packed with COVID patients. We took her to a private hospital at night, and she was able to receive the treatment she needed.

At that time, God gave me the opportunity to share the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ. I was able to speak with two of the nurses about God's wrath, man's deepest problem, and the hope found in Christ Jesus.

I challenged them with questions about death, which shocked them, and I was able to present to them the hope of the gospel. It was a wonderful privilege to share the Good News with them during these pandemic times, when so many here are fearful of death. Praise God for this opportunity! Please pray for these two nurses that God would open their hearts to trust in Him.

On June 6, I again took my sister-in-law to the government hospital for her kidney dialysis. I had another opportunity to share the gospel with a caregiver nurse, who listened intently, as well as one of my relatives who had been admitted to the hospital. At the hospital I saw many faces with sadness and mourning, eyes that were full of tears and pain. On that day, I saw five bodies of people who had died of



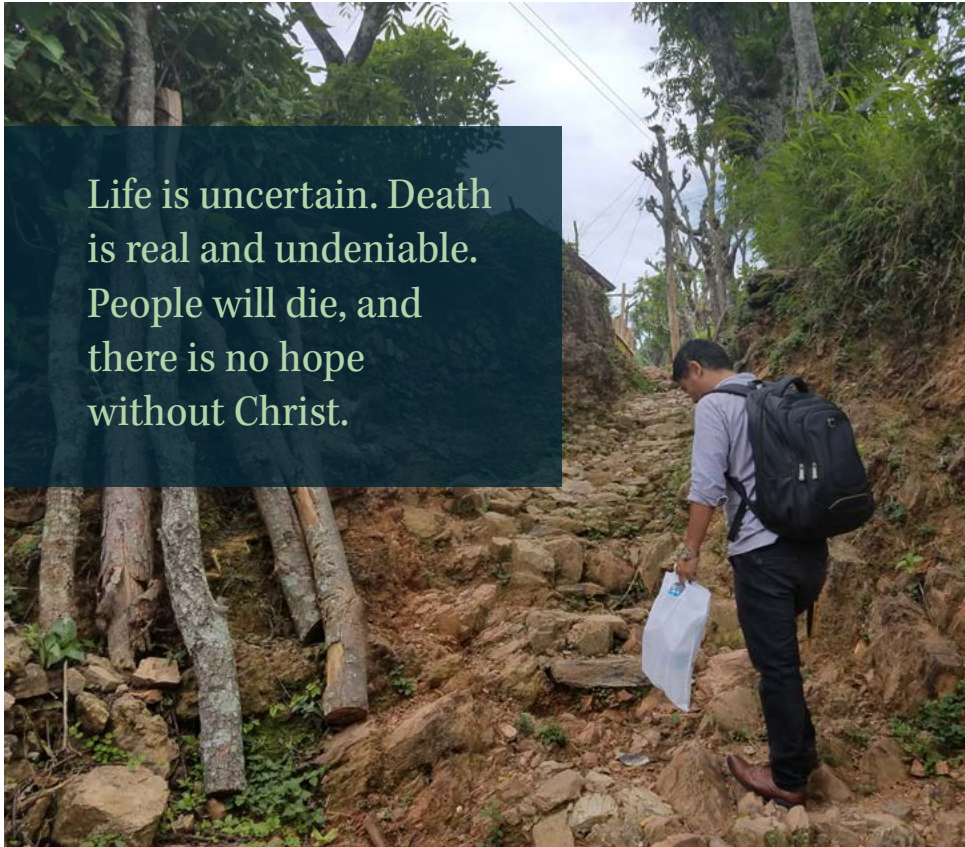
COVID. It was very sad to see with my own eyes these people who were dying without the hope of the gospel. I was not able to keep silent. In my heart, God was encouraging me to GO, GO, GO and share the Good News. God gave me such a boldness to speak the truth. Praise the Lord! Please pray for these souls with whom

I shared the gospel on that day.

On June 9, I visited my mother-in-law. I encouraged her from God's Word to be bold in the Lord. She was very thankful for my visit. On the same day, I was able to visit the newly appointed young pastor of the local

this congregation in sound doctrine and biblical principles. Please pray for them.

The next day, during another dialysis appointment for my sister-in-law, I had the opportunity to share the gospel with a COVID patient for



Life is uncertain. Death is real and undeniable. People will die, and there is no hope without Christ.

church where my wife was raised, and I gave him Paul Washer's recently translated book *The Gospel's Power and Message*. Whenever I am in this area, I take the opportunity to visit this brother; he is steadily coming to a right understanding of sound teaching and the seriousness of his life, doctrine, and ministry. It was a very fruitful time to encourage him in the Lord. There are many areas in which this local church needs to grow. My prayer is that the Lord would nurture

an hour. I was also able to follow up with the caregiver nurse I had met a few days earlier. It was a good time to review the truths of the gospel again with her. Praise God for this opportunity! For each of these people who heard the gospel, please pray that God would bring them to repentance and faith.

