

The Gospel News



"To all nations"



EDITORIAL: The Power of God's Word

We as preachers of the Gospel are easily discouraged by the apparent rejection of our message. We become accustomed to that rejection, and this can lead us to descend into merely glumly witnessing to God's truth, as an unavoidable duty we feel we ought to discharge. It can seem that many people are almost inevitably predisposed not to accept the message; their surrounding background and personal history leaves us shaking our heads with the impression that really, they are just hopeless cases. God's word; it may seem, is simply not for them.

We wonder why the word is so hard for them to understand. And in our own mire of mediocrity, we can assume likewise that there are parts of our own lives which simply will not change; we can only hope in God's grace to save us. In the worst case, this can descend yet further into a questioning as to whether God's word is indeed mighty to save men in this world. Yet Isaiah 55:10-13 challenges and shocks us out of this negative attitude: "*For as the rain comes down and the snow from the sky and doesn't return there but **waters** the **earth**, and makes it **bring forth** and **bud**, and gives **seed** to the **sower** and bread to the eater; so shall My **word** be that **goes forth** out of My mouth: it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall **prosper** in the thing I sent it to do. For you shall go out with **joy**... Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree; and instead of the **brier** shall **come up** the myrtle tree". The words I've put there **in bold** are all picked up in the Lord's parable of the sower. There are so many connections that I suggest His parable was a kind of *midrash*, an expanded commentary, upon that passage in Isaiah 55. The simple point is - response not only *is* possible in the face of every kind of distraction, but response **will** be achieved - such is the power of God's word.*

The Context of the Sower Parable

Mt. 13:1 prefaces the parable with the comment that it was given "*The same day*". The Gospel records give more information about that day than concerning any other in His ministry, with the exception of the crucifixion (Mt.12:22-13:23; Lk.11:27; Mk.4:10). The preceding chapter 12 has recorded how the Lord now changes His position regarding the Jews. Instead of the positive tone of the Sermon on the Mount and the hopeful appeal to Israel, from now on in Matthew there is much talk of condemnation to come, of Israel's rejection of the Gospel, and of how they were an adulterous generation for whom judgment was reserved. The Kingdom principles which He had so clearly expressed in the Sermon on the Mount now become "*mysteries*" of the Kingdom (:11). From now on, the Lord started using parables - hence the shock of the disciples and their question ` *Why parables ?* ' immediately after He had finished the sower parable (:10). And He explained that He now spoke in parables exactly so that from now on, the masses would not understand. The mission of John had been largely unsuccessful, despite the good initial response. The Jewish religious leaders and the hopes for an immediate Kingdom in this world had led Israel to reject the message, and their last state would be now worse than the first. The parable of the sower speaks of seed which initially grew (Israel's response to John's message) and then went wrong - with some responding amazingly.

Three Types Of Bad Ground

By The Way Side

The birds came - Lk. 8:5 adds that first of all, the seed was "*trodden down*" before the birds came. The impression is given of something, someone or a group of people hindering the growth of the seed - and that is a theme explaining the failure of the seed to grow in the other cases of ` *bad ground* '. The Lord has in mind the damage done to the growth of the word in the hearts

of first century Israel by a group of people - and those people were the Jewish religious leaders. On a wider level, it's true that in practice it is the attitudes and pressures from others, conscious and unconscious, which stops people today from responding to God's word beyond an initial interest. Birds were symbolically understood in Judaism as the Gentiles - and the Lord is applying the symbol to the very religious leaders of Judaism, whom He saw as Gentiles in that they were consciously trying to stop people responding to the seed of God's word of Christ. And yet His later parable in the same chapter speaks of the birds coming and dwelling in the branches of His Kingdom (Mt. 13:32). I see in this His hope, even His fantasy, that His worst opponents would come into His Kingdom. And some did - for some Pharisees did later repent and were baptized, even the apostle Saul. And this is a great example to us, of wishing the very best, the Kingdom, for even the worst.

The way side - The Greek *hodos* means simply 'the way'. It is the very word used about John the Baptist seeking to prepare the way for the Lord Jesus (Mt. 3:3). If Israel had responded as envisaged in the Isaiah 40 passage which speaks of this, then the way or road would have been prepared and the glory of Yahweh would have travelled over it to establish God's visible Kingdom in Jerusalem. On one hand, the fact the sower sowed even on the 'way' is an element of unreality in the parable which simply points to the extreme enthusiasm of this sower, casting the seed on to all types of human personality, including those who appear hopeless cases. We note the usage of the same word to describe how some despised individuals sitting in 'the way' were in fact persuaded to respond to the Kingdom invitation (Mt. 22:9,10); Bartimaeus was likewise sitting in the way [s.w.] and responded, following Jesus "the way" (Mk.10:46,52). The 'way [side]' could have responded to the seed- but it didn't. Because men came and trampled it under foot, and the birds came and took it away. It wasn't as if there was no chance at all that it could have responded.

Devoured it - The same word is used of how the Pharisees "devour[ed] widows houses" (Mt. 23:14) and of how the Judaist fifth column within the fledgling church 'devoured' some (Gal. 5:15).

Understands it not - The Lord has just made clear that not understanding Him is a conscious, wilful intellectual act; and people shut their eyes so that they will not understand, lest it demand too much from them personally (:15). The wayside category are not, therefore, merely predestined not to understand. It's not that they were just in the wrong place, exposed to the wrong teachings and religious culture, and therefore they did not understand. For anyone who hears the word or seed of Christ, refusal to understand it is a conscious choice. It may not appear like that, but the Lord has said in v15 that it is. By "understanding", the Lord means the understanding which brings forth fruit. He is here redefining "understanding the word", making it refer to something fruitful in practice. He spoke against a religious culture in which spirituality was seen in terms of being a microscopic student of the Old Testament and word by word, verse by verse, coming to the right theological interpretation. Many of us were raised in a similar environment. And the Lord here is redefining "understanding the word" away from the sense of 'correct exposition' towards 'responding faithfully in practice, bringing forth fruit'. The bad ground, therefore, involved an element of choice to be like that. We showed on v4 that there were 'wayside' persons who **did** respond; our location in terms of culture, environment, psychology etc. is not an inevitable barrier to responding to the word which we hear.

On The Rocks

Stony places - The Greek *petrodes* is a form of *petra*. The Lord had taught that the wise man who heard and did His sayings developed his spiritual house upon a *petra*, a rock (Mt. 7:24). And of course Peter was the *petra* upon which the church would be built (Mt. 16:18). So again we see that it was not impossible for the seed on the rock to prosper. The problem was that some who began their growth upon rocks stopped growing because of persecution and tribulation (:21) - which in the first instance was from the Jews.

Care of this world - In our age as never before, given more possibilities and knowledge of possible futures and what could go wrong, we have the strong temptation to be full of such care. The same word is used in Lk. 21:34 about the "cares" which will be a feature of the last days - both of AD70 and today. But in the first instance, the `world' in view was the Jewish world.

Among Thorns

This of itself didn't mean that growth was impossible. The Lord's next parable makes that clear - the good seed brings forth fruit, clearly alluding to the `good ground' of the sower parable, **despite** being surrounded by "tares", weeds, within which category are thorns (13:26). Both good and bad seed `spring up' (:26); the point is that the good seed continues to bear fruit despite this. Fruit can be brought forth **despite** a spiritual environment in which we have to grow and fruit next to thorns. `Thorns' were defined by the Lord as people - those who do not bring forth good fruit, even though they may claim to be true believers (Mt. 7:16). Heb. 6:8 likewise speaks of `thorns' as people ("*He that bears thorns... is rejected*"). The later interpretation in v22 is that the thorns are the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of "*this world*" - and yet these abstract things operate upon the believer through persons, through people devoted to them. For we all `are' the principles which we live by; and our example and influence upon others is more significant than we realize.

~ **Bro Duncan Heaster**

News from Africa

NEWS FROM CONGO



My family, our Ecclesia and I are pretty well here in Kinshasa. We thank you so much for the work you are doing for God. Be blessed! Our prayer is to be together with Jesus Christ in his Kingdom soon.



Bro. Kim's in his office, reading the Gospel News Below: The Kinshasa Ecclesia and Bro. Jadot

About the Bibles, we have shared these among brethren and sisters in Kinshasa. I have difficulties about the pictures because my camera was broken when I came from Mbandaka last month and I can't have another. But, I used my best to have these. After Kinshasa, we sent the French Bibles to brethren, sisters and friends who don't live in Kinshasa (10 Bibles at Mbandaka, 10 at Nkana, and 5 at Kunzulu and 5 to Maluku).

I am learning English and I am now in the first level and we must have three levels (three months each level), which means we will have nine months. I am not at all able finish to pay tuition fees for six months; I pay 20\$us per month.

NEWS FROM KENYA



BUNGOMA

Thanks a lot for the variety of literature on the Basic Bible Truths which had been out of stock in our ecclesia for some time. These will help us a lot. Thank you also for the book on James and the other study papers.

~ **Bro. Hohn Muyala**

The ecclesias of the whole world at large have benefitted because of the work of the CAT. Through God's power it has given to many the Word of Truth and many are being saved thereby. Our lives are in the hands of God. God's servants believe that what He has promised must be fulfilled. We are promised salvation through our belief in our Saviour, Jesus Christ and it is the will of God to give us eternal life at the time of the end.

I have read the Gospel News magazine and its impact is a far-reaching one. It has influenced us and those in the world who are reading it, so I hope, God willing, to continue reading it even though the costs are quite difficult.

We have now come out of the country's campaigns and the General Elections have secured a new President.

~ **Bro. Martin Sibole**

Thank you for the Bibles, the DVD, "*The Real Devil*" and the Bible studies with assistance.

~ **Bro. Francis Mayende**

The New European Version Holy Bible: My comment on this project is really good. Most people like it as it has been clearly written with relevant references. All the Bibles you sent me were distributed and now the demand is high. I therefore still need more if you have any in stock. The readers recommend this version because of its clear English language which enables them to understand and translate it to the students who prepare themselves for baptism. I therefore recommend that the project should continue to prosper and I request 80 more copies if it is possible. We are very positive towards this project.

~ **Bro. Clement Fwamba**



CHWELE

"No man has seen God at any time," the Bible tells us in John 1:18. His literal appearance and His splendour are beyond human comprehension. But just as a good teacher explains matters to students in terms they can relate to, so God through His Word the Bible describes things we cannot see by means of things we can see. May God bless you and give you more expert knowledge.

~ **Bro. Jacob & Sis. Phoebe Waliaula**

Thank you for the Gospel News magazine and the book about organic farming which we have seriously read, it has given us good knowledge and when put into practice it leads to an increase in our food production as we are faced with many problems due to climate change, where rainfall patterns have changed and different diseases and pests threaten to destroy our crops. Thank you also for the CD which we hope we shall get a friend with the necessary gadget to play for us. We request 10 copies of the book on organic farming for brothers and sisters to learn more about it.

~ Bro. David and Sis. Jacklyne Wanjala

Bro. Jacob Waliaula and family

Thank you in abundance for the DVDs, (*The Real Devil*) which you sent to us. It has practically shown light and truth in our lives. Personally I have encountered those who do not understand what the devil is. Through the DVDs we can now understand better.

My daughter has been an example, whereby she is a victim of sickle cell. The nurse that used to treat her in a private clinic could not see that she was making any progress. On realising that I had spent a lot, she advised me to seek for other alternatives. She said that we had to visit a special servant of God who by special prayers could drive away the devil that always caused sickness in her life and then my daughter would be well. I was astonished, while gazing at her with regret that she believed in false prophets. I felt very sorry to have taken my daughter to see her and told her that I did not believe what she said. I told her that God is the only solution to our problems. My daughter was suffering great pain and I had to seek for other ways and to leave to seek for further medication. Fortunately in the other private clinic we were advised to have tests in Bungoma District Hospital and that is where the sickling test was done and hence the cause was known. She has been admitted twice into district hospitals and also into a private hospital, which is very expensive, when I had to sell my two goats to pay the bill. At the moment she attends check-ups and at least we can find some solace but when she is in a painful crisis we expect to watch her for about three days and nights. We are living in the hope of the prayers of the brothers and sisters worldwide. Every month we have to make sure whether we are able or not to get money for some medicine which she needs daily.

