



March 31, 2010

## Tanzania Update

Greetings from East Africa,

We want to thank you once again for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers. We realize that many of you are “prayer warriors” and that always encourages us as we continue to serve the Lord in Tanzania.

On March 17<sup>th</sup>, Glenna, I and Pastor Frank began a five day seminar at a large church in the hills overlooking Mwanza. Nyakabungo, despite being close to the city, is still somewhat remote. We’ve been receiving heavy rains the last few weeks and the rough road leading up to the church proved to be a real challenge!

When we finally arrived we were warmly greeted by Pastor Charles and some of the church leaders. Glenna and I have had the privilege of working with many denominations and his, the “Evangelical Assemblies of God in Tanzania,” has generally impressed us with their organization and commitment.

Not only were we impressed with the church leaders, but the building itself was quite unique. In the shape of a large cross, it sits a top a high hill with a beautiful view of the city and bay far below. The main part of the sanctuary is flanked by an addition on each side, and each is lined with large sliding windows. In the late afternoon sun, cool breezes gently blow in off the lake and circulate through the church. This was quite a different experience for us after speaking in many small, cramped churches with dirt floors and steamy conditions!

Our program began with several choirs performing, including the one that has been accompanying us on engagements in or near Mwanza. The choir, known as the “Huduma Band,” or “In His Service,” really fired up the crowd with their distinctive songs and choreography. Everywhere we go people love their music and it’s such a joy to work with them.

Our teachings were received with just as much enthusiasm. One of the lessons Glenna presented was entitled, “Having the image of God.” In the lesson, she expounded on several important points; the first being that God created man to live for Him. Like our first parents, Adam and Eve, we were meant to have close spiritual fellowship with our Creator. However, through sin, we were separated from God in so many ways and that intimate relationship was shattered. But, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that shattered relationship can be restored and renewed. 1 Peter 2:24 states: “He Himself bore our sins in His body on a tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness, by His words you have been healed.”

On Saturday Pastor Charles had the joyous task of baptizing 30 people in the waters of Lake Victoria! Both Glenna and I commenced our sessions by remarking that all Heaven rejoices when just one person makes the decision to receive salvation.

With that in mind, I decided to preach on Romans 14:8, “If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. But whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.” I emphasized in the message how we must remain faithful to God. Everyday of our lives we have to make choices and we should be continually asking ourselves “will this decision bring me closer to God or move me in the opposite direction?” I concluded the sermon with the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed Nego found in Daniel 3. How three young boys stood for what was right, what was holy, in the face of certain death. They refused to compromise, to bow down, regardless of the powers brought against them. When the King of Babylon threatened them with a fiery furnace, they stood firm and said, “Oh King, we know” (not we think or we hope), “we KNOW our God can deliver us from the fiery furnace! BUT, if He chooses not to deliver us we still know He is God!” In the face of what the Bible teaches prophetically, maybe some of us in the near future will have to make the same stand.

As we concluded the seminar on Sunday with morning and evening sessions, we sensed the Holy Spirit moving in a powerful way! There was a great celebration over the baptisms, accompanied with special prayer for each new Christian. Pastor Frank and I also laid on hands and prayed for several people suffering from various physical infirmities. The evening service ended with some of the most joyous music I’ve heard anywhere. Praise the Lord!

As in the past, we told the congregation at Pastor Charles’ church, that there were people in America and Canada praying for them. They, in turn, send their greetings and want all of you to know that they are praying for you as well. It is truly remarkable to be in the family of God!

On Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, we are beginning a five day seminar in an area called Igombe. Please continue to pray for us.

In conclusion we again thank everyone for your prayers and financial support. Not only are your Tanzanian brothers and sisters in Christ remembering you before the Lord, but Glenna and I are as well. May our Lord Jesus Christ fill you with a “peace that transcends all understanding.”

In His Service,

John and Glenna