This pandemic has truly challenged many people regarding the reality of death. Life is uncertain. Death is real and undeniable. People will die, and



there is no hope without Christ. Many do not know our Savior and Lord; each of them will face the eternal judgment of God. They need Christ in order to be saved! I often remember Romans 10:14-15:

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"

As the Apostle Paul says in Philippians 1:21, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." I am assured that you all are part of this gospel advance through your prayers and financial support. Thank you for your partnership in gospel work. Praise be to our Almighty God!

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It has been a very hard time for me. But in the midst of difficulties and suffering, God has given me opportunities to serve people and to share the hope of His gospel. Whether I live or die, let the gospel be advanced!



**“IT IS
WORTH IT TO
FOLLOW CHRIST”**

BOB N. | INDIA



The pandemic has been a challenge for us, as it has been for so many, with lockdowns confining us to our four walls. But as the Apostle Paul, speaking of the failure of the chain to bind the gospel, says in II Timothy 2:9, “But the word of God is not imprisoned!” In this update are a few stories that witness the truthfulness of this promise, even to this day. I am very encouraged in writing these things to you; as I do, I am pressed to pray, “Lord help my unbelief.” I am sometimes concerned about various hindrances the lockdown has put in the life of the church and ministry. I am reassured of the promise of our reigning Christ, that He is still building His Church and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it! I hope and pray that you will also be encouraged and give all praise and glory to our good and gracious King.

Recently, a young female student was introduced to us by another brother. He had shared the gospel with her, and by God’s grace, she was willing to be part of our fellowship regularly. This allowed us to communicate

the gospel to her often. Slowly and gradually, we began seeing the work of the Spirit in her life. I remember a time when she shared with us her recognition of how rebellious she was. As she listened to the preaching of the Word, God opened her eyes to the truth and reality of the gospel and what it means to be a Christian. We are rejoicing in the Lord to see her growing

eagerness to read and know the Bible. We can see the joy she has in being around believers. We are praying and longing to hear her profess Christ as her Savior and Lord, to be baptized, and follow Christ. Please pray that God’s work of salvation in her life would be evident.

As she is from a Hindu family, there is a possibility that she would have to suffer at some point if she were to profess her faith in Christ. Pray that God, in His grace, would grant her strength to stand for Him at any cost.

I am currently studying Mark’s Gospel with a family from our fellowship. Only one member of the family has assurance about his salvation. He has prayed and labored for his family so that they would come to the true saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

God has blessed this brother's labor for his family, as the growing desire of knowing God's Word in his sister-in-law is evident. Our recent study was from Mark 1:9-20, where we studied about following Christ at all costs, as He is God's Beloved Son and King who came to save sinners. During our study, I was speaking with the sister-in-law, who is an association football player. I asked her if Christ would be worth her being cast out by her coach and banned from playing football. Her

year. Due to the lockdown, we are not currently able to meet in person, and we do not know when we can meet and fellowship together as a church. We are eagerly looking forward to that day, but trust in God's providence. Please pray that we would be holy and blameless in our conduct and a community that testifies about Christ before the watching world.

Finally, I, along with all the brethren here, would like to convey our heartfelt gratitude to you all for your gen-



reply to the question gave me tearful joy! She said, "It is worth it to follow Christ!" Our study that day concluded with praise and rejoicing as we considered what a Savior Christ is! Please join with me in praising God for His marvelous work in this family through His Word. Pray that God would continue His work of salvation in the rest of the family members.

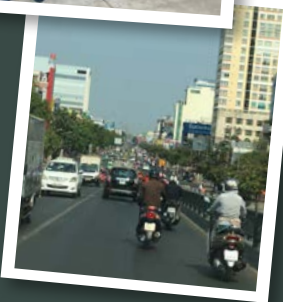
I would like to conclude with some prayer requests. Please pray for our fellowship. We are a new church plant, and we were hoping to covenant together as a church by June of this

erous, unceasing support and prayers. Through your support, we have been helped greatly in carrying out the gospel work here. Words will not suffice to describe our thankfulness toward God and you all. We love you and pray for you.

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MISSION *Snapshots*

In this section of the magazine, we have included a few shorter notes from missionaries in varying locations across the globe to provide a brief glimpse into the current events of their lives and ministries.