We have stood firm in preaching the truth about the devil and many are getting interested in our literature materials. Had we not got the truth about the real devil we could have been misled. Please remember us in your prayers as we expect more materials from you. With love and waiting for our Lord Jesus in the Kingdom which is coming soon.

~ **Bro. Jacob and Sis. Jedeliah Walianla**

GEDE

I have missed the Gospel News since June 2012 and I do not know the reason why. This is our promise from God (Is.59:21), that we shall not cease or stop preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God. I enjoy reading articles from different brothers from different parts of the world and know that CAT is very busy. I do thank you for the Bible.

~ **Bro. Walter Wanyama Wasike**

KITALE

I appreciate your letter full of encouragement and appreciation. I love the Gospel News magazine as it helps me to preach the gospel to brothers and sisters plus friends. I give my personal thanks to you and the Advancement Trust as a whole for the work you are doing worldwide. I am trying my level best to see that the Word reaches many. Thank you very much for the books, leaflets, DVDs etc

~ **Bro. Martin W. Barasa**

(Baraton Ecclesia - pictured above right)



Some of Baraton Ecclesial members, Nyasi, Ndalua and Kaptama. I am the second person with a Bible in hand

We greet you here at Shimo La Tewa Ecclesia and are happy and hopeful that you are fine in the Name of Jesus Christ, who is the coming King of this world. We are fine also. I want to thank you so much for sending us New Testament Bibles, *Bible Basics*, the Gospel News magazine and the CD which has very exciting teaching for brethren, sisters and friends. "*The Real Devil*" shows to my ecclesia what the devil really is. May God bless you and continue to finance CAT so that you can continue to send us Scriptural literature which we so need to teach and strengthen us and help to make us fit for the return of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.

In our ecclesia we have 13 brethren, 16 sisters and 10 interested friends who are able to read English and who we hope to be baptised soon.

~ **Bro. Anthony Wafula**

KATITO

I am well but in isolation on this side of Kisumu country, struggling to broadcast the words of life to the residents in the area. It has been disappointing as the respondents turn back to their former denominations, citing a lot of things that they think are lacking in our Church formations.

By the way, I am planning to set up a library at Katito so that one can read and understand for oneself at any time, what the Truth entails. I have therefore kept two NEV Bibles, two New Testaments, The Real Devil, etc. for that purpose. Living in isolation makes one voiceless in regard to any assistance for development spiritually or materially and I am working towards seeing an ecclesia established in this area.

Coming to world events, it is time for Damascus to be in ruins. No letter of the Word will go unfulfilled. I do wonder how some leaders need to be instructed or fed with explanations as to how the Assad regime has been repressive to its citizens! I pray that God's will be done to avert the situation in Syria and am very sorry for the Islamic nations in their inhuman reasoning.

~ **Bro. Lawrence K'Owiti**

KISUMU

In July the members of Nyanza North area witnessed the baptisms of four new brothers by Bro. James Mijwanda, namely, Bro. DANCAN, Sis. VIANCA ODUMA, Sis. LUCY ANYANGO all from Kisumu ecclesia and one sister from Bondo ecclesia. May our Almighty God drive them safely towards His Kingdom which I believe is not so far away.

~ **Bro. Richard Oduma**

LURAMBI

I send loving greetings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will soon re-appear on earth according to the Signs of the Times. Firstly, I would like to thank you very much for sending me the *Bible Basics* and the NEV Bibles. We do need four more Bibles as the work of God is spreading rapidly and soon you will receive some photos from us. Many people here have been interested by the Commentary in the NEV Bibles which have changed many who had believed differently in the past, especially concerning the parable of the rich man and Lazarus and others. Also the CD gives a very clear and true picture about the real devil. I gave a Bible to one of our secondary school teachers and he has turned and believed our true doctrines. He is now in our class learning and we pray that several baptisms will soon take place here.

May God, our Father give you all health and strength till the coming of Our Lord, for whom we are waiting and we pray it may be soon.

~ **Bro. Martin Chemiati**

NANGO

I am happy to say that right now we have started receiving the rains and that is a great blessing from the Almighty. We experienced a very dry period and then the rain finally came and many people are now busy on their farms expecting harvest from their labour.

The Bible and *Bible Basics* copies you sent us are going to be put to good use. The parcel stayed for a while at the Post Office while I was looking for some money to pay the Post Office charges. I am looking forward to getting materials for teaching the Sunday youth children or to get some training on Sunday youth training and teaching lessons. We have several youths who we expect to grow up mastering the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and to be baptized later on, God willing.

I pray for the Kingdom to come to redeem the world from this turmoil we are experiencing right now.

~ Bro. Raphael Joni Aimo

NATIRI

The Christadelphian expository books that you send to me with other courses of the Bible which I have been receiving are very rewarding. When the CBM opened the Church in our region six years ago we used to lack knowledge of many things, but now we are growing both in number and in spirit. CAT has been of great importance in our growth especially with the Bible literature that you have been providing us with. These lessons always draw us near to God and by so doing we share what we have learnt with friends and relations. So far I have gained a lot of friends though they are not ready to join our ecclesia because of their present faith. They appreciate the Word and they always learn from the lessons you send. If possible please send to me a book "Preaching the Truth". It will be of great importance to me and the ecclesia as a whole.

~ Bro. Masongo Haron

NYANGE

I would like to encourage my colleagues who will go through this to keep on praying and trusting in Our Lord and Saviour.

The simplest way of praying is through:-

- A - Adoration
- C - Confession
- T - Thanksgiving
- S - Sublimation

I would also like to encourage each one of us to push prayer for each other.

- P - Pray
- U - Until
- S - Something
- H - Happens.

~ Bro. Kevin Simiyu

NYANZA

Am very much thankful for the huge parcel of Bibles, Books and even the leaflets you sent to me. They arrived safely and I collected them from the post office.

My wife, my family and my Ecclesia all pass their regards to your family, your Ecclesia and the entire UK Brothers and Sisters. I remain hoping to hear more from you.

~ Bro. James Mijuanda

ORUBE

We at Orube Ecclesia are doing fine. God has blessed us with a new building which we moved into in September.

~ Bro. Benjamin Mwatu

SUNA MIGORI

Thank you very much for putting us in touch through Gospel News and other Christian literature. It is really encouraging to realize that we are not alone in our tumultuous walk to the Kingdom which has many obstacles and one finds it extremely difficult in isolation. May our Father who is in heaven, help us.

~ **Bro. Joseph Onyango**

WESTLANDS

Greetings from Muramba group. We are a group that started studies in 2006. Since then we have been meeting regularly and consist of three brothers, three sisters and friends. We have a Sunday School of 12 children who are under the guidance of Sister Grace Phillip. We have a shortage of Bibles, Sunday School materials and teaching materials for strengthening and building up our faith in Christ.

~ **Sis. Grace Phillip**



Some of the brothers, sisters, friends and children. From left to right: - Sis. Grace Phillip, Sis. Erita Nyagasi, friend Caro Onyango, friend Erita Nyasima, Sis. Anne Nanyama, friend Bill Kisanji, Bro. Benjamin Khtaba. In front are some of the Sunday School children.

NEWS FROM MALAWI



MZUZU

The parcel has come at the right time as economically things are not well in Malawi and has really eased my life. When I think deeply of what you have been doing for me I consider you are my God-given friend. I am sure, Bro. Marcus, you still remember the way you met me at my grass thatched house and the care and love you showed me, together with Bro. David Bonner. That day is so special in my life. I was sightless and you opened my eyes. Now that I am able to see things the way they are spiritually I can exclaim, "I see!". Why? because of your efforts. May the good God continue to bless all CAT's efforts so that in turn we all experience eternal life in the Kingdom together.

~ **Bro. Sylvester Tembo**

PHALOMBE

I was very glad when I received the DVD entitled "*The Real Devil*" and the Bible Study. I enjoyed them both. As you know, Malawi is a poor country and we depend on farming to get our daily living. This year the rainfalls are over so we have a big problem of hunger. I have a big task to support my child so that she grows well and I need your help if possible.

~ **Bro. Thom Bicycle**

ULONGWE

I would like to inform you that the DVD you sent is a very helpful one and enjoyable. I enjoy reading the Bible every day and also the Gospel News magazine, so please continue to send them to me. Please help me with materials to use when studying the Bible in our Study Group, such as Bibles, literature and note books.

~ **Bro. Edson Makwecha**



A Bible Study Group receiving some books to use from well-wishers

NEWS FROM MAURITIUS



Many thanks for the books *Bible Basics* which I just received and also for the French Bibles which Brother Jean Claude received. May the Lord keep you and bless you for your preaching works.

~ **Bro. Herold LaFrance**

NEWS FROM NIGERIA



ABA

It's been long since I communicated with you though my eyes always cherish every new issue of the Gospel News. Hope you and your ministry, which I must say I love so much, is doing fine.

Please consider the following appeal for publication in Gospel News Magazine : "There is a time to stand up. Now is the time, in Africa, we are rich yet poor. We have a problem, The benevolent missionaries have fed us for over 40 years yet we are still learning to crawl. Over 40 years? Yes, but we must refuse to play the fool. We must learn, like others, to endure and prayerfully solve some of our problems. Next time you receive a brother from afar, do everything possible to tap

from his loaded spiritual wealth and flown from a distant land. Merry your heart with as much of this spiritual treasure as you can get, but please, please, learn to spare their gold, by this we shall learn to walk and not fall, run and not faint".

~ **Bro. Peter Ojike**

AKWANGA

I thank God, our Almighty Father in Heaven, for strengthening me and the world-wide ecclesias in the Truth. Thank you, too, for the books and CDs you sent me, about which I am very excited.

Please remember us, the Christadelphians in Northern Nigeria, in your prayers, as Christ said to Peter, *"But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren"* (Luke

22:32). As some of us live in the most difficult areas, where there are terrorists (Boko Haram) and crises over religion, we need your prayers.

We know from Scripture that all the happenings around us now are heralding the return of our Master: *"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars; see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in diverse places."* (Matt.24:6-7). Almost all of these are current happenings.



As the world today is in such a dreadful state, and all is in fulfilment of Scripture, all we need to do is to be strong in the faith, and patiently wait for our Master. We are to strive to proclaim the

Bro. Rukpa Isaac gospel of God's kingdom here on earth to the inhabitants of this planet. May God open our eyes and minds to see and understand more of His revealed ways to follow and serve him in love and truth.

~ **Bro. Rukpu Isaac**

COMMENT: The frequent, dreadfully gruesome attacks and killing of Christians by the terrorists in Northern Nigeria brings tears to one's eyes, especially when one has travelled to some of these areas and witnessed the strong determinate faith of our Brethren and Sisters there. It's a fearful place these days for Christadelphians and we must earnestly pray for their protection and that somehow the Lord will strengthen and deliver them. **MH**

ENUGU

Here is the picture I promised you which we took at Lagos CYC. By God's grace ten people were baptised: The theme of the gathering, ` *The Wind of Youthfulness* '; Leader of the Youth Circle, Emenike Ekeoma. We thank the organisers for a job well done, and the hosts, Lagos Ecclesia. May Nigerian Christadelphians please try hard to keep on preaching if we knew that our Lord Jesus Christ's return was tomorrow there would be more preaching.

~ **Bro. Goddy Nwosu**



Lagos CYC Gathering

IBADAN

Thank you always for all your fatherly care and support of my spiritual welfare. I am most grateful for all you have done for my growth and steadfastness in the Truth. Daily reading of the Scriptures is a habit that I try not to lose. I will keep reading and digging for hidden treasures in God's inexhaustible mine of pearls of great price. If my application for medical internship in Lagos works out successfully, I hope I will be closer to the ecclesia and be able to contribute my medical education to support our brothers and sisters there.

~ **Bro. Timothy Temilola**

MBAISE

Our ecclesia is moving on in Mbaise, both for public and private preaching; Bible study, and Memorial services are all progressing well.

