



March 2, 2011

Tanzania Update

Greetings to friends and family from Tanzania,

In this time of great upheaval and change throughout the world, Glenna and I have been reminding ourselves that the Lord is still in control and sovereign over all things. "God reigns over the nations. He is seated on His Holy throne." (Ps 47:8), "He changes times and seasons; He sets kings up and takes kings down ..." (Dan 2:21). Certainly this is a time to renew our trust in God and seek Him "while He may be found." (Is 55:6)

The last two weeks have been a bit of a blur as our mission's team fulfilled speaking engagements at three different churches. On February 13th, we spoke at the Mwanza International Community Church located in the center of town. We have been privileged to attend services there when our schedule permits and never fail to be inspired by the messages. Pastor Zachayo is highly educated and his understanding of the scriptures is well above standard.

We felt impressed by the Holy Spirit to speak on the subject of being "sent" by God. We used the passage from Isaiah 6:1-8, where the prophet, upon hearing the Godhead ask, "Who can I send? Who will go for us?" – to preach to the wayward nation of Judah – shouts out, "Here am I! Send me!" At the close of the first service that morning, we sensed the Spirit moving as several people came forward desiring to be used by God in a greater way! Pastor Zachayo was deeply moved and began weeping over the wonderful things the Lord was doing in his life. (A few months before, Zachayo had received a scholarship to complete his PhD in religious studies in South Korea.) God is good!

That same week, we were slated to begin a seminar in the village of Magu, but it was cancelled at the last minute due to the death of a prominent member of the church. Many times in Africa when a death occurs, services are suspended until after the funeral. Frank, our coworker, then contacted another pastor in the area and we began a three day seminar on February 18th. This church is located in a region called Igoma, which is approximately ten miles from Mwanza. Pastor Fabian and his congregation gave us an enthusiastic welcome with the choir leading out in a powerful praise and worship session. (See attached picture.)

In one of Glenna's lessons, she discussed surrendering our bodies, minds and spirits to the Lord. She read from Romans 14:8, "If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." She stated that when we give ourselves to God, we give him everything! When the apostle Paul wrote that our bodies are "the temple of the Holy Spirit," it means that we are to pursue the things of God, rather than the temptations of this world. We honor the Lord and receive His blessings when we stay faithful to the truths written in His Holy Word.

I presented a lesson centering on the power of God and His ability to deliver His people out of the most difficult circumstances. We looked at the story of Elisha, the prophet, and how he had angered the King of Syria (2Kings 6:8-23). The evil monarch sent his army at night to surround the prophet's house with orders to bring him back alive. The next morning Elisha's servant stepped out of the house and saw the vast army getting ready to move in. In fear, he ran back inside and awakened his master. However, Elisha wasn't upset in the least and called upon God to open his servant's eyes and see the divine reality of the situation. When He did, the servant's eyes widened in amazement for above the Syrian army stood the army of the Lord! In the story, Elisha reminded the servant that "they who are for us are far greater than they who are against us!"

On Friday night Pastor Fabian gave an altar call and over thirty people came forward! Frank, Glenna and I offered prayers for each one as they raised their hands and cried out to God for help in their

particular situations. One young girl, at the mention of Jesus' name, fell to the floor and began thrashing about. Recognizing the problem we immediately called out to Christ to free her from the curse of demonic possession. After several minutes of struggle, a peace finally settled over her countenance as she calmly renewed her commitment to Jesus.

Pastor Fabian was very pleased with the seminar and asked us to return in the near future. His church is young and growing and he is anxious for them to receive further teaching.

The following week the three of us traveled to a remote village about an hour from Mwanza called Nyamatara. We had agreed to do a five day seminar beginning on Wednesday, February 23rd. When we arrived the first night, we discovered that Pastor Joseph had changed the venue from a seminar in his tiny church to an outdoor crusade! As I've often said, in Africa agendas can be changed at the drop of a hat and you quickly learn to just go with the flow. So, after taking our places beneath a large shade tree, the program got underway.

This being Tanzania, several choirs performed each night before the message was delivered. The people here love choirs with their highly animated singing and dancing, and it, along with the presence of North Americans, helps to bring in a crowd.

The week long service proved to be a big success as the Lord blessed us richly! Each night we drew around five hundred people to hear the music and listen to the Word of God! In addition to our usual messages of salvation and stories of the Bible, Glenna offered a children's story based on what Jesus did for us at the cross. By the time the crusade ended, around 40 people had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior! (See attached pictures.)

Pastor Joseph was ecstatic with the results even though he had been hobbling around the entire time with a painful injury. A few weeks before, he had chopped into his bare foot with a sharp tool, which is a heavier version of our garden hoe. His foot was badly swollen and looked infected, so we arranged through Pastor Frank to get him to Mwanza for proper medical care.

On Wednesday, March 9th, we are again planning to travel to the village of Magu to begin five days of teaching. Please keep us in your prayers.

In conclusion, we want to thank all of you once again for your prayers and financial support. As I mentioned last time, each of us must press on in our work for the Lord while the day is still upon us, for the night is soon coming when no one can work. May God bless you abundantly!

In His service,

John and Glenna

(Pictures on next page)



Pastor Frank leading an altar call



Pastor Fabian's Church



Glenna speaking to children at crusade

John and Glenna in Tanzania