

A Country in Need

Zimbabwe is a country that has been through so much in recent history. They are a nation which is overcoming the worst economical downfall in the world. It is a country with many physical and financial needs, but even more than that, it is a country that has many, many spiritual needs. As people are clinging onto any religion that comes their way, in hopes to improve their physical needs, Christianity seems to be one of the many religions that is proclaiming to possess the only way of truth. Because of this competition for the hearts and souls of men, it seems as though it is a religion that has taken a wrong turn and compromised in its beliefs to try and attract the masses. While we were in Zimbabwe, we heard about the false teachers and false prophets out there deceiving people. Many of the stories we heard seemed too bizarre to be true. Sooner or later the people will catch on to these false teachings in the church and may discard Christianity completely.

Actions Speak Louder than Words

What people need is a true demonstration from Christians. Not in the form of a religion but in the form of lifestyles demonstrated by those who truly are Saved. Those who claim to be Christians must understand exactly what it is that they are professing to be and behave accordingly - men and women of integrity and love, serving the living God in all areas of life. Not the superficial nominal Christianity we see so often today. This is what we came to Zimbabwe to teach the people.

Discipleship Courses

While in Zimbabwe we conducted several Discipleship courses. These Discipleship courses each lasted 3 days with plenty of lectures in them. The main focus was Salvation - How can you disciple a man who is not Saved? Salvation by grace alone received by faith alone was preached. Repentance was constantly brought up in many of our lectures and teachings. The participants were very grateful and so humble in their learning. Even the pastor of a church that we worked alongside confessed an error in his teachings and promised to rectify it. It is such a challenge to see leaders and teachers in a church being so humble before an entire congregation.

Wonderful Teaching Experiences

Under the topic of *Salvation*, some of the other lectures we gave were: *I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel*, *The Beatitudes*, *What is a Christian?* and many more. It was such a blessing to present these topics to people who are willing to learn and appreciate the time we spent with them and answer any questions that they had. We asked

the participants what they had learned from the course and what touched them the most and some of the answers were as follows:

"I learned about self-examination" "You have made it clear about why you should tell people about Christ and the Cross", "This course is something that needs more people to attend. These teachings need to be told to more people.", "This is a good course especially for Evangelism. We usually speak about crusades when talking about Evangelism. But now we can see that it's not just about crusades but about one-on-one talking to people about God."

During these teaching experiences we were able to equip the participants with the appropriate books which deal with the issues in more depth.

Encounter with the Youth in Zimbabwe

We were given the opportunity to preach to a youth group where we could address assurance of salvation and deal with peer pressure, especially in the form of sexual immorality. We had a good time of counselling afterwards. The youth were asking different questions with regards to what is, or is not, immoral and what does the Bible say about these issues. I was able to use my testimony to help them on many of the challenges that I had heard that they were facing. It was the first time that I had ever done this and it was so great to see how what I might have meant for evil in the past God now uses for good. It is so important that the next generation understands what a Biblical Worldview is and that they are trained up to be strong, godly leaders. We were encouraged to see at least one youth leader attend our course. We hope that what we teach the leaders will be passed down to the young members of their churches too.

Gripped with Fear

I went to preach at a rather rural church, where I addressed the issue of making a stand for God and His Kingdom. When I was done preaching I had a time to minister to the people in prayer and everyone that came up to me honestly told me that they had no courage to share their faith. It is interesting to observe how the devil uses fear to grip people and stop them from sharing their faith.

Teaching the Congregation

One congregation was willing to come to night classes for Discipleship training. They were full of questions and interested in discussion. Questions about Salvation and the Trinity as well as topics such as Suffering were discussed. The need for practical Discipleship training was so evident and greatly appreciated by the participants that at the end of the classes one of the ladies came to us and said: "I usually have a lot to say, but now I am speechless"

Church Plant

In central Zimbabwe there is a very rural and secluded peoples group. In this particular area there is no Evangelical Church; only churches of a cultish nature. We went alongside a church group to go and plant a church in this area. The spiritual state of the people there is very poor as they are largely influenced by Zionist cults. While we were discussing Bible related topics with some of the already Christian people there, they had many questions about what someone should do who comes out of the cults in the area and can they still practice some of the things that they used to do in the cult. Much training, Evangelism and prayer is needed for this area.

Praise the Lord

Praise God that we were able to do all these courses and seminars without any disturbance from the enemy! Our vehicle was safe the entire time and the normally sticky law enforcement never gave us any trouble. Even though we spent three hours at the border going in to Zimbabwe, it was actually a blessing as we took six hours to get in last time and we heard stories of people taking up to two days to get into the country!

Ministry

In total, we were able to hold 3 Discipleship conferences, with 23 lectures in total. We presented 6 Devotional messages and we were able to preach at 4 Sunday Church Services. We were also able to show 15 Films which reinforced the lectures we gave. Our time was well spent and blessed by the Lord. We are grateful for that which He allowed us to accomplish.

Please Pray for Zimbabwe

The people of Zimbabwe desperately need the truth. Pray that the Lord of the Harvest will send out workers into the harvest field. The Churches of Zimbabwe have to fight off false teachers and cultish groups constantly and they are losing people to these charlatans. Pray that God will give them strength and courage to overcome!

South Africa Ministry

After Zimbabwe we had the opportunity to run a BWS in Vereeniging. The participants were so ready to learn, it was a blessing to be able to speak to them. I had the task of speaking about The Message in the Music, which didn't sit too well with most of the participants. Dealing with an issue as sensitive as music is not easy, but because of the semi-hostile reaction I received, I could see it was needed. I also had the privilege of speaking about Peer Pressure, a topic which I have had to deal with a lot in my own life.

“If My people who are called by My Name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

John Clifford

Email: Jclifford@frontline.org.za

Frontline Fellowship

P.O. Box 74 Newlands 7725

Cape Town South Africa

Tel: 021-689-4480

Fax: 021-685-5884

Email: mission@frontline.org.za

Website: www.frontline.org.za