I would like you to send some more copies of Old and New Testament Bibles to give to others; I have received two out of eight. In number we are now increasing, with those baptized and expecting to be. Last week the Aba brethren baptized some students, whom I sent to see them. I heard from them through those interviewed who live in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, that they are to worship in Rivers State, not at home, except if they return home on weekends or public holidays, when they will join us.

We are living in the last days, waiting for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to this earth, for which we are praying. We pray for you also and thank God for your recovery from the sickness that worried you. May the Lord be with you: remember us in your prayers.

~ **Bro. Blessing Nwigwe**

NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA



BLOEMFONTEIN

Bro. Paul & Sis. Leonie Verster accompanied by Bre. Ollie Mahopo and Emmanuel Mphambo made a trip to Bloemfontein to baptize two more students from Kroonstad: this time **Bre. SAMSON MATSEPE & JAPIE MKAKANE**. After Bro. Emmanuel had delivered a spirited seminar on ` *One Bible Many Churches - Why?* ' The interviews were conducted late into the Saturday night by the Bloemfontein brothers. On Sunday we greatly rejoiced in witnessing the two baptisms and added to that joy, were two more requests from Bloemfontein students to be baptized. God willing, these will be done later.

The two newly baptized brethren with Bro. Phakiso Mophethe, also from Kroonstad, visited the Soweto ecclesia to meet the brethren and sisters and experience how a meeting is run.

SOWETO

Our dear Bro. James Sithole, (75) was brutally mugged last week at dusk when he and his niece were returning home after walking his cousin to catch a taxi at the Protea Gardens. He was attacked and struck on the head with a blunt metal bar and was left without his cell phone, and all his money was taken. He was rushed to a clinic where his two awful gashes on the head were stitched up; of course he is all bruised. His niece thankfully was only bruised. His head is full of stitches which testify to the fact that he could easily have been killed. Despite his ordeal he supported the literature stand on Friday... Bro. James is a great example of steadfast endurance. His attendance to the memorial is unaltered.

NEWS FROM TANZANIA



SINZA

Thank you for the CD you sent recently. Our Heavenly Father enabled me to make visits to Dodoma five times on different dates. With His blessing I succeeded with the work which I started. Now there are interested people intending to understand the Word of God. I am very thankful for all you sent me for my project of spreading the Word of God, you and others in the UK and for your helping hand.

~ **Bro. Ayubu Sazi Kilumbi**

NEWS FROM UGANDA



DOKOLO

May our Lord Jesus Christ expand your wisdom and knowledge and give you good health in spreading the good news to the needy in all parts of the world. The work of CAT has continued to help us. We need more literature for distribution. Such support can help people to be healed spiritually. Many people have come to know The Truth and we are now receiving many converts every Sunday during our fellowship meeting, Pentecostal, Catholic, Muslim and Protestant. My

prayer is that God should provide us with Preaching Funds as the Bible says we need to do the work of God while it is still day.

~ **Bro. Paskweli Odur**

I am very happy for the work you perform to this nation so that people come to understand the good news of the kingdom of God. Thanks for the Bible literature which you sent, it is helping me in preaching the word of God. I request for more if possible. Hoping to see you in the kingdom of God soon.

~ **Bro. Peter Wabwire**

NEWS FROM ZAMBIA

CHINGOLA

Thank you very much for the Gospel News, which is quite interesting. God willing, I will write an article and send you, for the magazine. I would like you to send me the book "Wrested Scriptures". Here in Chingola we have no problems with our postal box as it has been registered in my name as a personal one. Bro. John Bwalya would like to receive the Gospel News.

~ **Bro. Pinoty Chimbele**

KABWE

You are right, Brother, in several countries postal authorities have tightened up the rules regarding the use of postal boxes: I'm praying this will not happen here in our country. Could you please send me discs on Scriptural subjects, as I have a friend who is a believer whose disc player I am able to use. Please also continue to send me Gospel News, since I have not lost one since you started sending them to me.

The coming of Jesus Christ is very near, that's why things are changing every now and then, but many people don't know about our hope. About Bibles, please send me as many as you can spare: here we are so many and requests are being made for them.

Things here are not going well because of unemployment, so we have to work extra hard in order to survive. May God keep you.

~ **Bro. Greenwell Kunda**

KALOMO

There is a lovely example in Scripture of the servants of Solomon. I wonder whether they kept the words of the Queen of Sheba at the forefront of their minds, we read "*Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom*" (1Kings 10:8). The servants of Solomon lived happy and blessed lives because they stood before their king and listened to his wisdom.



From left: Bro. Costa and Okrey Kanembe, and a friend, Daniel Konayuma

~ **Bro. Costa Kanembe**

KANONA

I am fine and thankful to be so. I have just received a CD and Gospel News from you, and appreciate you sending me these.



In Serenje, Kanona, there is a prison, where I visit the prisoners. I teach lessons to them every Monday and Saturday. I would like 25 full Bibles for them and also any more books by Duncan. I wish to make a community public library. I have also two outreach points: one of about 10 local students and another of 15.

~ **Bro. Chrian Mambwe**

(Pictured above)

KASAKA

We have been promised that we will be given strength for all eventualities (1 Cor.10:13).

Temptation and its Conquest. Overcoming temptation involves appreciating that danger exists, recognising the cause and taking appropriate action. Sometimes that action involves avoidance, sometimes confrontation. (Prov. 4:14-15; Matt.5:29-30; Mk.8:33; James 4:7-8.) We must not place ourselves in a situation where temptation will arise. We must remove ourselves from circumstances where temptation, or danger, has arisen. (Psa.1:1; Luke 4:30). We should seek the company of those who are wise and strong, and who will influence us for good. (Prov.9:6; 13:20; 22:17-18).

We must deny our wayward emotions and fleshly desires (Rom.13:14; Eph.4:22). We must be quick and decisive when we are confronted with temptation, and positive in our reaction against it. (Prov.1:10,15; Matt.16:23; Heb.12:1.) We must be awake to, and aware of the insidious nature of temptation, (Matt.26:41; Luke 12:15; 1 Cor.10:12; 1Peter 5:8-9).

We are inadequate on our own to conquer every temptation, and we must seek God's help in prayer and through His word. We have a pattern of perfection in Jesus we need to emulate and adopt that model. (Matt.6:13; 26:41, Heb.12:1-2; 2 Peter 2:9).

~ **Bro. Maxwell Choongo**

MAZABUKA

Thank you for the latest copy of Gospel News, it is always lovely to hear and learn how others are doing in the mission areas they serve. We have had the visit of Bro. Andrew and Sis. Josie Walker in Mazabuka, and we have a newly baptised Brother Creighton who has no Bible, he has requested the NEV which has a commentary and abbreviated *Bible Basics*. Also I have a

Pastor who lives in Nega Nega and he is very interested as well and I would like to ask for three Bibles and three *Bible Basics*. In the Old Testament we read of Moses, who turned aside to see the bush that was not consumed by burning. In our daily lives God calls us in some way so that we turn aside to hear what He has to say to us through the Scriptures. Moses was 80 years old when God spoke to him but he was not too old for God to use. He was a shepherd, just an ordinary job, but God uses ordinary people like you and me, to minister to others the words of life.

Moses had a rod in his hand to help with his work as a shepherd; nothing special, just dead wood, but God took that and made it work with His power. That rod became powerful it parted the Red Sea, brought water out of the rock, etc. God can take whatever talent we have and make it work in His service. God told Moses to put his hand into his coat and it came out leprous a sign of sin. God told him to put it back into his coat, and when he obeyed it came out clean again. God is the only one who can cleanse us from sin. God had heard his people cry out to Him for deliverance, and Moses was the 'ordinary' person God chose to bring that about. This recorded incident in Moses' life has been a real blessing to me, so that is why I am sharing it with you. We are nothing, but God is able to do more with our lives, than we can think or imagine, if they are dedicated to His service.

~ **Bro. Gideon Hankomone**

Some people are slaves to sin, doing evil is what they treasure. Without that they don't feel themselves, which does not help (Rom.6:21). Before repentance, people live under the rule of sin (bondage): they live a life that bears poisonous fruits the fruit of death (Rom.7:5).

Paul tells and warns us that one who is enslaved by sin lives only to die, yet the slave of righteousness will live for ever. So He, God, wants us to be instruments of righteousness (Rom.6:13). It's up to an individual to choose life, having known that *'the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus'* (Rom 6:23).

Now what benefit does a slave have? We know that those giving themselves to sin are slaves to that, and the price is death. But there is great reward in being slaves of righteousness. People become enslaved to sin when they deliberately commit it. Jesus told the Jews that whoever committed sin was a slave of it (John 8:34). Paul in the letter he wrote to Titus said, *'they are led*

astray by various passions of pleasure' (Tit.3:3). There are many ways by which men become enslaved: we become slaves of whatever overcomes us (2 Pet 2:19).

Why not give yourselves to God and become slave of righteousness? For sin leads only to death, yet righteousness to eternal life in Christ Jesus. Do not obey sin, rather obey God, who will set you free (Rom 6:16-20).

~ **Bro. Chrivious Joseph**

SERENJE

I have received the parcel you sent me thank you for your help. May God our Father in heaven extend His hand upon you richly, that His work does not suffer due to financial problems. Yes, the financial situation is hindering in extending God's work in remotest areas. Covering a distance of 10 to 15 kilometers on foot becomes difficult to us who are living in isolation in rural areas.

~ **Bro. Cephass Kalungah**

NEWS FROM ZIMBABWE



BANKET

Thank you for the booklets and leaflets I received from you. I will have to share them with my two young brothers. We are truly interested in reading the Gospel News, which Dad received from you. Yes, Dad has many books which you have sent him on the Truth, which we used to borrow from him for our studies. Thank you for the booklet entitled 'Revision Studies' which we found to be most helpful for some questions which are asked regularly.

Father is not feeling well and is in hospital now and then, which is a great disadvantage. We love our Instructor a courageous man who preaches the Truth boldly to the people in our vicinity. We yearn for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to restore order to this troubled world.

~ **Collen Banda Yelulani**

BULAWAYO

In this country of ours we are all in good health, only facing the ups and downs of this present world of turmoil. At present I think I am just one of those who have enjoyed and welcomed the DVD and CD that were posted to me. I have managed to buy another DVD machine. The postage is rising on a daily basis, so this is a good economical way of providing us with spiritual material.

Truly the world is in a time of trouble, as we see what is happening world-wide earthquakes, floods, uprisings, epidemics, famines, weather or climate changes, just to mention a few.

In our own country many people are out of work, as many companies have closed, while others are working short hours. My own company is still under judicial management, but no machine has run since 2009: we are praying that there may be an investor, if the Lord wills.

~ **Bro. Ambrose Tanyepana**

CHIPINGE

I'm delighted to announce my job transfer from Rateishoek Estate to New Year's Gift Estate, just near Chipinge town. My new address is New Year's Gift Estate, Bag 2024, Chipinge, Zimbabwe.

With a warm heart of thankfulness I send my thanks to you for your kindness to me both spiritual and physical, and I thank God for joining me with the new people in a new environment. At first we were busy getting settled into our new home, and adjusting ourselves to our fresh surroundings.

We have been received by the people here since they are now learning that the Bible is not merely a text book from which people can obtain texts for sermons, but that it is a book that can enter into the lives and mould the characters of men in the humblest walks of life. So far I have got a very good number of people around us with a knowledge of the Truth. God willing I will continue labouring in the Master's vineyard till the final day and hour.

Truly the Truth is, whether young or old, we are all going where we have never been before. Every day we face new decisions, new demands and new dangers. How are we to find our way safely through these? There are maps for every part of the world; but the Bible is a map for the greatest journey of all, to eternal life itself. Yes, in seeking a map for Life we should open the Bible, because of the claims it makes. All over the world today thousands of people are reading the Word of God to find the answers to where they came from, why they are here on earth, and where they are going after this life is over. There is a good time coming on the earth in the not-too-distant future, and this is the time spoken of in the 113th Psalm, where we read, *'He (God) raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth the needy out of the ash-heap, that he may set him with princes, even the princes of His people.'*

At that great time men will no longer spend their lives in the headlong rush after money and pleasure, or in the mere struggle for existence, but will take time to think of the Creator, and their sweetest pleasure will be found in His worship and service. War will be abolished, for we are told in Isa.2:4 that *'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.'* Keep on praying, for the time is near.