Grace to Those Who Are Far Off

GENNADY | RUSSIA

Pastor Gennady is the pastor of a Baptist church in Russia. He takes regular trips north of his hometown to visit believers who are spread out in small villages. He writes below of a recent trip he took to visit those isolated by long distances in a difficult climate.

By the grace of the Lord, I continue to serve as a pastor in my church. This month, the Lord blessed me with the opportunity to visit the children of God in the northern portion of our region, making it to three separate cities total. My trip took a week and a half. Despite the long journey and the many different roads, we had blessed fellowship and meetings with believers. I was once again convinced of how important it is to visit those who are far from the “mainland,” who live somewhere on the periphery, in remote places, deprived of much opportunity for regular spiritual fellowship.

Believers in these groups are always glad to see guests. For the full duration that we traveled, every day we spent time in spiritual fellowship, dealt with relationship issues in the churches, reviewed several texts from Scripture, and conducted specially called church services where I had the opportunity to preach God’s Word.

In total, I drove about 2,200 miles by car on this trip. Throughout the

journey, God protected us and provided for us. Praise the Lord, our car did not break down in any way! We so appreciate the generous help of HeartCry in keeping the necessary repairs on our vehicle up to date. For this specific need, we are enormously grateful to the Lord. Without such a gift, we would be unable to make trips like these. There are many sections of the road where there are no service stations or populated stops. If a vehicle breaks down, it is always followed by great difficulties—especially in the summer, when the mosquitoes and other pests are in full force. Therefore, we thank the Lord for the successful completion of this journey, constantly being driven to Him in prayer to ask for grace.

We thank you for your help in the ministry, as well as for your prayers for us. May God bless you all, help you in your ministry, and give you everything you need for fruitful and dedicated service to our God! Know that we also pray for you.



Church Planting in Sinaia

FLORIN STAN | ROMANIA

HeartCry missionary Florin Stan has been evangelizing in the town of Sinaia with the intention of planting a church in the “touristy” area. The town’s population is approximately 20,000. Florin and Fieni Baptist Church have collaborated with Sorin Prodan and Providence Church of Brasov in beginning the new work. This month, Brother Florin details the difficulties of planting the church in Sinaia.

I have been passing out Christian literature and gospel tracts regularly in Sinaia, especially on sunny days when people are out and about. I have covered about 95% of the town now and believe that there are only about ten blocks left. I hope to cover them next month. Following the literature distribution, I want to approach people on the street and preach the gospel to them more directly; I am hoping to be able to meet many of the people who call Sinaia home. As I have continued to prepare for ministry in Sinaia, I have had strategic meetings with the people who intend to be involved in this project.

I struggled a lot this month in thinking about planting the church in Sinaia, trying to put things in order in my mind for the beginning of this ministry. First of all, we need to locate and prepare a place for our Sunday evening meetings. We need to prepare the sending church to take up her role in this project. We also need to create

partnerships for this project. We are thankful to have found a trustworthy partner already in Brother Sorin Prodan and Providence Church of Brasov. We have decided that a group from their church will come every other Sunday to be involved in the ministry in Sinaia for a few months. We pray that the Lord would help us and prepare everything we need for planting a biblical church in Sinaia.



He Revives Us and Comforts Us

CARLOS GARCIA | PERU

Carlos is the pastor of Christ Is the Only Hope Baptist Church in one of the poorest and most dangerous areas of Sullana in northern Peru. He also helps with the training of pastors in the remote mountain villages through training by extension.

I always give thanks to God for His work here in Jorge Basadre. I am thankful for the lives of my brothers and sisters in the church. The Lord is always giving us strength, and He lifts our heads. He revives us and comforts us in our grief and is always with us. This is the God we love and exalt. We always give Him the honor and the glory.

The political crisis in our country is having an impact on jobs and the economy. As a result, the lives of many of the brothers and sisters in the church have been affected, especially considering that this part of the city is extremely impoverished. Still, we give thanks to our God because He is faithful to provide. Despite the current conditions, our brothers and sisters can testify to the Lord's faithfulness. We praise God for this!

While we live in this world, we will be exposed to many difficult things. These hardships are part of our lives, and we know that God uses these trials to shape us. I want to ask you to pray for a number of believers in our church who are experiencing trials. Juanita has



been diagnosed with colon cancer. Esther, an elderly lady, had to have an eye removed because of a serious infection; it was the only way to prevent it from spreading to the other eye. José is very sick and walks with great difficulty because of his arthritis. He has helped us so much through his faithful service to the Lord and with his house-to-house evangelism. He has been faithful to visit and encourage members of the church and has helped with his own hands in the construction of the church building. Though he still has the desire to do all that he once did, José is now coming to grips with the fact that he is no longer physically able to do so.

