

Pastor Training International

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Teach to Preach

PTI Prayer & News – July 2007

'The Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting.' (Psalm 100:5)

Dear praying friends,

These past few weeks have been times when we have again proved the wonderful goodness of the Lord to us.

- We have received letters from both **Zimbabwe** and **Sierra Leone** which give testimony to blessing and help received from the conferences earlier in the year.

One pastor who attended the conference at Rusitu (Zimbabwe) has written:

"I would like to thank Almighty God for such wonderful work and support. It was a nice time in your service and the work which is indescribable. To my great pleasure I thank you for the books you gave which I am using. May God expand and bless your work. This week's workshop was so encouraging and challenging. It brought many leaders to know more of each other and enjoy the study."

A pastor from Sierra Leone writes:

"I was blessed by the conference held by Alan Levy in March 2007 in my country. The materials (books) I received have been a tremendous blessing to me and my congregation. The 'Bible Answers' has become one of my main materials to teach. It is blessing the lives of the people."

- God has provided more friends to help with the mentoring ministry. This is a provision at just the right time. The number of men applying to use our books is growing rapidly.
- We praise God for the continuing help that publishers so willingly give to us. Without this our ministry would be severely curtailed. This is another good provision from our rich God.
- Books are reaching many pastors and are proving to be a great blessing as the following two comments demonstrate.

A pastor in Botswana writes:

"These books have turned my life upside down. Knowledge has created faith. My ministry has advanced a lot. I am no longer a child. You have helped me in Bible studying, Bible reading even interpretation. I'm so glad."

And a pastor from Malawi says:

"These books have been very very helpful to me and they are still and will still be helpful. When I studied 'Preaching Pure and Simple' I felt as if I have never done homiletics before. It was as if I was standing in front of a mirror and see how dirty my face was. I could see the mistakes I have made in preaching. Thank God for that book. Now I am a different person and I believe my preaching will never be the same"

Malawi conferences

Timothy Alford arrived back in mid-July from conducting conferences in Malawi with Richard Underwood and Abraham Folayan. Here is a part of his report:

Over eighty attended the first conference at the Evangelical Bible College of Malawi, Blantyre. This venue provided good facilities for sleeping, eating, and teaching. The second main conference involved a two-day journey to an SU campsite in the northern region, at Kande Bay. This idyllic venue on the beach of Lake Malawi is in the early stages of development, so bell-tent sleeping

accommodation was included for some! Electricity was connected the day before our arrival – interrupted by only occasional power cuts. Both of these conferences started ‘slowly’, but increased in responsiveness and deepening fellowship. The studies in the life of David, the pastoral epistle of Titus, and the application of Biblical principles to aspects of African culture, were received thoughtfully and appreciatively. The praise and prayer times were intensely real, and often brought heaven close.

Books: The closing ceremonies included the presentation of carefully selected books to assist the continued studies and work of each person attending the conferences. (Workbooks are included, and when completed may be posted to the UK for mentoring by correspondence.) The farewell was a highlight for everyone concerned, not least for ourselves to hear how much our visit meant to those who then returned to their churches refreshed and envisioned.



The closing ceremony is always a special occasion, but especially so on idyllic Kande Beach.



A few African ladies with a ministry to women attended the conferences. Ruth Folayon (2nd on right) and Pansy enjoyed good fellowship with them.



'Refresher Course' at Kande. They came from churches of various denominations for four days of in-depth Bible ministry.

Our next conferences: Zambia – August & September 2007

We are looking forward to conferences in Zambia next month. We visit **Mongu** for the first time in the week of 13th August when Alan Levy and Ian Harrison will be teaching. The following week they will be in **Kasama**. This is our third and last visit to this centre. Alan has asked us to pray that the combined teaching will, under the Spirit of God, have lasting effects. Peter Kaluba, who is one of the pastors in Kasama, tells us that he has been training some of the younger men in his church to become preachers and already he can see a difference in their lives. We pray that the Lord will give similar results in other churches.

For the first two weeks in September we shall be in **Petauke** (at Covenant College again) and **Ndola**. Peter Seccombe will be leading these two conferences with the help of Kabwe Kabwe and Gilbert Mubanga. Peter asks for much prayer for their preparation and that the teaching will be appropriate to the situation.

At all of these conferences a pack of books will be given to those who attend. Please pray for the safe arrival of many boxes that have been sent through the post in recent days. These have been chosen to back up much of the teaching given at the conferences. We are dependent upon the ministry of the Holy Spirit to make these profitable.

Ethiopia – October 2007

We have plans for our first visit to Ethiopia for the first two weeks of October, and will give more details of this next time. Please pray for Ken McIntosh and Gerard Hemmings who are to lead these. At present Gerard is suffering with a voice problem. He would value much prayer for a certain knowledge of the Lord's will about this visit as well as grace to help him through this difficult period.

Other items for prayer and thanksgiving

- While PTI is not involved directly in translating books into other languages, we are able to give encouragement to some translation projects. *'All Things New'* has been translated into Chichewa for Malawi, and we are encouraging brothers who are keen to translate the *'Christian Handbook'* into Indian Punjabi and Urdu.
- We are encouraged with opportunities to make our ministry more widely known among believers. We thank God for the opportunity to have an article in *Evangelical Times* and for being able to have stands at the Keswick Convention in July, and at the Evangelical Movement of Wales annual conference at Aberystwyth in August.
- Ian Bald felt that the time had come for him to step down as our Secretary and Board member. We thank God for his warm and willing contribution to this work and pray that he will be conscious of the Lord's good hand upon him as he continues to serve him.
- Last month we sent out more packets of books than in any previous month. Praise God for the ability to be able to do this. Pray that the books will be read alongside the Scriptures, and especially that the Lord will continue to lead the readers into a much deeper and richer knowledge of himself which they will be able to share with the people the Lord has entrusted to their care.
- In connection with the delivery of books, please continue to pray for their safe arrival. Sadly some do go astray. We have a central distribution point for Nigeria which provides us with savings in postal costs. Pray that recent difficulties will be overcome. We had a very profitable meeting with Ani Ekpo over this matter earlier this month.
- Already invitations to conduct conferences next year are being received. Please pray that the Lord will give us much wisdom and clear direction as we seek to know his will.

We close with another comment from Timothy Alford:

Importunate requests for return visits make no allowance for our seniority! So more 'Richards' and books are needed if we are to respond to people on the spot who are in the best position to evaluate the need. In fact, we have come to a stage in Malawi where a new phase of training is called for; following up at a deeper level what has already been achieved. This must not eliminate the kind of conferences held during the past five years, for these bring encouragement to pastors with little or no previous training, and with few resources. But we do need to equip more Africans to engage in the kind of leadership training at which Abraham Folayon excels. So we need to keep aiming at working ourselves as ex-patriots out of a job!

With thanks for your prayerful interest,

Gordon Oram – PTI Editorial Board