~ Bro. Simion Madhimba



Bro. Madhimba, in brown jacket, and a workmate

CHISITUMBA

The word of the Lord came to Ezekiel, saying, *‘ Son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them, "When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people: then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not take warning, and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head. If he had taken warning, he would have saved himself"* (Ezek.33:1-4).

Ezekiel was made a watchman by God for the house of Israel. Ezekiel was made to warn the wicked to turn from his ways, and if he does not do so, he will die for his sin. Ezekiel 33:11: *"Says the Sovereign Lord, ' I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. The righteous when he sins, will not be allowed to live because of his former righteousness, he will die for his sins.'* Christ kept his righteousness for his whole lifetime, and was saved from death for that by God.

~ Bro. Ngoni Chikwata

CHIVI

It is a long time since I wrote to you, due to life's pains and pangs. With God nothing is hard. I love the way I live, however I fight hard to live. This is a lesson to me that God loves the poor and the rich: He put us on different levels. Many people in this world are fighting to get rich. Today in many countries people are attending churches which appear to give riches. For example, here in Zimbabwe people are flocking to a church which claims to have wonders and gifts that are not from God, of which we must beware.

My brothers, I know that the Word of God gives health and riches. The Word can also heal us from harsh conditions. With the Word we can walk in the light. We may plan our future life and

try to cover our life from mishap, but we may fail. The only thing we must do is to put our trust in God like Jacob and so many others in the past have done, remembering that our Saviour Jesus is our Redeemer and Guide.

~ **Bro. Dzingai Sumburera**

MAGUNJE

I just wish to say that God, who created me, has helped me greatly. I say that because this year I was dangerously sick, with severe vomiting lasting two and a half months. I could eat nothing, and could not even keep water down. I prayed to God to save me from that sickness, and wish to thank Bro. Robinson, Bulawayo CBM Treasurer, who helped me to buy medicine to cure the illness.

So with God's blessing I am now walking again and doing my home jobs. Brothers and Sisters, pray to God for help, because He is the only one who can. Let's bless our God in heaven.

~ **Bro. Joseph Ndoromazasi**

MASVINGO

Thank you for the Bibles you sent to us. They are very useful indeed. Could you please send us another six? Last week we welcomed back into fellowship Bro. Munhamo Mukova and Sis. Cluedza Mukova. We pray that our Lord may be with them as they travel on their journey into the Kingdom of God. We also pray for the return of our Lord.

~ **Bro. Admire Museba**

MT. DARWIN

Thank you for the Discs you sent to me all of them are wonderful and Bro. Thomas and I were very excited by the questions which were asked of the people in the streets, and their answers. Some of the answers showed me that some who call themselves pastors are causing people to go astray. So more work must be done in the field of God, so that the people will know the true gospel.

~ **Sis. Esther Chigiji**

Thank you for the DVD containing various books. I am today reading "*The Nature of the Angels*". My family and our Sunday School, join me in sending you greetings in the Lord Jesus. I will finish the 14 chapters on Angels. It would be hard to send the books in printed form, but the DVD, light as it is and very small, has many items on it. Please, God Willing, produce more DVDs as they take up less space.

~ **Bro. Sylvester Kamuriwo**

RUWA

Thank you very much for the New European Version Bibles you sent me: they are wonderful and food for life to those who are seeking Him. The Bibles are especially useful with a commentary good for Bible studies. I would like more, if it would be possible, as people who are seeking the Truth in God are visiting me many times. The Lord is working hard extending the good news of salvation to the nations.

I do have some prayer problems: sometimes I use the same prayers when preaching to other people, though on different occasions, which worries me. Some time I hope the Lord will help me with some other prayers.

~ **Bro. Maxwell Mlakah**

ZAKA

I mostly leave my pamphlets in the Post Office for people to take and read, in the Post Master's knowledge. What is needed is 'walk together,' and thus defeat sin. The day I opened the box they asked me our number, which I gave, and the names of who were responsible for keys, and their rights to collect mail sometimes without keys. This has run fairly well to the present day. Rentals are paid once a year, US\$24. To tell the truth, the system is very good, otherwise some who want personal boxes would need to pay for it in person.

Some people want the NEV Bibles, but they do not want to change their churches. Many people are spoiled with politics. They are keen on NEV Bibles because of their good commentaries, which can be read easily and help with understanding the Bible. I gave two NEV Bibles to two people of two Reformed Churches in Zimbabwe. Many are coming begging for these Bibles.

~ **Bro. Svuure Faustino**

News from Europe / Eurasia

NEWS FROM NORWAY



Some readers will live in societies where it seems materialism and postmodern indifference to the Bible is almost overpowering; our message seems almost doomed to rejection. But God's word doesn't return void; there are some who are increasingly searching for meaning in the coldness of our postmodern world.

KIM



our material in great

depth? Kim finally contacted us via a Facebook group.

We usually report baptisms of asylum seekers and refugees in Scandinavia, driven by their plight towards the Lord Jesus. But here is a local Norwegian driven by the spiritual plight of this modern world to come out of atheism, to be deeply impressed by the argument for creation, the power of Bible prophecy and the compelling logic of the true Gospel- and thus come to the Lord Jesus.

With joy we met with our brother and baptized him in a swimming pool in Kristiansand. His testimony, part in English and part in Norwegian, is from the heart and a triumph of God, His Son and His word over the emptiness, apathy and ultimate boredom of this age in the Western world. You can hear our brother on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eem5OIKHbE8>

Please pray for our brother in his relative isolation, and for all those other people, unknown to us but known to the Lord, who are likewise piecing together the Truth doctrine by doctrine but are shy to come forward. Here's our new brother in the cafe of the swimming pool after his baptism:

NEWS FROM UKRAINE



Baptism with an Ostrich as witness!

Another fruit of this work of distributing Russian Bibles is the baptism of PASHA in the Ukraine. Pasha works for a pittance as a nightwatchman at a deserted collective farm in a really remote rural area of Ukraine. The collective farm doesn't function much, but there are whole fields of rusting combines and heavy machinery which would otherwise be stolen for scrap value. So our brother, along with three other men, just sit around all day and night watching over it all. The tracks to the farm are overgrown and it'd be quite hard to steal anything in any case. The other three men live together in a room which has a wood stove. Since he came to Christ, Pasha doesn't want to be around the talking and behaviour of the world, where drinking home made alcohol is the main occupation. So he lives separate from them in what was once the gathering

room in this once bustling collective farm, this is not heated and the temperatures are below zero at night. He has a bed, two bags of clothes, and a table in the corner of the huge room, where he eats what little food he has:



At 31 years old, life seems bleak- single, geographically isolated, no family. But he has one prized possession - a cell phone and internet connection on it. Sitting through the long days and nights, he came to think about God and Jesus, and so he went in search of a Bible online. He has a tiny screen and the connection is agonizingly slow. But he came to our site and asked for a Bible, which brother Maksim sent him. He studied further with us and came to a strong desire to be baptized. Despite the very low temperatures, Pasha was willing to do this in a river - there was no other option. It's very wild there, and we found a place with a disused fishing platform. The cows come to drink there and the "beach" is basically cattle excrement. But we had some unexpected opposition from a huge ostrich. Ostriches were kept for meat at the collective farm, but with it breaking up, they escaped and now live wild. They are quite aggressive and very big, far taller than a man. Pasha had had experience with them before, and knew how to talk to the ostrich and calm it down- they can run fast and will chase if you run from them:



We performed the baptism in the very cold and dirty water, with the ostrich as witness. We just marvel at the power of the Gospel to compel a man to make that commitment to the invisible but so real Christ, and at the constant work of the Lord in *"adding daily to the church / ecclesia such as should be saved"*, calling each in different ways.



The Gospel News



News from the Americas

NEWS FROM TRINIDAD



Hoping that by God's grace you are all okay. Thanks for your letter; I see that you have had a recent medical challenge; I have been praying for you and hope things have greatly improved.

Thanks to God I am O.K. I had been living in a sort of dream world for some time, thinking a lot about being out there, and expecting to be outside soon for things looked very promising. Everything was in place for us to leave prison, and after 20 years behind bars I could almost taste freedom. My bags were packed and I was just waiting for the call to leave. Then the Minister of Justice was fired.

His successor announced shortly after taking office last October that the inmates would be pardoned, give her a couple of weeks. Earlier this year she said that the plan to pardon was the former Minister's dream, but it's not her dream. I had been living with the expectation of being pardoned for over a year, and when I realized that God wasn't ready I had to "reprogram" my mind to deal with the fact that I have to spend some more time in here.

I am very thankful for my spiritual family out there, you have helped to keep me strong, and being busy most of the day has helped to keep my mind off the disappointment, but I'm over that now. I will wait till God is ready and keep trusting in Him, continuing my spiritual journey, helping others when I can and trying to be a better person in God's sight. I was back to teaching English for a few months. I pray that God will continue to bless the great work being done.

~ **Bro. George Constantine**

Does God Torture People in Hell?

"Hell" is an English word which has been greatly misused, and is consequently much misunderstood. At the risk of oversimplifying a rather complicated subject, the main facts about hell can be summarised like this:

1. In the Old Testament, the word "hell" always means "the grave". To be more precise, it is a translation of the Hebrew word Sheol, which is a poetical word meaning "the dwelling-place of the dead", or, more simply, "the grave".

Modern translators of the Bible often avoid using the word "hell" in the Old Testament, and instead leave the Hebrew word Sheol untranslated. For example, take Proverbs 23:13,14. The ancient King James Version (1611) translates it in these words:

"Withhold not correction from the child: For if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, And thou shalt deliver his soul from hell".

The modern Revised Standard Version (1952) replaces the last line with *"you will save his life from Sheol"*.

Yet there are some passages where the Hebrew word Sheol so obviously means "the grave" that both the King James Version and the Revised Standard Version translate it that way. For instance, *"Jealousy is cruel as the grave."* (Song of Solomon 8:6).

There is nothing in the Old Testament to suggest that the souls of wicked people are tormented in a fiery hell.

2. In the New Testament there are two quite different Greek words translated "hell". One of these, *Hades*, is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Sheol, and consequently this also means "the grave".

A good example of the New Testament use of this word is in Acts 2, where Peter quotes Psalm 16 and says it is a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ. The prophet David, the author of this Psalm, wrote: *"Thou dost not give me up to Sheol, or let thy godly one see the Pit"*. When Peter quoted this in a speech, he declared: *"For David says concerning him (Jesus), 'For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor let thy Holy One see corruption ...'* he (David) foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. Clearly, what David and Peter are both telling us is that Christ rose from the dead: his body did not remain in his tomb, that is, in "Sheol", or "Hades", and so it did not "see corruption".

It is so obvious that the Greek word *Hades* does not mean "hell" that modern translations usually leave it untranslated. The RSV does this in most places, but in Matthew 16:18 it translates it as "death".

3. The Greek word *Gehenna* is altogether different. Modern translations do translate this word as "hell", and at first glance it seems as if they have good reasons for doing so. To begin with, the word always refers to a place of punishment. It occurs twelve times in the New Testament, all but one of them in the sayings of Jesus, and in several of these places it is associated with fire. It does rather look as if *Gehenna* refers to the classic idea of hell, as a place of fiery torture.

However, when we take a closer look at the twelve "*Gehenna*" verses, a very different picture emerges. In only one of them (Matthew 10:28) is there any mention of *souls* going to *Gehenna*. And even there it does not suggest that the soul is *tormented* in *Gehenna*; on the contrary, it says that the souls are destroyed there. Moreover, in seven of the twelve passages it refers to the *body* or parts of it such as feet, eyes and hands going into hell. What are we to make of that ?

Reference to any good dictionary soon solves the riddle. *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary* says:

"GEHENNA, the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, in which the Israelites sacrificed their children to Moloch, and to which, at a later time, the refuse of the city was conveyed to be slowly burned: hence hell ..."