Despite these difficulties that our brothers and sisters are experiencing,

I am a witness to their steadfastness in the faith of our Savior. They tell me things like, “Pastor, we are prepared for whatever the Lord has for us; we are trusting in His will.” They do not say this because they have given up hope or have a fatalistic outlook; rather, they say it with sound confidence and a glow on their face. They feel the pain and sadness of fallen humanity, but

they hold fast to the strength of the Lord and to the unbreakable hope of what awaits those who are in Christ Jesus. When we go to visit and encourage them, we ourselves receive encouragement and comfort. It is in the most difficult moments when we often see a display of true faith and godliness.



Faithful in Death

BINH B. | VIETNAM

Binh grew up in a Buddhist home, hating and opposing the Christian gospel. Finally, God broke through and saved him in 1995. After finishing Bible school in 2000, Binh began to pastor a church in Vietnam.

I first send greetings to all pastors, families, churches, supporters, and staff who have supported and prayed for the mission in Vietnam. We sincerely thank you; may God bless you all with His grace and peace!

God has given us peace, even though we are affected by the disease spread across the country. I continue to pray to God for mercy and for the pandemic situation to be reduced so that everyone's daily life can return to normal.

About a year ago, we baptized a new believer in our church. The first day I met him, I prayed for him and taught him the Word of God. He quickly grew into a man who loved God and was faithful in worship. There was

not a week when he was not present at church meetings until the day he became ill with COVID.

The last time I prayed for him, he cried and then passed away to God. I was sad because I lost a brother; but on the other hand, I am happy that he believed in God. Although he was a Christian for only a year, he was



faithful to God in the last hour of his death. I am incredibly grateful that the Lord used me to take care of him in the end.

The Apostle Paul said, “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction” (II Timothy 4:1-2). The Apostle Peter also said, “Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing

dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (I Peter 5:2-3).

These two passages from the Bible are very important and meaningful to me as a pastor, because they help me realize that the ministry I have is a calling from God through His only Son, Jesus Christ. I must therefore cherish this ministry as God-given and do it faithfully with all my heart, while building myself up through prayer and Bible study. Please remember us in prayer.



Opposition to Evangelism Intensifies

SAM HUHN | MICHIGAN, USA

For the last year and a half, HeartCry has been partnering with Brother Sam Huhn of Grace Baptist Church in Hamtramck, Detroit, Michigan. As an elder in that church, Sam is also heavily involved in evangelizing Muslim immigrants, primarily from Yemen. During the summer, the church holds meetings in a community park—singing and preaching the gospel in Arabic, then conducting games and activities for the kids while others engage the adults in gospel conversations. These evangelistic efforts have been so severely disrupted this year that a move had to be made to another park. In his latest update, Sam explains the challenges they have been facing.

Our dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we are so grateful for your faithful prayers. We thank God for the events of the last few weeks and the opportunities He has given us to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ in this city. A few weeks ago, we moved the location of our outreach from a park where we

have been going steadily for several years. We weighed the problems we were encountering there against the number of gospel conversations we were able to have, and we concluded that the time we have been investing could be better used in another part of town.

The tension had been building at the old park for a while, and the teenage boys became particularly troublesome. In the past, they have generally respected women and refrained from any violence. The last few weeks we did ministry there, however, all of that changed. They lobbed eggs at one of our church members during the games with the children, they stole some of our equipment, and they hurled things at me. As we packed up and were leaving, they began to throw rocks and broken tiles at me and my family, and some of them were saying filthy things to my wife.

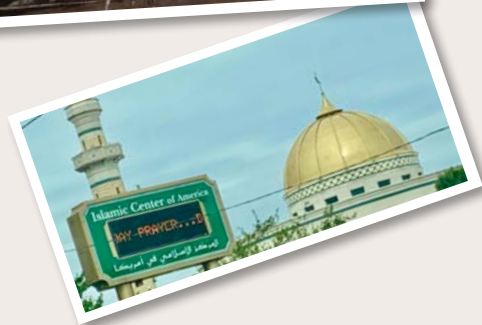
I think we would have continued going, albeit without our families, if there was a chance to preach the gospel. But none of us can really begin to speak about Jesus before they start to mock Him and His gospel. I will probably return occasionally, together with someone else, to try to speak to others; but God has been giving us new opportunities in this other park, so we are grateful.

Since this transition, we have had two youth groups visit and help with outreach at the new location. God has given me several opportunities to talk about Jesus and His redemptive work with Muslim men there. We are thanking God for the fellowship with the believers who have visited as well as the opportunities He has given us to proclaim His gospel.

