



PTI Prayer & News – August 2009

'Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth: break forth into joyous song and sing praises.' (Psalm 98:6)

Dear praying friends,

We send this prayer letter with great joy, for we have known the wonderful goodness of the Lord to us in recent months. It is a great privilege to serve the Lord in this work and to receive so many testimonies of blessing and help from pastors and preachers in Africa and Asia. The Lord is answering our united prayers in ways far greater than we can ever imagine or deserve.

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Malawi conference report

At the beginning of July **Timothy Alford** returned to Malawi to teach at two pastors' conferences. He writes:

The relative coldness of winter in southern Africa made no difference at all to the reception given to Pansy and me during our recent seventh visit to Malawi. The air may have been rather fresh at times, but a really warm spiritual atmosphere was generated by the interest and expectancy created by the Holy Spirit. This was evident in the attendances and attentiveness at both conferences. The core ministry consisted of expositional studies in 1 Timothy, under the general title of 'A leader led'. Other relevant issues were included in the teaching programme, in which African colleagues also had a leading part.

First conference: Evangelical Bible College of Malawi, Blantyre

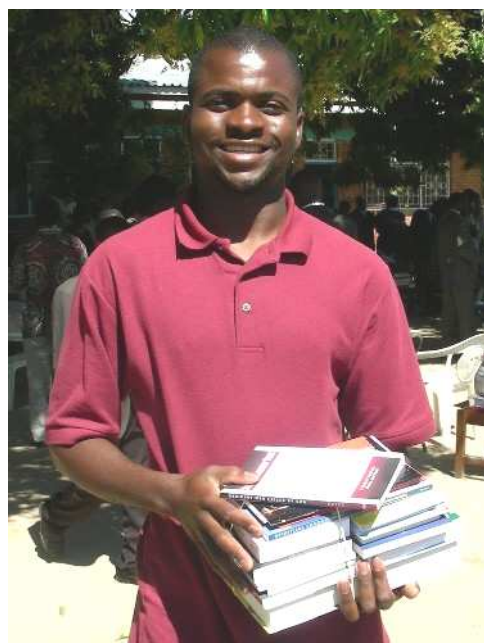
Attendance is usually limited to 80-100 registrations, but not everyone registers! So the conference began and continued with over 200 attendees. Imagine the logistical problems! Not enough accommodation available at the college, more food needed than had been prepared, and of course a shortage of PTI books for the usual presentations. But our African brothers are skilled at problem-solving, so the spirit and outcome of the conference was very good.

Second conference: Anglican Church Conference Centre, Nkhatakota

A similar issue with the bookings occurred, though, with around 100 regular participants, it was not so acute. One of the striking features of these conferences was the number of different churches represented. According to our records there were 45, bearing an ingenious variety of denominational labels! The underlying hunger for the Word of God eclipsed these secondary differences, and the fervency of united worship in spirit and in truth left no room for doubt that God was in the midst.



In both conferences time was reserved for comment and feedback. Lively interaction took place on issues such as the role of women in ministry, and money management in the life of the churches. Perhaps it would have been more profitable to major on issues of personal holiness and the fundamentals of the Gospel, both of which were highlighted in the formal teaching sessions.



The books

Over 300 sets of books were presented to those attending the conferences. The PTI selection was supplemented by other suitable publications available from EBCOM. It is now the intention of Abraham Folayan, who is a member of the college faculty and a missionary with Zambesi Mission, to provide further group training using the PTI study books. A nicely bound Bible was also presented to everyone. These were made available by Frank Maxon, pastor of Antioch Reformed Baptist Church. He and his family are committed to a church-plant ministry at Limbe on the outskirts of Blantyre where they also run a bookshop in which the church presently meets.

What next?