So when Jesus spoke of *Gehenna*, he was talking about a place that everybody who had ever been to Jerusalem would know. He was making a sort of parable out of it. In effect, he was saying something like this:

"You know that horrible place, Gehenna, where the people of Jerusalem get rid of their rubbish by burning it ? Well, let that be a lesson to you. On the day of Judgement, God will rid the world of what He regards as `human rubbish' people not fit to be given everlasting life. Instead, they will be sentenced to an everlasting death. Body, soul, feet, hands, eyes everything belonging to an evil person will be destroyed on that Day, as surely as the fires of Gehenna destroy Jerusalem's rubbish nowadays."

4. To recapitulate, in all the Old Testament references to hell, and some of the New Testament references, the word simply means "the grave". In the other twelve New Testament references to Hell, the word means "The place where the wicked will be wiped out of existence on the day of Judgement."

These facts fit in with the Bible teaching that "God is love". (1John 4:16). It is hard to see how a loving God could possibly torture wicked people for ever and ever ! But it is altogether reasonable that, on the day of Judgement, our Maker should "unmake" (destroy) those rebellious people who refuse to accept His way of salvation.

Bro. Alan Hayward (UK)

Days In Dodoma

(Dodoma, Tanzania)

It was a pleasure to spend two days in Dodoma with my Brothers and Sisters in Christ, students and friends. More than sixty attended at the venue in the local hall built of mud with a grass roof, Bro Yona Mlula, recorded sixty names, of those who attended the talks and there were many young people listening outside the hall.

We were expected to be in Hombolo, earlier, but the bus we were travelling in broke down. However, many were interested and heard what the Christadelphians believe, teach and preach, together with the distribution of booklets, leaflets and displays on the walls of some buildings. Many people realised that what we believe and teach is really from the Bible, not man-made. I have to say thanks to our host, Mr Yona Mlula and others who supported the visit.

At one time there was some doubt whether this event would take place, but under the grace of God, many people contributed and made the whole thing possible, so we are especially grateful.

Lastly, my thanks to all who willingly replied to my call and tried to ensure that the work of teaching and other Gospel activities continue in Dodoma. I also cannot forget the generous contribution by the benefactor who helped me.

Bro. Ayubu Sazi Kilumbi

Witnessing For Christ ~ Witnessing To Christ

(New Zealand)

Christian believers are Jesus' army!

When our Lord departed `this world' for a time, he left specific instructions to his band of dedicated followers: "*Go into all the world ...*" This was to preach, teach and baptise in his name. Believers are the body of Christ, and he is the head, the planner, the director, the motivator.

In the Western world, many are tired of religion with all its apparent limitations and weaknesses. The `Church' in general is quite culpable in generating this adverse image and outcome. Education, however, does not carry the same negativity. In fact, education is now a driving force, sought after with almost religion-like fervour ! Education provides a way in too many that church-based religion has turned off. The question is - how can we make good use of this situation ? We can offer Bible education !

In my lifetime I have witnessed the transition from Christadelphian lectures and publications to Bible Seminars and the Internet that have made good progress, the modes may change but the objective remains - to bring new members to the family of Christ. The apostles frequented the temple in Jerusalem and the synagogues elsewhere and built the first Christian community.

If we are to preach Christ, then we will do it his way. His WAY is unique. He focussed on God's love and concern for the fallen state of mankind, less on the impending judgement of sinners. He urged and facilitated serious conversation - not just `church' attendance. He went for the heart, too, not just the head. "*The common people heard him gladly*", we are told in Mark 12:37. We suspect they still do !

A witness is one who sees and tells!

If we are witnessing FOR Christ then we ought to do it his way, teach his words, his doctrine, his methods. Our motives are to be his motives - not ours ! It is a true observation that the only CHRIST many people may see is YOU ! Jesus wanted to change people, not just educate them. The book of Proverbs, chapter one sets out the process, first knowledge - the facts, then understanding - the logic and reason. Last comes - the wisdom, the sound application of both knowledge and understanding. "*Wisdom is the principle thing - therefore get wisdom*". We are wise if we preach his Gospel, his way, in the manner he would approve of.

A witness is one who defends truth!

If we are witnessing TO Christ then we ought to do it faithfully. Jesus' faithfulness to his God and Father is singular. Christ is termed "The Faithful" in Revelation - so also is John! We may not be sinless like Jesus, but we can be faithful - like John. Faithfulness involves honesty. If Jesus' teaching has become our `Hero', then we will seek to honour him - not ourselves. This is not easy, being burdened with the `weakness of the flesh', but it is achievable. How ? Why ? We will witness to the forgiving nature of our God that we have received and accepted. We can set our hearts to demonstrate this divine attribute for others.

With Christ, his love of God and his reciprocal love for men and women were total and show us the more excellent way! He - to his God and Father, we - to our God, Father - AND to our beloved Saviour and Lord.

Bro. Neil Todd

Be All of One Mind

(Subri, Ghana)

The Acts of the Apostles is the witness of the work continued after the Lord's death and we read in the first chapter that he addresses one called `Theophilus': "*The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and teach*" (Acts 1:1-3). Who Theophilus was we are not certain, but this name means "Friend or Lover of God" and indeed this could be a general title given to all those knowing God's truth and desiring to walk therein.

After the Lord's resurrection, he appeared to his disciples and charged them not to leave Jerusalem, but to: "*Wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence*" (Acts 1:4-5). As the disciples gathered together with the Lord after his resurrection, they naturally wondered if he was to then establish the Kingdom of God on earth as God's son, the Messiah. However, he replied: "*.. It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth*" (Acts 1:7-8).

The Kingdom was not to be established then, but only in God's future appointed time. However, prior to this, they were to be given the great work of spreading the gospel message to all peoples throughout the world. We, as Gentiles, have learned of His name and what is required to walk in God's ways, because of the apostle's work of witnessing and the precious record they made.

The Lord Jesus was with the disciples for forty days after his resurrection after which he was taken to heaven to reside at the right hand of the Father.

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, `Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:7-11). Not knowing what exactly to expect, the disciples gathered together to strengthen themselves through prayer and through the bonds of unity and fellowship they shared until the promise of the Lord came upon them: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren" (Acts 1:14).

When the gift of the Spirit came upon the twelve it lighted upon them in the visible form of tongues of fire accompanied by the sound of a mighty, rushing wind. This portion of God's power invested them with the gift of healing, miracles and speaking in tongues, in order to spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus, to all peoples and nations. These apostles were for the most part, uneducated men, fishermen from Galilee, who could now speak in the languages of whom ever heard them: *"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). As those who heard and believed the word, were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ they joined the apostles as brethren in fellowship - part of God's household: "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:46-47).*

How the disciples must have been encouraged as they witnessed to so many with their newly found spiritual power, seeing great numbers joined daily to the body because of their work. Their lives were not easy, even with this addition of spiritual power. They were threatened, beaten and imprisoned by the council of elders who sought to halt the belief being spread of Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God and Saviour. These men counselled together against the disciples, saying: *"... let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, `Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.' So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done" (Acts 4:17- 21).*

Strengthened by the hand of God, they rejoiced in the deliverance granted and in the unity they felt among their brethren who joined with them in fellowship. *"And (Peter and John) being let go, they went to their own company and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea and all that in them is; and when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness. The multitude that believed **were of one heart and of one soul**: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:23-24,31- 33).*

The unity they felt one with another helped to sustain and strengthen them in the work. The same knowledge and understanding we are privileged to know through their witness, is to help us persevere today although our work of witnessing is not with power to perform miracles, healing or the gift of tongues as was theirs.

In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he exhorted: "... *Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. ... There is one body, and one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling ... One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all and in you all*" (4:1-6). Joined in that same unity of Spirit and mind, we, too, can know His care and nearness which strengthens us from day to day.

Bro. Francis Kotei Odiko

The Book From Heaven

(Bulawayo, Zimbabwe)

1. There are so many terms applied to the Biblical record that affirm its divine origin: Isaiah 34:16 - The Book of the Lord, Romans 1:1 - The Gospel of God, Romans 3:2 - The Oracles of God, Hebrews 6:5 - The Word of God, Colossians 3:16 - The Word of Christ.

2. There is much evidence from the scriptures that the Bible is an inspired book: (a) its marvellous unity (b) its superhuman range of teaching (c) its perpetual freshness and universal appeal (d) its transforming power upon the individual (e) the fulfilment of its prophecies, and (f) its indestructibility. The Bible's unity of doctrine is remarkable from its beginning to the end. There is one system of doctrine, one rule of faith, running from Genesis to Revelation. There is one dominant theme - redemption through the cross of Jesus Christ. The unity and plan exhibited on every page of the Bible is clear testimony to an activity more than human guiding the pens of the writers. It is quite clear how human wisdom is eclipsed by the teachings of the Bible. *Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* (1 Cor 1:20).

3. The scriptures offer a clear solution to all the problems of life. They treat upon God and man, the meaning of sin and suffering and death, of origin and destiny, in a manner understandable to the simplest, and yet inexhaustible in its profundity. Scriptural words exhibit a coherence and a sense of proportion not found elsewhere in any book.

The Bible is a book from God who is in heaven which ought to be our food and drink so that we can feel its perpetual spiritual freshness. The oftener we read it, the more we enjoy it and the more it builds us up. The deeper the mine is dug, the broader grows the vein, and the richer the ore: *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God"* (2 Timothy 3:16) and *"Holy men of God spoke they were moved by the Holy Spirit"* (2 Peter 1:21). Let us not be moved or cheated by any new preachers of new teachings based upon so-called bibles like the Koran or the Book of Mormon.

Bro. Ambrose Tanyepana

Testimony

(Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania)

I realized there is something to know about God, Jesus Christ and the good news of the Kingdom of God in general. Really, there is no other book other than the Bible.

I am from the Catholic Church, and my late father and mother were both Catholic members. The class where I attend at "Sinza" ecclesia at Kigogo area under my tutor Mr Ayubu Sazi is helping me to learn the gospel. The class at "Sinza" Kigogo was given to teach the truth about man, God, angels, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit gifts, and to know the truth about the difference between God and Jesus Christ. I am still going on with my Bible course at Sinza and my tutor is helping me to search the Bible. I hope that God will be with me. I think that soon I will become a Christadelphian member.

Patrick Julius Mduta

The Healings of Jesus

(Mazabuka, Zambia)

Matthew records some healings Jesus performed, and he gave instructions to his apostles: *"These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and proclaim as you go, saying, `The kingdom of heaven is at hand, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You will receive without paying; give without paying'"* (Matthew 10:5-8).

The Israelites were God's chosen people, but because they did not receive Him, we, the Gentiles, were grafted into the branches and received the good news of the kingdom of God. *"He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him, but to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God"* (John 1:11-12).

Acts 1:8 tells about the power of the Holy Spirit the disciples would later receive after Jesus' ascension into heaven. This power was to help them witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth. John 20:22-23 also talks about the giving of the Holy Spirit by Jesus to the apostles.

Is it true that power of healing still exists today? Do people forgive sin in this generation? Some people believe that a priest or pastor can forgive sin and that certain individuals possess the power of healing. They hold crusades advertising that they can heal and bring the dead to life, this is not true.

They attempt to exorcise demons but only Jesus and the apostles did this. In our lifetime we can be healed by prayer to God: *"Why do we call elders to pray for the sick? Because we are of the same faith and of one accord"* (James 5:14-15). In Mark 2:1-5, the four men took their brother to Jesus for healing of his paralysis; they had faith - in other words, these people were of one mind. Paul in 1 Corinthians has told us that God is not a God of disorder but of peace, so we must have one faith.

Why do we examine ourselves during the breaking of bread ? We examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith. We must test ourselves. Do you not realise that Jesus Christ is in you ? Unless indeed you fail to meet the test (2 Cor 13:5). We must test ourselves by our work according to what Jesus requires of us. We must ask ourselves questions. Am I doing the right things ? Do my works please the master ? (see Gal 6:4).

Most people desire the coming of the kingdom of God. For ourselves, we must pray that by God's grace we might be part of that kingdom. When Jesus will be ruling, there will possibly be a temporary period with worse diseases and troubles than in our present lifetimes. Can you imagine Zechariah's prophecy ? *"And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, their tongues will rot in their mouths. And a plague like this plague shall fall on their horses, mules, the camels, the donkeys and whatever beasts may be in their camps"* (14:12-15).