Thank you so much for participating in the gospel work here through your faithful prayers, your generous support, your welcome visits, and your personal notes of encouragement to us. Please pray that Jesus would continue to

build His Church here and that He would help us to bring Him glory and honor as we preach redemption and reconciliation in His name. Please pray that we would be faithful and would make the most of every opportunity to tell people the great things that Jesus has done for all who will come to Him in faith.

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ONLY THE GOSPEL BRINGS TRUE CHANGE

MARIO MANEVILLE | SOUTH AFRICA

Coming from a community rife with gangsters and drug addicts, I have come to one conclusion: only the gospel can truly change a person.

I have seen drug addicts go from one rehab to another. So often, as soon as they leave they go straight to drugs again. Some of them may hold out for a few months, and you might be able to see the change in their appearance—to the joy of their families. But then they go back with a vengeance! Most of them only return to rehab when they are on the brink of death. Many do not get that second chance. I have seen gangsters “turn over a new leaf” by getting out of their gang and finding a job, even giving up selling drugs. However, they remained the

same prideful, violent, and angry people who traded their gang life for a safer lifestyle. I have witnessed prostitutes who have given up their life of prostitution to live a “normal life,” only to end up having multiple babies from different men (if the father is even known).

People might be able to change their behavior, but they are not capable of changing *who they really are*. All they can do is exchange one sin for another.

On the other hand, I have seen Jesus Christ through His gospel change gangsters, drug addicts, and prostitutes into entirely different people—to the degree that those in our community can testify that only God could have done this. No rehab or any earthly



institution can possibly do what God does through His gospel!

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

(II Corinthians 5:17)

An error many Christians seem to make is living as if the gospel only justifies them so that they can have a future hope (heaven), while essentially ignoring the present joy they can have in Christ in being sanctified through the grace that comes from the gospel. They do not seem to know how to apply gospel grace to everyday life. Gospel change is not an event, but a process. The gospel does not just transform people initially; it continues to transform people continually.

I believe that the whole Bible narrative—from Genesis 3:15 to the end of Revelation—is a narrative of God’s redemptive story. It is the story of how God redeems a fallen people and restores them back into fellowship with Him. That fellowship does not become sweet only when we get to heaven—it is sweet immediately and only grows sweeter as we grow in grace.

What is the chief end of man? The

answer to this question is not that we will only glorify God and enjoy Him forever *when our life here on earth ends*. God forbid! We glorify and enjoy God now and forevermore!

The gospel sets us free to begin to live for the glory of God while enjoying fellowship with Him now. The gospel also empowers us to do so. We are free from past sins and look forward to a future glory, but we also have a present grace and promises from God that are meant to be enjoyed today.

When we ignore the present grace that the gospel provides for everyday, God-glorified living, all we are left with is moralism and legalism—two giants that have already been conquered by the gospel. “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36).

The gospel exposes us to the truth about God, man, and the redemptive work of Christ. It demands a response of faith and repentance. But faith and repentance are not the end of the Christian experience; these are the very means of grace by which we are being kept “for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (I Peter 1:5).

For change to occur in our lives, we need to live a life of daily repentance and daily trust in Jesus for our sanctification.

Change happens when we acknowledge and confront the extent and gravity of our sin and our total dependence on the person and work of Christ. Furthermore, this change cannot happen in a vacuum or in isolation; it only occurs in communion with the saints.

Christ has been placed over all things as head of the Church (Ephesians 1:21-23). The Apostle Paul refers to the Church as “the body of Christ” and Christians as “individually members of it” (I Corinthians 12:27). When Paul talks about the Church being made up of many members, he highlights the fact that “the members may have the same care for one another” (I Corinthians 12:25). If we are all members, connected to one an-

other and forming the body of Christ, then it would make sense that “if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” (I Corinthians 12:26). This implies that when real change happens to an individual member, all the members are affected by it. It would also imply that real change would happen primarily in the community of a church—not in some sort of churchy “group therapy,” but as believing sinners dealing with their sinful issues in the context of Christian fellowship.

This is where the gospel promises shower on us the reality of Christ’s presence with us when we gather (Matthew 18:20; 28:20; Hebrews 13:5). This is why we continue to “stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together” (Hebrews 10:24-25). Change happens when we practice those “one another” commands that the New Testament is so full of. We need each other if we are going to experience continual and lasting change.

The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” (I Corinthians 12:21)

If we will live for the glory of our Head and experience the joy of being part of His body, we will need to nurture change within the community of the church—which is His body. It is for this reason that James says, “Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

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