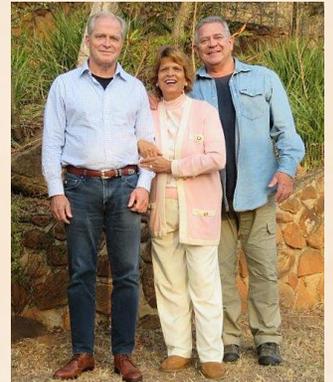


In the tracks of a missionary – Chapter 23

South Africa is in kind of a “time-warp,” (trailing America by about 50 years in some areas). We are sometimes and somewhat disaffected by much of the world news and events around us. Amidst images of the 9/11 anniversary, covid variants, and Afghanistan, the grace of God marches on. “God makes all grace abound to us, abundantly” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

One of the great blessings we have is the availability of God’s Word, 365 days a year (from our church’s ministry). In most South African villages, townships and sprawling squatter camps, you will find believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, but with little to no means of growing spiritually. Either, no Bible teaching church, no qualified pastor, and no consistent teaching of the Word of God. **Many preachers, much preaching, but no teaching.** One of our immense challenges in South Africa is to provide sound teaching of Bible Doctrine to positive believers on a daily basis. This year, we have launched upon a writing initiative to accomplish this very purpose. Our faithful friend from Dallas, Terry Wilson, recently visited us again for the ninth time to help work on this project.



“Teaching the Teachers and Training the Trainers,” is one method we use to teach Bible doctrine in the mission field. The men and women we teach come from many different service fields including, pastors, teachers, evangelists, students preparing for a mission field, managers in business, prison counsellors, school principals, and women involved in children’s ministries. The three women pictured here have an active ministry teaching children (orphaned, underprivileged and indigent). On Saturday the 11th September, they are having a full day of teaching and training of almost 50 to 70



children and parents. The teachers are Rose, Bhusi and Promise. They are faithful students under Tom’s teaching for the past three years. Rose showed Tom how she plans to communicate the Gospel and eternal life, using the “top and bottom circles,” and how to help the children understand the importance of living in God’s Plan by using 1 John 1:9.

Unemployment in South Africa is one of highest in the world (over 34%). Yet, there is a strong Christian population of almost 80%. Joblessness, no work, no money, no skills are real difficulties amongst the groups we teach. How can this phenomena be understood from a Biblical perspective? ***Thank God for teachers who teach the teachers!*** Recently our Pastor taught the Biblical Doctrine of Work, as from Proverbs 12:11, 24 and 11:1.

We were able to “on-teach” the same principles, albeit in a South African context. Many would ask, “*Is South Africa under God’s judgement, cursing and discipline?*” Tom explained that while many countries such as China, Japan and India have very low unemployment rates, they also have very low belief in God. Whereas, in South Africa, people have freedoms of religion, lifestyle and vocation. Unemployed people here cannot depend on government to uplift them. They can only depend on God. During covid, the government provided a small grant of R350 (\$23) per month, to each qualified person. There is no welfare system. Many who are unskilled, work as “informal traders” in street-side stalls.

Our Bible class on *Work Ethics* and the *Doctrine of Work*, carried on for 5 hours. It was an eye-opener for many! One young pastor-student commented, “*Biggest problem is that people are ashamed to do menial work. They all want jobs in air-conditioned offices!*” They learned that there is no menial job to be ashamed of, but to do all work as unto the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:31). The group is in the sprawling village of Matsulu, with churches, schools and homes interlinked through a network of rocky, rutted dirt roads. Some men and women walk 5-10 kilometres, waiting as we arrive. Hence, the long hours of teaching. We will be teaching a second group in Barberton on the upcoming Saturday, on the same subject.

Always, the response to Bible teaching is overly positive, with great appreciation and a yearning for more. While Terry was here for just over two weeks, in addition



to our ongoing writing project, we asked him to teach **Parental Training** to each of our groups. This is such a critical area. Training the next generation of South Africans in God’s Word may result in a more disciplined, more diligent generation with a work ethic focused on God’s Design. Needless to say, the attendees positively grasped the information those lessons taught, with a couple even openly admitting how they had failed as mothers, but would now teach their grandchildren! Terry did exceptionally well!



the next generation of South Africans in God’s Word may result in a more disciplined, more diligent generation with a work ethic



Prayer Request: That the teachers and trainers we teach may take the Truth of God’s Word and teach it to others. So that the people in villages, townships and squatter camps may benefit from hearing the true Gospel, and the absolute Truth taught from the Word of God.

South African bush fires are common, but not as destructive as California wildfires. While Terry was here, a bush fire once again raged down the mountain behind our house. Our guardian angels were active in force, albeit with the support of Army Ranger Officer Terry and Marine Major Tom. The 6 – 10 feet high flames that hungrily lapped at our gate, did not enter! Thank you for your continued prayers and encouragement, which uphold this ministry in ways far beyond what we may see or know.