My brotherly advice is that while many of us have come from different religions which have taught different doctrines, we have now come to the right doctrines, and therefore we must not get carried away by what others believe concerning healing and miracles. We know that only Jesus and the apostles could do this, and now that the apostles are asleep, no-one can pass on these spiritual gifts, they just do not exist now.

God bless us all in our walk to the kingdom, and may we find favour in His eyes every day of our lives.

Bro. Gideon Hankamone

A King to Believe

(Bungoma, Kenya)

We have kings and queens, presidents and prime ministers in the modern world. Among these, not one can be measured against our Lord Jesus Christ. He is not just different but unique. He is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. He is a son of Adam, the Saviour, the son of David, the lamb of God, the only mediator and, importantly, the coming king. Jesus is the only king who was born a king. He is the King of the Jews, an ethnic king and King of Israel, a national king.

David said, *"The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handiwork."* Jesus is the only king for whom there is no means of measuring his limitless love. No telescope can bring him into visibility. He is enduringly strong and the centrepiece of civilisation. Our Lord Jesus Christ stands alone in himself, and belief in him brings hope. This hope can give us glory.

Our Lord is unparalleled and unprecedented. The way he conducted himself while still living in this world means we can have total trust in him. He is the grandest idea not only in the Bible but in any literature. He is the highest personality in philosophy. When we are faced with problems and tribulations, let us turn to him, for he is the supreme protector in time of criticism. He is the fundamental principle of spiritual religion. If we want to excel in life and become great people, let us not trust in our own minds. Let us put our trust in him, for he is the key to knowledge and the wellspring of wisdom.

If we live according to his will, doing what we are required as Christians, showing great mercy and being mindful of neighbours, preaching peace to all, then we may be able to bring faith in Christ to others. Though it is impossible to live one hundred per cent like Jesus, let us try to follow his example. There is always room for forgiveness once we admit that we have sinned and fallen far short of the glory of our Lord Jesus. Let us appreciate that all great and honourable actions are accompanied with great difficulty and we must seek courage from our Lord.

Brothers and sisters, you can't outlive him and you can't live without him. The Pharisees couldn't stand him, but they couldn't stop him, and the grave couldn't hold him. Every knee shall bow and worship him, and every mouth proclaim he is the true king.

Once we believe, our life won't be the same again. There will be happiness and joy during his reign when he comes back as the king to rule the whole world. May he come soon, God willing.

Bro. Nasingo Haron

Christadelphian Ministries Reports

SYRIA

Recently we were able to meet with our one Syrian brother whom we baptized a few years ago. He escaped through the mountains to Turkey, where he has now been joined by his extended family. Our brother had already shared the good news of Christ with them in their home village in Syria, but the situation there made baptism almost impossible. So it was with joy that we were able to baptize our brother's nephews and brothers HUSSEIN, JELAL, BARI, HAMODE and MENNAN. Here they are together with Hannan (third from left) in a tea house after their baptism:



They are very frightened young men, all from the same village. They have all been called up to serve in the Syrian army and also in the rebel command which is in control of their home village. The village has been shelled and bombed, is without electricity, water and sewage; all food has to be brought in from afar and is very expensive; no wages or pensions are paid, indiscriminate killings have occurred, and the whole area is largely deserted apart from the elderly and those otherwise unable to escape. They are desperate for news of their remaining families. There is a legitimate concern about many refugees and asylum seekers that they are simply seeking a better life in the West. But the situation in Syria is different - 100,000 dead, several hundred thousand wounded, basic amenities, income, food and employment cut off for millions, fighting

everywhere, and a few million refugees. The situation is truly desperate. There are Syrians everywhere in Eastern Turkey, rich ones, poor ones, some on foot, some in cars, but all uprooted and desperate.

Turkey is not a friendly place for refugees. The police arrest and hassle anyone who looks like one, and Turkey will not give asylum to anyone. Humanly speaking, that is understandable. Because of its geographical position, Turkey is flooded with refugees and asylum seekers - from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq. And now a few million from Syria. Short of putting landmines on their long, mountainous border or shooting at the crowds of desperate people surging over those borders, there's little Turkey can do about the influx of millions of desperate people into their country - apart from making things unattractive for them within Turkey. Our brethren cannot work legally, and their passports cannot be renewed because they have not done their military service. So they are without valid documents. We gave significant financial support to our brethren, some of which they will send to their elderly relatives who they say are literally starving. They are clearly suffering in many ways, not least from post traumatic stress. Only the Lord can resolve their issues and the world's problems, and we so wish and pray for His early return.

SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan is the world's newest nation, theoretically comprised of the Christian, black African South which seceded from the Moslem, Arabic North after years of civil war which claimed a few hundred thousand lives and created millions of refugees. However, the border area includes Darfur and other unstable areas, meaning that South Sudan has a steady influx of Moslem refugees seeking shelter from the fighting and famine. South Sudan itself is unstable, with much of the territory outside the main towns in the hands of various rival militias and cattle herding tribes at war with each other for pasture. The roads are severely potholed, not tarred and largely impassible. The only way of safely getting around is by rickety aircraft or barges along the Nile or other rivers. There is no functioning postal system, hardly any banking system, no use of credit cards, an airport with no security scanners - and almost everything is imported, which along with the hefty cost of transport makes life very expensive. And yet as a nominally Christian nation, the people of South Sudan know very little about their faith. There are very few Bibles around - everything has to be brought in from Kenya or Uganda. And there's no postal system either. So here is a nation which is crying out to be given Bibles and to be taught the Gospel. It was a common sight at our meetings to see people eagerly sharing a Bible.

There's very little teaching of any Christian doctrine going on because there are few pastors with any real idea about the Bible. It's part of our work at Carelinks to seek to take the true Gospel to those areas where it's not been preached, and South Sudan is one of them. We're pleased to report great response to our work on the current visit, and the first Christadelphian baptisms there.

The first baptism in South Sudan was of brother JOSEPH from Aweil, a town near the northern border with Sudan, pictured below.



He is typical of so many. He fled to Ethiopia on foot as a child. His father was killed, his mother and grandmother had the back of their legs cut and their ears cut off [mutilated people are a common sight]. He and one other person were the sole survivors in a bombing raid on one village. He was buried alive when a bomb landed near the hole he and an old lady were hiding in, and it took them hours to dig themselves out of the soil on top of them - they were almost buried alive. We've made a video of his story, we'll put it online soon Lord willing. We asked how he managed to forgive so much, and he has some profound comments. Like many other such 'lost boys' as they are called, he wandered through Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, feeling a strong sense of calling to Jesus, passing through Catholic and Protestant groups, but not learning much detail about the Bible. He prayed to God for guidance, to send someone to teach him the Truth, and then came upon our free Bible offer online. It was a wonderful climax to his amazing journey so far to be baptized. He is married and has built a large shelter under which he teaches up to several hundred people the new knowledge he has found online from us. He is eager to teach them the Truth. In his area, there are new arrivals of Moslems fleeing the war in the border areas and the famine. They arrive barefoot and with nothing.



Joseph does his best to look after them and to introduce them to Christianity. Our brother is desperate for Bibles and *Bible Basics* in Arabic to teach them - and for brethren to visit him and teach and probably baptize others. We're quite low on funds at this time - please consider donating towards at least the printing work. We can try to send the literature by DHL to Juba and

then it can be transported on barges to his place. Joseph is a lovely man, generous, courteous, cultured and a true lover of God and His Son and their word.



Please pray for this amazing opening ! And please, consider getting involved. This is true missionary work - taking God's Word and the saving grace of His Son to those who have not heard.

After that we journeyed to Malakal, a garrison town on the troubled border with the North. Most people there are in the security forces. It's cut off by Darfur to the West, Northern Sudan to the North, and rebel militias on the other sides. The reason for coming here was our outstanding brother Amos, a third generation Kenyan Christadelphian who has been working there for some time with a construction company. His work involves him traveling around a lot, and in doing so he has managed to teach many people about the true Gospel. These are all kinds of people, ranging from young men from cattle herding tribes who have grown up with nothing but violence, cattle rustling etc., right through to fellow Kenyan ex-pat contractors and professionals. It was with great joy therefore that we baptized ten brothers and one sister in the River Nile:



The other side of the Nile at this point [visible in the baptismal photos] is in the hands of rebels, apparently there was a major battle there the week before we arrived in which 300 people were killed. The banks of the Nile on the Malakal side are under curfew from 6 p.m. due to the fear of rebels landing in speedboats. So the baptisms had to be done well before then ! We take our cap off to Amos for a fantastic logistical achievement in gathering together people from throughout the region to our Bible conference held in a hotel on the banks of the Nile. Amos and Duncan gave talks hammering through the basic doctrines and practices of the one faith, ably translated to Arabic so all understood.

Again, the enthusiasm for God's word was apparent, as was the lack of Bibles - although we managed to bring at least some Bibles and *Bible Basics* with us.

One highlight was the baptism of MARTIN. He has internet on his phone and has had a lot of contact with brother Amos. The presence of mobile coverage is wonderful because it enables people to have some access to the internet if they have mobile phones, and this is a great teaching opportunity. Martin lives in Renk, accessible only by river during the rainy season, and a long, difficult journey by road and track during the dry season. It usually takes two days for the barge to travel from Renk to Malakal. Due to engine problems, it took our brother three days - and he arrived just as our seminar was ending. The barges on which travel is done are open to the sky there is no cover. You must take your own food, cooking facilities, clean water, cover against the rain in rainy season and mosquito net. And Martin travelled three days like that to be with us. Flying around South Sudan, the aircraft often follow the rivers, so it's easy to photograph these boats moored in the villages and small towns that are along the Nile:



One amazing thing about South Sudan is that there is mobile coverage almost everywhere, which means that for those with reasonable cell phones, there's access to the internet - even in places like this which can only be reached by boat or chartered helicopter. If you'd like to text Brother Martin some encouragement, or even call him, we'd be happy to let you know his cell phone number so you can help him feel part of our worldwide family in Christ.



Martin was baptized, and naturally wishes us to go to Renk [a peaceful, safe place] and spread Bibles and teach the Gospel. He and Bro Amos are real solid reliable brothers and persons. Now here again is an amazing opportunity to take the true Gospel "to the regions beyond", really pushing back the frontiers of true Christianity into hitherto closed areas of jungle and riverland.

Two brothers from New Zealand are willing to make a trip - but the potential is huge. Get in touch if you'd like to come along. And of course... work in this area is hugely expensive. We really are open to donations... sorry to keep mentioning that but it is really so. And please pray for the work, for the safety of those who go, and for God's glory to be achieved through lives being totally given to the Lord Jesus in spirit and in truth.

Please pray for the wonderful opening we've been given here... for a mighty and effective door has been opened, as Paul said, but there are many adversaries.

RUSSIA

Requests for Bibles and *Bible Basics* continue to flood in each day from throughout Russia. And this is without any advertising. It's from people searching for spiritual things and coming across us on the internet. The true Gospel is really going all over the place. This week we visited a group in the Urals and were delighted to baptize NADYEZHDA. She had never held a Bible in her hand until just over a year ago. She owns a business and one of her employees, our Sister Vera, gave her one of the NEV Russian Bibles. She was ready for it - she has read every day according to the Bible Companion along with our commentary and Bible Basics. There were many tears and great joy on earth and in Heaven. These two women really have become best friends and now sisters in Christ.

We were happy to have the company of brother Kolya, a great preacher of the Gospel and distributor of Russian NEV Bibles. A huge thank you to all those who enabled and continue to enable the production and distribution of these Bibles - they really are bringing forth fruit to the glory of our Lord.

