

Transport

With over 15000km travelled on our mission trip to and from Zambia, the need to stay alert on the roads was evident. Overturned trucks on the sides of the roads and huge potholes eating away at the tar, makes one all the more cautious when travelling. While travelling through Zimbabwe we were in the process of overtaking an 18 wheel truck when two of their tires exploded! Thankfully God's hand of protection was on us and we managed to come away unharmed. Despite the far distances travelled, four border crossings, going through rocky, sandy and rough terrain, our faithful vehicle brought us home, which, in itself is an answer to prayer.

Caring for the Elderly

En route to Zambia we were able to provide *Boxes with Love* to an old age home, in Zimbabwe. The boxes contained food, toiletries and literature. When in Zambia we visited an old man who only had one leg. On our previous trip we were able to supply him with a wheel chair. This time around we could give him blankets, a mattress and tarpaulin to cover his leaky grass thatch roof. Unfortunately the young men in his village don't look after him much and he has to fend for himself most of the time.

Rural Outreaches

In the western part of Zambia, is a very rural peoples group. They have been reached by the Gospel but only to a small extent. When challenged on what they believe in, a common response is a salvation based on works. "I am a Christian because I pray", "God will let me into Heaven because I do more good works than bad", or the inevitable: "I have always been a Christian!" These are some common responses to the question "what makes you a Christian?" During our outreach we were able to visit different rural clinics to conduct some surveys and opportunities for evangelism were many. Sitting under trees and next to water wells we were able to spread the Gospel as these were common places for nearby villagers to be. Not only did we have the opportunity to spread the Gospel in a straightforward uncompromising way for people to understand clearly, but we had excellent times for teaching as well. Questions such as the doctrine of baptism and what is considered wrong as far as sexual immorality is concerned were asked of me. I had a great time teaching from the Word of God and the hunger for knowledge and discipleship was made very clear from the interest displayed by the people.

The Jesus Film

The Jesus Film has been used as an outreach tool for years and has been effective in many different countries and translated into more languages than any other film in the world. Once again The Jesus Film was used as an outreach tool to Lozi speaking people. At the time that we showed the Jesus film at a certain village, there was another traditional ceremony happening on the other side of the village. More people were attracted to come and see the Jesus Film than to go see the traditional ceremony. There was a crowd of between five to six hundred people watching the film. Before the film started a short Gospel Message was given and after the film another one was given, this time with an altar call. While the local pastor was presenting the Gospel and rebuking sinners, there were some who were mocking, some who were opposing, and some who couldn't care less and there was a group of people who were genuinely interested in what was said. The people who were interested put up their hands when the invitation to repent and follow Christ was given and as they were praying the mockers got louder. This did not deter the people from praying, instead it provoked them to pray even louder until they were making their commitments to follow Christ at the top of their voices. I had never seen anything like it in my life. Completely opposite reactions to the same Gospel presentation were evident, both reactions radical and both reactions that could shape people's eternities.

Encouraging Leaders

At the various villages where we visited and evangelised we were able to speak to the leaders and encourage them. The churches in the rural parts are under spiritual attack from the enemy in the form of cults, sects and false religions stealing the people away from the Truth. The leaders of the churches all had similar questions and similar problems, mainly from the Jehovah's Witnesses and Catholics and some other small sects as well as the ever present threat of witchcraft. It was disheartening to see so many Christians who are afraid of witches and demon possessed people, as few people are willing to stand up against the witchdoctors in their areas.

Ants in my Pants

One evening we were camping alongside the Zambezi and fire wood was needed so myself and John Leach went out to go search for some. We came across an old dead tree, which was lying slightly hidden in the bushes. We made our way to the tree, and by this time it was already dark. As we were braking off branches, for our fire that was to be made, I felt something biting my leg, almost like a mosquito! I said: "hey uncle John Something is biting me!" he replied: "Don't worry my boy, it's just these bugs". I continued breaking off branches when I felt a few more bites! The next thing I heard was: "Hey something's biting me too!" Needless to say I ran out from the bushes into a clearing, screaming "I'm outa here!" Uncle John followed and we started stomping our feet to get whatever was biting us out of our pants! I rolled up my pants in a hurry to see what was trying to eat me, and all I saw was a swarm of ants digging into my legs as though they were a rare delicacy! By this time the ants had gotten into my shirt and as though they had coordinated an attack, they started biting viscosly into my upper body all at once! Now these ants don't just bite you as though they were trying to buy the time with some fun and games.