A breathing-space is now needed for evaluating the work of the past six years in Malawi. Prayerful discernment of the will of the Lord must determine whether now is the time for an exit strategy, so as to

concentrate on new areas of need in other parts of Africa. Meanwhile, there are numerous reasons for praising God for His rich blessings on the recent conferences, and their potential outcome. The fact that He preserved our health and safety in our exhausting travels, (almost miraculous given the state of some roads and the standards of driving) intensifies the doxology!

Zambia – August 2009

August is the busiest month of the year for conferences, with four taking place in Zambia.

Peter Seccombe writes about those in which he is involved:

This will be the second conference at Chipata, close to the Malawi border. Last year about 70 men came; we hope for closer to 100 this year. Solwezi is at the opposite end of the Copperbelt to Ndola where we have had conferences previously. There has been a revival of the copper mining industry in Solwezi in recent years and the town is prospering as a result. Although Gordon Oram has had contact with a number of men in the area, this will be PTI's first conference there. Arrangements on the ground have been rather last minute. It is about 13 hours by car away from Chipata but the journey will be split over the three days between the two conferences. Phil Bailey will be kindly driving me to and from both conferences together with my fellow trainers, Kabwe Kabwe and Gilbert Mubanga, pastors in Ndola. I will be expounding Philippians, leading preaching workshops and teaching two of the doctrinal sessions - we are dealing with sin and its consequences, repentance and faith, justification, and regeneration. Kabwe will teach the other two doctrinal sessions; he and Gilbert will be responsible for sessions on pastoral issues and Gilbert will give four early morning devotional talks. Please pray that all of us will be adequately prepared; for health and strength and safety in travelling; for effectiveness in ministry and eager receptiveness amongst the men who attend.

Zambia itinerary:

- Chipata, 10th-14th August
- Mongu, 10th-14th August
- Solwezi, 17th-21st August
- Mansa, 17th-21st August



Alan Levy, who will be at Mongu and Mansa, asks for prayer about the following matters:

Mongu: That the good spirit which was evident at the end of last years conference will be present again. He is sharing the teaching with Victor Kanyence and asks that they will get on together well and that their ministry will be helpful to all the pastors who attend.

The journey to Mansa is long and on some difficult roads, so he asks for ease and safety of travel, and that he and Victor will be given much clarity in their teaching and presentation.

One of the heart-warming developments in Zambia is that we are able to share teaching with pastors from within the country. Please pray that we will be able to find similarly equipped pastors in other countries who can share in the ministry with us.

Ethiopia – October 2009

It is unlikely that we will be able to produce another prayer letter until late in October, but please do remember **Ken McIntosh** and **David Sercombe**, who will fly to Ethiopia on 7th October for the conferences at Addis Ababa and Ginchi. Ken writes about these conferences:

David and I hope to visit some of the churches to the north of Addis for the first few days of our time in Ethiopia this October before the first conference in the capital. Please pray for safe travelling. PTI have also had a request from a Christian leader further to the south. We need wisdom in dealing with this request. This is our third and final planned trip to Ethiopia, pray for more good conferences and for health and strength. Our programme includes teaching on the following: Romans, the Holy Spirit, Hosea, Amos and Elijah and Elisha.

Ethiopia itinerary:

- Addis Ababa, 12th-16th October
- Ginchi, 19th-23rd October

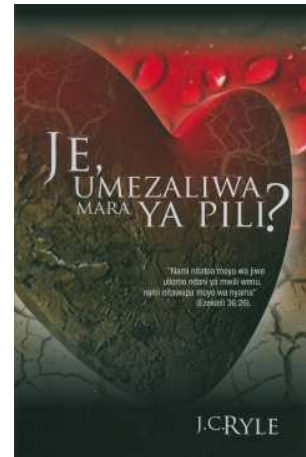


Other matters for prayer and praise

- **Ghana** – We are greatly encouraged that MacDouglas Ampadu is seeking to hold sessions in Ghana to follow up on the conferences we held last April. More books are being sent to him for this purpose. Please pray that this will not only reinforce what pastors have already been taught, but that it will be of much value to pastors who did not attend the conference and give them the desire to attend next year. Pray that we may see similar things happening at other centres in the coming days.
- **India, November 2009** – In November we have our first visit to this country. The conferences are to be at Siliguri in the North-east and Bangalore in the South. We will write more about these in our next prayer news, but please pray for all the arrangements that are being made by Jyoti Chakravarty and others. The speakers will be **Mervyn Neal** and **Rob Owens** at Siliguri with **John and Jim Grindell** in Bangalore. Pray for their preparation during the coming months.
- **2010** – We are making plans for conferences in 2010, and need prayer for much wisdom as we consider requests and follow up other invitations. Much seems to be falling into place, but please pray that the Lord would direct us in the few areas where we need clarity about where to go. Again, we plan to share more with you next time.
- **Mentoring ministry** – Requests to share in our ministry continue to arrive almost daily, which is a matter for great thanks to the Lord. However when pastors realise the study that we require, not all of these become firm in their desire to study and read in depth. Letters of appreciation are always bringing us much joy as we read of the testimonies of pastors growing in their understanding of the Scriptures. We rejoice that so many share the books they receive with their congregation and friends, while others seek to use them for seminars with pastors in their areas.

Christian Books Worldwide, our sister organisation, is encouraged with the publication of Ryle's booklet on Regeneration in Swahili, shown on the right. The friends in Kenya are making good progress with the translation of other books. Please pray that these would have a wide circulation and be used by the Lord in the lives of many who read them. Other books have been translated into Indian Punjabi. The process of getting them printed is proving to be a slow and drawn out process. Please pray for the Lord to give wisdom and grace to all involved that the publication of these books will be reached before too long.

The translation of healthy books into other languages is of great importance, and much sensitivity to the Lord's will in this work is important.



Pastors' letters and comments

We conclude with some quotes from letters we have received in recent weeks. We trust that they will encourage you and stimulate your prayers for the Lord to continue using the conferences and literature in many lives and ministries.

"These books are useful instruments to see the secret of God's intention to reach man and save for his glory... they are very important and I will use them for reference. Those who are using my library will use them to strengthen their knowledge of the Word of God." Ethiopia

"The books are quite very good, and they will help me to go a long way especially in improving my library. My small library is also helping Christians in the community who usually come to read." Zimbabwe

"Let's Study 1 & 2 Thessalonians is a good book. I used it in teaching these letters to the brothers and sisters who are working for the Lord to be active soldiers of Christ. By now I am extracting some expository sermons from it. Let's Study 1 Corinthians has helped us to solve problems at our local church. For the Christians were bringing in divisions and forsaking the one true God... during the afternoon lessons we are using this commentary to teach." Zimbabwe

"Those books have been a counselling aid to me in my Christian race. My doubts about some issues and questions in my Christian Life were answered... my intensive study through these books has increased my ability to preach and to teach. My members can see the difference." Nigeria

"The books you have sent me have all been read and it was such a blessing and I have learned much from them. They have helped me to be able to handle the sheep of the Lord, especially the book Pastors and Teachers. In this I read something which I have never read before. It is a wonderful book to my heart... with this I am thirsty now, I need more books." Kenya

"Let's Study Luke is what my lovely wife and I are using for our morning devotion... thank you for the exposition of the epistle to the Hebrews (No Turning Back). This is what we are planning to start using as our church word exposition programme... I have digested and am still meditating on the reason why I and my people should fall in love with Jesus... The books have taught me some principles on how to prepare my messages, how to address situations, how to dig deep into the Word and how to believe the Word. If I were to pay for these stuffs, then I would die from hunger." Nigeria

With our warmest greetings,

Gordon Oram and all the PTI team

Would you like to hear more about PTI?

If you would like someone to visit your church to speak about PTI's ministry then please contact us on 02380 360108 or g.oram@pastor-training.org