

In the tracks of a missionary...

On safari, a Game Ranger tracks wild animals. A trained Ranger can identify specific *spoor*, the tracks or evidence of a wild animal, even amongst a multitude of other spoor. He knows exactly what to look for. Spoor identify the type of animal; its direction; whether it was accompanied by others of its kind; approximate time-span since it made its mark; and much more: The more the knowledge, the greater the expertise; the greater the expertise, the more alert and focused on his mission.



Elephant Spoor



Lion Spoor

It's not so different with missionaries. There are many such spoor to track. Some lead to the right objective; others mislead to the wrong purpose. We have to have the knowledge to recognise exactly and precisely, which *spoor* the Father wishes us to track and pursue.

One such Missionary is Walter Burtsche and wife Helga, German Missionaries in South Africa for 22 years. Twenty years ago they founded an organisation called, *Christian Outreach Media*, which translates, prints and distributes Zulu Bibles and material to local villages, and also spreads the Gospel using the internet to reach other parts of the country. (The government restricts radio licenses, so they use the internet instead.) The organisation is non-charismatic and pre-millennial in their beliefs. Remember them in your prayers and thanksgiving. For they have graciously helped us to see the spoor and follow the tracks to several open doors. Each door mentioned below has been opened through their keen foresight and wise discernment. We stand amazed as we see the “coincidental” and “chance” encounters develop; though we know there are no coincidences or chances or even “ifs” in God's Plan. To witness the *Tapestry* of God's Plan unfold, and observe its *threads* being intricately interwoven, is an exceptional encouragement.



The First Spoor led us to a Bible Institute:



Following a lecture and a Book Launch (to which Walter invited us), a *chance* encounter with a senior faculty member, Richard Murray of this Institute, led us to being invited to meet with the Principle, Vice-Principle - an American, and two Professors. The Dean of Academics is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary (whom we've yet to meet.) When God opens doors, no one can shut them. Such was the case at the *Union Bible Institute*. As in every case where Tom has been asked to present or teach, his emphasis is simple and straight forward: Classes on Christian Professionalism, Honour Code, Survival Training and Leadership. In all sessions, Biblical Truths are made categorically clear: The Gospel, Fellowship with God and Growing in Truth. There was a 100% positive reception, no objections, no restrictions and even a sense of urgency. Tom was asked to first present to all of the faculty and staff and then teach the students, over a period of time.



Prayer Request: That the hearers and speaker all know and realize the impact of **Isaiah 55:11:** *It is My Word that goes out from My mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

The Second Spoor we encountered was on Thursday, 22nd March 2012.



It led straight to the **South African Police Academy**: A ten-month bootcamp to train and equip the law keepers. It just “so happened,” through an introduction from Walter, we met with a senior, active-duty police officer of 22 years who is German and a Christian, Heinz Hiestermann. Heinz was very intent on us meeting with the Academy Commander/Colonel Modise and the Training Lt Colonel Mgwaba. When God opens doors they are thrust open! Again, 100% reception, no restrictions. Teach Truth and present the Gospel. When? As soon as possible!! To commence immediately after Easter. It is worth noting that the South African Police Force (SAP) emerged from the dark years of Apartheid as one of the most feared and hated arms of the Government. It was tantamount in many ways to the Nazi SS. Now, most of the



new recruits are African, and though having various religious beliefs, as the Commander humorously informed us, “Most of them from this province are “holy,” so you will have anxious hearers.” The Commander himself is not a Christian, but was exceptionally open and set no limitations to having the Gospel and the Name of Jesus Christ being presented at the academy.

On a whiteboard in Heinz’s office, were boldly displayed three Gospel Scripture verses. In the Lt Colonel’s office was a large plaque, “*The Armor of God.*” She asked if we would like a copy.

Prayer Request: That whatever opposition might arise – it will be defeated: **Ex. 23:20-22:** *See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. . . . If you listen carefully to what he says and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and will oppose those who oppose you.*

The Third Spoor: At the beginning of this year, we attended a Graduation ceremony of 350 Bible

College Students, all African. It was Walter who informed us and encouraged us to attend and meet the Headmaster. Friends and family of the graduates numbered about 3,000. The Molinars’ were the only white faces in the audience! We were invited to sit on the platform, next to the Headmaster’s wife. Head of the College is Professor/Pastor Johannes



Ncube. The college is an informal, non-resident course for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who have an interest in developing their spiritual lives. Through Walter, Professor Ncube requested to meet us. At our home, Professor Ncube expressed a need for us to help teach Truth and make the Gospel clear to the students. Amongst many, there is a clear understanding of the consequences of **Hosea 4:6:** *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.*

Prayer request: *Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90:12*

Tracks of the 4th Spoor... led us into the heart of a beautiful area,



called *The Valley of a Thousand Hills* (very near our home) and a Zulu church, called **Grace Community Church**. The Pastor is Siphwe Petrus Gwala “Petros.” Now here’s where it really gets interesting! Twenty years ago, Petros was a young labourer who helped construct our missionary friend (Walter’s) mission post. Walter led



Petros to the Lord and paid for his Bible training at the *United Bible Institute* (same Institute as mentioned above. Is that *coincidence*?!). Petros is now a Pastor of Grace Church and still works for Walter. On Sunday, 18th March, Petros asked Tom to teach at his church for 50 minutes. The discipline, respect and positiveness of his congregation to God's Word, were truly remarkable.

Additionally, along with three other pastors, their wives and a couple of the students pictured below, Petros attends a weekly DVD Bible study at our home, studying R B Thieme III's lessons on 1Corinthians 13 on Virtue Love. Their earnest desire for Truth and direction is genuine. They wish to be able to teach accurately God's Word to their congregations, and have appealed to Tom for assistance and guidance, for themselves and other pastors.



Prayer Request: That as we track this course, **2Timothy 2:2** will be our guide: *And the things you have heard Me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*

To possibly help you know a little bit more of South Africa, one must understand that there is a large disparity between its 1st & 3rd worlds. There is great affluence, high technology, and superb medical and educational standards on the one hand. On the other hand, many indigenous villages live without electricity and running water. They walk miles for the basic necessities of life. Children in clean uniforms walk distances on dusty, rutted



roads and some have to cross rivers to their schools. During Tom's teaching at Petros' church, they clearly comprehended the Samaritan woman's plight of having to draw and haul water; and laughed heartily at a brief clip shown them of the Children of Israel, with all of their livestock and possessions piled up on carts and heads, traversing the dessert and crossing the Red Sea.



(These photos are all on Petros' village and the road to his church.)

We have found that there is a genuine understanding and appreciation of Grace amongst the Africans that extend into so many directions: Many will shed tears of gratitude over the smallest act of kindness or an insignificant gift given. There are no attitudes of expectation, merit or entitlement. When someone offers to teach Truth they are hungry to learn. Humble enough to accept Grace!

We know that if the Lord doesn't go before us on a particular trail, we do not want to go there: **Exodus 33:15:** *Then Moses said to Him, 'If Your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here.'*

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in eternity past, for us to do. Ephesians 2:10