They bite you in such a manner that their entire bodies lift off the ground so they can put more force into their bite! Throwing my now ant infested garments onto the ground, I began to spray doom all over my body in a frantic attempt to kill my attackers! Eventually I was sitting down, wearing nothing but the bare essentials, trying to rid myself of any ants that survived the doom attack! I thought I had learned my lesson. Unfortunately these events repeated themselves another time before the night was over, when I went wondering back into the bush again.

Supporting Missionaries in Remote Regions

As part of our mission we explored remote areas, where we weren't sure what the spiritual state of the people was. We would move in and do evangelism in the area. Upon arrival at a certain village we found out that there were already full time missionaries there. One of the missionaries had been there for over 50 years and had moved there into full time ministry at the age of 18! When we met up with the people at the mission station, we were greeted with warm hospitality. It was made apparent that there were many projects that our team could help out with at this station. We were able to help out with mechanical and IT problems that they were having as well as encourage them in the work that they were already doing. Near the end of our stay there the leader of the mission told us "I believe that God sent you to us".

Leadership Training

In the central and eastern parts of Zambia we were able to do leadership training. Again many of the problems that the leaders face are in the form of cults and false religions. The leadership training included lectures on Vision, Unity, Cults and False Religions, and Islam. We also showed films such as Islam Rising and In Your Face, dealing with promiscuity. Leaders were also well equipped with literature dealing with Doctrine, and Evangelism. We managed to conduct four leadership training seminars in central and eastern Zambia alone.

Discipleship

In rural Zambia, we had the opportunity to take with us two men from the local Church to do some evangelism. The purpose of this was to teach and train them how to evangelise, at the same time, they were to be our interpreters. Although the two men were meant to be our interpreters, only one of them could speak very broken English. The other could barely speak a word at all. This didn't give me too much confidence in evangelising but the interpreter interpreted without hesitation. The purpose being to disciple the two men made the task worthwhile, because after one or two evangelising encounters they were able to do it on their own, which was encouraging to see.

Wolves Amongst Sheep

At one of the Churches that we were asked to preach at, we had a good time speaking to the pastor afterwards. He was telling us about a church down the road from him called "Sweat Heart". At this church called Sweat Heart the pastor has convinced the women that if they sleep with him they will be considered Holy! They also practice polygamy and teach that the members have to be vegetarians! Lack of discernment and hedonism has crept into the hearts and minds of people and has caused them to go astray. People like the pastor of this Sweat Heart church are not uncommon, even in our own society there are those who change the Word of God into man-made doctrines to suit their own passions and lusts. Unless we are well equipped and know the Word and how to use it effectively, we are vulnerable to these false teachers and practices.

Answers to Prayer

Many long days were spent traveling in our vehicle and thanks to fervent prayers we managed to make it back home in one piece and without any serious damage to the vehicle. During the course of the trip one of the team members started to get all the symptoms of malaria. We brought the case before the Lord, and before the day was up the team member was healed and the symptoms didn't return! Crossing borders is always a task on its own and the border controllers are often very eager to give you a hard time. Although the border crossings were at times time-consuming, we never had too much trouble with the officials and we had the favour of the Lord with us. In all the villages we visited there were no hostile reactions towards us individually, perhaps there was some hostility towards the Gospel but none towards us. We praise God for keeping us healthy and safe, giving us favour with authorities and elders in the various villages.

Pray that the leaders in the rural areas will stay strong in the Lord and stand against the false religions threatening them. Pray for the seeds sown during outreaches and leadership training. Pray that we will have opportunities to go back and do follow up ministry especially in the rural parts where others are not willing to go.

"For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the Lord made the Heavens." 1 Chronicles 16:25-26

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