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Many thanks for the prayers and expressions of support during our travelling. Finally, FYODYOR from Ust Ilimsk in far northern Siberia was baptized - that town is 1000 km. north of Irkutsk (Lake Baikal). The small towns and villages in that area are full of people from various parts of the former USSR. The reason is because this is the very area to which people were `sent to Siberia', some to camps (Solzhenitsyn readers may recall his mentions of Ust Izhma and other camps beginning with `Ust'), others simply exiled to live in those small villages in the middle of nowhere. The people sent there were the likes of Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventists, Jews, intellectuals, political dissidents and other free thinkers. An interesting group of people, living in an awful climate (brief hot summers, long cold winters) with poor transport links and few airstrips, many of them still subsistence farmers. This background explains why the JW's are a major religion there to this day; any leaving of the religion is felt to be a betrayal of the previous generation, who were exiled there because of their faith. Fyodyor joined the JW's at 15 years of age and was a zealous member. But once he was online, he started to work out errors in the teaching and practice of the organization, and that is how he came into contact with us.

He wanted more than anything to be baptized into Christ (JW's effectively baptize into their organization) and have a personal relationship with Him. And he didn't find this in the JW's. Fyodyor read most of our books which are translated into Russian (and they are many). He has an excellent knowledge of the Truth as well as a desire to really walk with the Lord Jesus. It was a pleasure to baptize him.

Please pray for your brother in his great isolation, remembering that his wife is still an active JW. Our postage bill is pretty big and we rely on your donations to keep sending out Bibles and

literature to the many people like Fyodyor who are genuinely searching. Thanks to the Lord's blessing of your and our combined efforts, so many are coming to the real Christ, now in the world's remotest areas. The Gospel of the Kingdom must go into all the world, and then the end shall come.



Here's our brother being baptized, and then immediately making his video appeal to JWs to come to Christ.

BELARUS

Belarus remains the last old school Communist dictatorship in Europe and one of the few left in the world. There are ample reports of Protestant groups being persecuted, pastors arrested and imprisoned, people fined for teaching the Bible to their children; and there is still a system of hard labour camps operating. Independent meetings are not allowed and the population are continually controlled via a system of informants operating on all levels of society. You can read such reports about Belarus at `The Voice of the Martyrs : Belarus'. Our work in Belarus is therefore limited, although we continue distributing Bibles and trying to care for individuals whom we have baptized there over the years.



It is about 15 years ago that we baptized Brother Sasha and soon afterwards his wife Natasha. They have been very faithful over the years. They live near the Chernobyl nuclear disaster site, and radiation levels are still very high there. Sasha was a member of the Chernobyl clean-up team and is now an invalid and losing his sight amongst other problems. Realizing the limitations upon preaching where they are, Sasha and Natasha are devoted to raising a family who will be eternal voices in God's Kingdom. They have seven sons, most of whom have serious problems as a result of Sasha's illness and their exposure to radiation; some deaf, others severely challenged. But they are capable of learning the Truth of Christ and this is why our brother and sister have continued having children. It's an amazing experience to be together with such a physically suffering family in small town Belarus and see their love for God's word and His Son. It truly was a pleasure to be with them and to baptize their eldest son VOLODYA in a local lake- and then to sit together and break bread.



We have many contacts in Belarus, many of whom fear to be baptized because of the situation there. Please pray for their faith and commitment to grow yet stronger. Please pray for our brother in his very difficult situation.

BELGIUM

We periodically report on the intense spread of the true Gospel amongst the Iranian community in Western Europe; we're pleased to report that this is continuing. This week we made a visit to Belgium during which three men were baptized, all in different locations.

SOREN has been intensely searching the Bible and reading Bible Basics for some time, and has been in contact with several of our team by email. He is fearless in his desire to openly follow Christ despite being from a Moslem social background. It's such a pleasure to meet such totally

sincere converts to Christ who so clearly see the error of Islam and simply want to be in Christ and love all things to do with Him. Our brother gave a very heartfelt confession of faith:



We then met and baptized DAVOOD, a contact of our brother Milad, who was baptized a few years ago in Latvia and is now reunited with his wife and family in Belgium.

Finally we met TAHER in Brussels and again it was a pleasure to meet and baptize such a well read man who has carefully analyzed so many religions and forms of Christianity before coming to the real Christ and realizing he has the pearl of great price.

Jesus the Teacher

(Mark 2:13)

Bro. David Yelulani

(Banket, Zimbabwe)

Teachers often exert a strong influence on the pupils they teach. It goes far beyond the simple transfer of knowledge. Good teachers provide role-models, impart wisdom, set professional standards and inspire their students to growth and achievement. They also attract students to their subjects. Ask any University where the biggest department is, and you will almost certainly find a brilliant teacher is the professor and head.

Jesus was a good teacher, and he drew large crowds. His teaching was simple. He spoke about everyday things which the people understood and to which they could relate. His teaching was deep. He touched people in the core of their being. He was never superficial or trivial. He stirred their imagination and caused them to despise their own superficiality. He introduced them to the real God and showed them the inadequacy of their own, shallow faith. He challenged them to rise above the petty and the narrow. He loved the people he taught. He believed in them and encouraged them to grow to heights they had previously not known. He lived whatever he taught. In dying he taught them more than his words ever said.

The greatness of his teaching is measured not by the size of the crowds who listened, but by the spiritual stature which his followers attain. How good a student of Jesus are you?

Joyful Commitment

(New Zealand)

As believers in Christ we can become excited reading about the things that Jesus said and did.

With the help of some Bible references and other study aids, we can often learn an even deeper message. Imagination is also a real asset. Small, seemingly insignificant details are often included by each Gospel writer, for a very good reason! Even help us understand the human side of our Lord that much better!

We take a look at a man called Zacchaeus, a tax man, and his amazing encounter with Jesus.

The record is in Luke 19:1-10.

The city of Jericho is the scene. Jesus entered in - and left. When Joshua conquered the land, this city, was to be fully devoted to God. Everything was to be destroyed. It is truly, a city of death and is used again (in that sense) in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan. Zacchaeus lived here! He is recorded as being very rich, presumably from his 'ill gotten gains'. Was he content with his money and living it up? I suspect not.

His name is drawn from an Aramaic word meaning 'Pure, righteous, clean' in a religious sense. This may tell us something important about Zacchaeus. Was he trying hard to put his life right? I suspect so!

Look at his enthusiasm to see Jesus. He must have had an urgent need? It couldn't wait!

It seems that Zacchaeus was much more than an idle spectator. He was a man with a mission.

1. He went out amongst a possibly hostile crowd?
2. He ran to get ahead of the rest.
3. He climbed a tree to see Jesus.
4. He watched and waited.

Their eyes met; there was a 'connection' being made.

Jesus looked and Zacchaeus saw. Now they communed and the first detail: *"Today, I must enter and stay at your house."* A truly Royal request - who could refuse? This was much more than the man, (deemed by others to be a sinner) could have anticipated or wished for. No wonder the record says he *"received Him joyfully!"*

Surely a mutual pleasure.

The lesson is clear.

Christ wants to enter the 'personal space' of every repentant sinner. He promises to *'arrive with His Father at our door!'* We must be ready, joyful and open up to them. Zacchaeus accepted, but made a public confession of his faith before witnesses. One wonders if this man had been influenced by John the Baptist, understood his sin, even baptized as a result of his heart change.

This confession has so much to tell us.

A number of commentators suggest that the present tense is employed in his words of commitment, so that Zacchaeus had already begun the process of restoration BEFORE this encounter.

Look at his spirit! A rich man willing to go 50/50 with the poor? Few would go that far! In addition, he regarded the law and acted lawfully in the matter of restitution (Exodus 22:1).

Paul's comment , "*...for the Lord loves the cheerful giver,*" (2 Corinthians 9:7) is very appropriate here. Guess Zacchaeus had little left after all that! Now he would feel `comfortable' about the Lord of Life entering his home and his life. One wonders if he had heard and embraced the Lord's words, "*How hard it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.*"

There is an important matter here.

Followers of Christ need to set about making amends, changing bad habits, putting wrong matters right with others, if they truly want the Lord to fully enter into their lives. This makes this one `little man' short of stature full grown, fully mature - A true son of Abraham and as seen and found by the Lord. Such examples must have inspired Jesus himself as He made His way off to Jerusalem, to the cross to complete His commitment to His Heavenly Father.

Bro. Neil Todd

Jesus Christ Will Come Again

(Torquay, UK)

The return of Jesus from heaven is clear from what he said to his disciples nearly 2000 years ago. His words were, "*I go and prepare a place for you...I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.*" (John 13:3).

Jesus also spoke about this in his Mount Olivet prophecy warning his disciples to beware of false claims of deceivers; he said, "*For as the lightning cometh out of the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be*" (Matt.24:27).

Everyone knows when there is a flash of lightning. With this comparison multitudes will know when the Lord Jesus has returned from heaven, especially those who have believed in his return and have waited for him. In the context of these verses Jesus speaks of mourning because of major disasters overtaking his people at this time; so Jesus says, "*and then all the tribes of the earth (land) will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory*" (Matt. 24:30).

Jesus Returns with Angels

The reference to the clouds of `heaven' must mean the angels: they are referred to as clouds because there will be multitudes of them.

In the next verse Jesus reveals one of the next duties assigned to them, "*And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*" (Matt.24:31).

If the sounding of the trumpet is to be understood literally it would mean that a miraculous heralding of great events is about to be accomplished, the emphasis of this verse is laid on the extent of the operation which will be world-wide and will consist of gathering together the elect of the Lord Jesus and will include the resurrection of those sleeping in the dust of the earth. (Genesis 3:19, Dan.12:2).

The Judgement

Many scriptures can be quoted to show that those responsible will be required to appear before the judgement seat of Christ that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad (2 Cor.5:10).

On another occasion Jesus repeated the need for the responsible to be gathered together for judgement. In the opening sentence he said, *"When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him. And He will separate one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats."* (Matt.25:31-32).

It is clear from the above that the Lord Jesus, together with the angels, will be engaged in the judgements of the saints after he returns from heaven and has established himself as King on the throne of his glory.

The location for the judgement must be somewhere in the Holy Land which means that those that have been gathered from other parts of the world will have to be transported, in some cases long distances to the Holy Land. The idea of those to be judged is therefore said to be brought together in clouds (or groups) is what Paul refers to when he writes, *"Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord."* (1 Thess.4:17).

An Explanation in Luke's Gospel

In this gospel Jesus foresees the situation where those who are called to judgement are singled out so that for example, *"Two men will be in the field: the one will be taken and the other left."* And they (the disciples) answered and said to Him, *"Where, Lord?"* So He said to them, *"Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together"* (Luke 17:36-37).

It seems that the purpose of this reference to eagles or vultures flocking to a dead body to eat it is to illustrate how they will arrive at that location from all directions: some having flown long distances. Similarly some of the saints to be present at the judgement will have to be transported long distances by the angels.

The Fig Tree

Lastly, in his historical survey of his return described in his Mount Olivet prophecy, Jesus introduced a developing fig tree to describe the progress of his return, *"When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near; so you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, at the very doors"* (Matt. 24:32-33).

The fig tree represents the nation of Israel which was re-established in the holy land in 1948. I suggest that Jesus actually referred to this event when he said, *"The sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven"* (v30). The reference to *'in heaven'* meaning that the State of Israel would be established in the political world, its birth being recognised by many major nations at the time.

The State of Israel has now developed into one of the major nations of our time in 2013, and we can rest assured that this development is a sure sign that the return of the Lord Jesus is `near, at the door' (v33).

Bro. Ralph Green

The Pope's Change of Mind

There has been much publicity on the Pope's recent proclamation that *"The Catholic Church must shake off an obsession with teaching on abortion, contraception and homosexuality"* otherwise he can see the moral edifice of the Catholic Church collapsing *"like a house of cards"*. This is the opposite of the alleged infallible teaching of his predecessors, showing that in order to keep and increase their membership they change their so-called infallible rules.

The Christian teaching is based upon the unalterable, infallible words of the Bible which speaks strongly on moral issues and other misdemeanours which, unless repented of, exclude one from salvation. *"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders, nor thieves nor greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you are washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ"*. 1 Cor 6:9-11 (NIV).

~ Bro Marcus Heaster

Blessed Is The Man Whose Delight Is In Yahweh's Law

(Mzuza, Malawi)

According to the Psalmist, the man is blessed because he has no time to waste by walking in the counsel of the wicked, nor standing in the way of sinners, nor sitting in the seat of scoffers, but he does make good use of his time by meditating with delight in God's law day and night. Let us consider God's law to mean the whole Bible, as it was written by God's direct inspiration.

As the Bible was inspired by God, therefore it is spiritual. Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman and said, *"But the hour comes, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such worshippers are those whom the Father seeks. God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth"* (John 4:23,24).

And so the blessed man having his delight in God's law by meditating in it day and night was taking in his life spiritual food. There are several righteous men in the Bible who had valued the word of God. Job was one of them: *"I haven't gone back from the commandment of his lips. I have treasured up the words of his mouth more than my necessary food"* (23:12). Again, Jeremiah had this to say: *"Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words were unto me the joy and delight of my heart: for I am called by your name Yahweh, God of armies"* (15:16).

Therefore is there any one among us who does not require God's blessings? I am sure there is none. Our desire, therefore, is to be like the man blessed in the Psalmist's message. Our friend's delight was in God's law day and night. Why not us?

Bro. Sylvester Tembo

New Wine

(Mark 2:22)

Bro. David Yelulani

(Banket, Zimbabwe)

When something that we use begins to wear out, we start to look for a new one. If a car is old, one component after another begins to wear out. The hassle of having to get it repaired every few weeks becomes too much. The costs rise. The inconvenience increases. Then, when the personal treasury is sorted out, the owner goes off and buys a new one. The seats are more comfortable. The paint isn't scratched. The brakes work well. The car goes like a bomb. And the smell inside is wonderful. Even the driver feels like a new person.

Jesus didn't fit into the old moulds. He was altogether new. In many ways the old religion had become a dull observance of many petty rules and regulations. There was no joy, no peace, no personal power, and no escape from the burdensome guilt that breaking the many laws imposed on people. Jesus was not just a repair of the old model. He brought a new faith, a new understanding of God, a new way of living. He was a breath of fresh air. There were no glass bottles. Wine was stored in goats' skins. As the wine fermented, so the skin stretched. Once used it could not be re-used. The skin would not stretch again. The new wine would cause it to break.

Have you tasted the new wine of Christ's empowering love ?

Youth Camp at Lake Kariba Zimbabwe

(Banket, Zimbabwe)

My name is Collen Banda Yelulani, aged 26, the fourth son of David B. Yelulani and my young brother; Norman, aged 23, is the fifth son in the family. We were privileged to have a wonderful opportunity to appear at the young camp for the first time which was held at Lake Kariba on 24-28 April 2013.

For four days we immensely enjoyed participating in every activity. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Brethren and Sisters who organised the event, not excluding Christadelphian elders who were present with us, namely: Farai Phiri, Moses Dhlakama, Danmore Kaocha, Richard Katongomara and Archbody Muhle. They monitored every situation in a splendid manner.

We learned the Truth from different speakers at the camp. We were spiritually and physically uplifted and stimulated. It was a great honour for us to be among other youths from different areas of Zimbabwe. We were taken to different places within the lakeside where we were shown boats, hotels, animals, crocks, fish and the immigration office at the border of Zimbabwe and Zambia. Then we went to see the dam wall, which was wonderfully constructed. While at the dam wall, we were allowed by the responsible authority to cross the border and visit the Zambia side for one hour only, then back to Zimbabwe. We all enjoyed the trip.

The photo was shot on the Zambian side. Standing left to right: me, Collen, and my younger brother, Norman. We thank God for His love, guidance and protection. This was a memorable event for the Christadelphian youths in Zimbabwe.



Bro. Collen Banda Yelulani

"Men at the Gate"

(Pinetown, South Africa)

An exciting recent development in South Africa is the holding of meetings especially for brethren and known as 'Men@TheGate'. Conceived in imitation of similar meetings held for sisters ('Women@TheWell'), these male gatherings were at first held over a couple of days at a central venue. Problems of cost and logistics, however, led to a decision this year to plan regional meetings instead.

The first of these was held mid-August on the east coast in KwaZulu-Natal and was hosted by the Pinetown ecclesia. Here just short of fifty brethren, ranging in age from eighteen to eighty, came together to discuss particularly the responsibilities of men in the Truth in the 21st century.

The speaker was Bro. Richard Polling, of the Spalding UK ecclesia, but at present located in Durban. He considered the topic in four parts: the importance of the Word of God as our foundation; the divine prototype of what God required of Adam; the example of Abraham in a world flawed by sin and idolatry; and, finally, the significance in every age of the work of the watchman.



All four sub-themes drew attention to the divine requirement that men have a special role in spiritual nurture and protection. Each talk emphasized that these responsibilities are to be exercised at different levels: first in the home, then in the wider family of the ecclesia and finally by holding out the Word to a perishing world outside.

The all-day programme included a time of group discussion, followed by reports-back which enabled all the delegates to benefit from the work of each group. One of the most encouraging features of the day was that one in five of those present were young men still investigating the call of the gospel before making a commitment to it.



In the coming weeks, other similar meetings are planned for other parts of South Africa: Gauteng, the Eastern Cape and the Cape Peninsula. In thanking our loving Father for this initiative, we pray that it will fulfil a much-needed encouragement for brethren at the close of the age.



Bro Robin Lamplough

Resettlement of our Refugee Brethren

(Canada)

Mention was made in the previous issue, of the complexity of the above undertaking greatly challenging our trust in God's promise of being a God unto us, and the requirement for the strength and encouragement provided in his Word.

Thinking of this, I recall the daunting challenges which the Jews returning to Jerusalem faced in building the temple (Ezra 1 6). Following the command of King Cyrus of Persia, appointed by God, to build the temple in Jerusalem, the Jews commenced this work, but were later forced by King Artaxerxes to stop. As most likely we would have also concluded, the Jews felt that the time had not come for them to pursue this work, and they then focused on making themselves comfortable in ceiled houses. Then God sent them a strong message by his prophet Haggai to *consider their ways* and urging them to continue the building of the temple. This required great effort as they were commanded to go up to the mountain and bring timber for this purpose. I don't suppose that they had the luxury of the heavy machinery to facilitate this operation, that we have. The effort required would have demonstrated their interest in God's work, just as God's sacrifice of his only begotten son for us clearly reveals his great love for us. Yes, God's commandment pointed to the priority of placing his work above their own interests, even in the face of great obstacles, and further emphasized that he would be with them in this project as Sovereign Lord Almighty with all the wealth of the universe which he possessed, above the seemingly powerful adversaries.

I suggest this message is for us in our situation with our Brethren in the refugee camps in their clearly dire need of assistance. God could have built the temple, but he assigned this project to his people, and could similarly bless us with this honour, to rescue our brethren from their distressing situation. He used Cyrus, a Gentile king to spearhead the building of the temple in Jerusalem, who in turn delegated this task to God's own people, which seems to be pointing to the fact that God wants us, his own people, to work with his suffering children. Just as this project was not a walk over for them, similarly resettling our brethren will present some formidable challenges to us. Despite these difficulties, he wants us to persevere on the basis of his all-powerful presence with us as we seek to honour Him by obeying his great commandment of loving our neighbours as ourselves. Let us therefore, commencing with earnest prayers to him, arise to this great commission.

Sis. Esther Worrell

Confessions

(Banket, Zimbabwe)

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. But whoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov.28:13). The conditions for obtaining the mercy of God are simple, just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some great thing in order that we may have forgiveness of sin we need not make long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances to confess our sins but *"he that confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy"* (Prov 28:13).

The apostle James says, "*Confess your faults to one another and pray one for another, that you may be healed*" (James 5:16). Confess your sins to God, who only can forgive them, and your faults to one another. If you have given offence to your friend or neighbour you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty to freely forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because you have wronged your brother and thus disobeyed the Lord's commandment. The case is brought before the only true mediator, our great High Priest, "*who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*" (Heb.4:15-16).

Those who have not humbled themselves before God in acknowledgement of their guilt have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced that repentance, and have not with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit confessed our sins, abhorring our iniquity, we have never truly sought, nor found the peace of God. The only reason why we do not have remission of sins that are past is that we are not willing to humble our hearts and comply with the conditions of the Word of truth. Confessions of sins, whether public or private, should be heartfelt and freely expressed. It is not urged from the sinner, it is not to be made in a flippant and careless way, or forced from those who have no realisation or sense of the abhorrent character of sin: the confession that is the outpouring of the inmost soul finds its way to the God of infinite mercy. The Psalmist says, "*The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit*" (Ps.34:18).

True confession is of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as to be brought before God only. They may be wrongs that should be confessed to individuals who have suffered injury through them, or they may be of a public character they should then be publicly confessed.

In the days of Samuel the Israelites wandered from God, suffering the consequences of sin, for they had lost their faith in God; lost their discernment of His power and wisdom to rule the nation; lost their confidence in His ability to defend and support His cause. They turned from the great ruler of the universe and desired to be governed as were the nations around them. Before they found peace, they made this definite confession: "*We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask for ourselves a king*" (1 Sam.12:19). The very sin of which they were convicted had to be confessed. Their ingratitude oppressed their souls and severed them from God. Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation: there must be a decided change in the life everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. The work that we have to do is plainly set before us. "*Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil. Learn to do well; seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow*" (Isa. 1:16-17). "*If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die*" (Ezek.33:15).

Paul says, speaking of the work of repentance, "*For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a Godly manner: what diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter*" (2 Cor. 7:11).

When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the doer does not discern the defects of his own character, nor realise the enormity of the evil he has committed, and unless he yields to the

convicting power of the Spirit, he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere, nor in earnest. To every acknowledgement of his guilt he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that if it had not been for certain circumstances he would not have committed the sin for which he is reprov'd.

After Adam and Eve had eaten of the forbidden fruit they were filled with a sense of shame and terror: at first their only thought was how to excuse their sins and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord enquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt upon his companion. *"The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave of the tree and I did eat"*. The woman put the blame upon the serpent, saying *"The serpent beguiled me and I did eat"* (Gen.3:12-13). Why did you make the serpent? Why did you suffer him to come into Eden? These were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of mankind and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the Divine spirit and will not be acceptable to God. True repentance will lead a man to bear his guilt.

Bro. Fibion Ngozi

A Worker Approved by God

(Mazabuka, Zambia)

In real life we go to school so that we can get an education. We may then further our studies in order to obtain a higher qualification. When we see an advertisement that suits our credentials, we apply for the job. When we are picked for it, we try our best to please our employers by doing our very best to make it a job well done. This should be the same with God's work.

What kind of qualification do we need in order to be in the kingdom of God? Paul tells us, *"Do your best to present yourself as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of God"* (2 Timothy 2:15). How do we rightly handle the word of God? Paul again tells us, *"It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now, as always, Christ will be honoured in my body whether by life or by death"* (Philippians 1:20).

When we believe in Jesus Christ, we begin our qualification for God's kingdom. When we get baptized, we begin obeying the commandments of God and put off our old self, and we put on our new self which renews our minds, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:23-24). We must be united in the body of Christ, knowing well that in Christ we are all one, regardless of colour, race, language, education, culture and geographical location. Love unites us together. To confirm that we are one in Christ and that the number one has value, Paul goes on to say: *"Therefore there is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all"* (Eph 4:4-6).

Jesus charged his disciples to preach the gospel to all parts of the world. This gospel has to be preached everywhere we go. Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and affliction.

The Bible tells us that he who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labour, *"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building"* (1 Corinthians 3:8-9). We have a task to do in the Lord's field, we have to labour well and achieve His objectives by trying the very best we can to deliver the gospel to all parts of the world. The letter to the Hebrews warns us that we ought to take care how we cultivate in our field (the Lord's vineyard). We must make sure we do our work diligently without being a stumblingblock to those who hear our message of salvation.

Here is a challenge and a duty for us to perform before our Lord returns to establish the kingdom. We must do our work with open minds and without fear of telling the world how important it is to believe in God and His son Jesus Christ. We must not feel comfortable that now we are baptized we will be saved, but continue doing the Lord's work throughout our lives and let only death separate us from the Lord's vineyard. When we die in Christ Jesus, we must not be sad but rather rejoice together knowing that we are merely sleeping awaiting resurrection and God's reward of eternal life.

Bro. Gideon Hankamone