



PTI Prayer & News – May 2008

'Blessed are you O LORD, teach me your statutes.'
(Psalm 119:16)

Dear praying friends,

We praise our gracious God that a number of the pastors who share in our ministry are giving testimony to the fact that they are growing in their understanding of God's Word and have a great desire to study it. This fact comes from comments received from those attending the conferences as well as other pastors who write regularly to us and receive books through the mentoring ministry.

In this issue:

- Returning to Sierra Leone
- PTI begins working in South Asia
- Conference plan update for 2008
- Looking ahead to 2009
- Book ministry
- Pastors' letters and comments

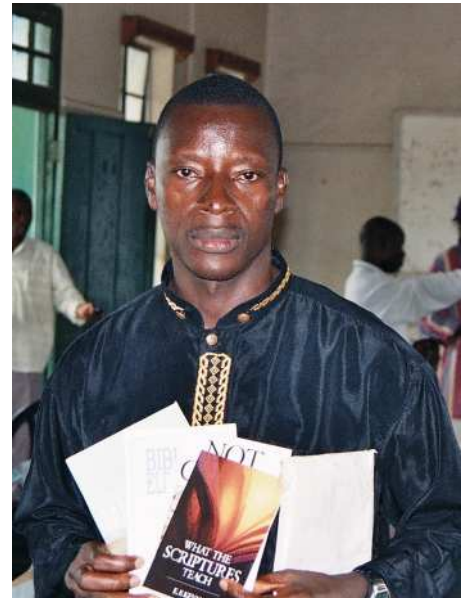
We start by giving an update on the conferences mentioned in our last prayer news:-

SIERRA LEONE CONFERENCES

From 16th February – 14th March Alan Levy was in Sierra Leone for our second visit to the country. Approximately 220 pastors and elders attended the four conferences. Alan found the ministry more difficult in some places than last year, but we have some encouraging testimonies as to the help and blessing received at the conferences. Alan was ill for part of the time while he was there, but despite a very painful throat the Lord enabled him to speak and he did not have to miss a session.



The Kenema conference group



One of the pastors with his book set

For many pastors it was difficult to accept some of the Bible's teaching on marriage which conflicts with some of their unbiblical practices. Please pray that the Lord will show them the priority of his Word in every part of their lives. We had difficulties with the safe arrival of the books. A number of boxes had been opened and some of the books removed. This is a problem we face in other countries and is a reminder to us to constantly pray for the Lord to keep the books safe while they are in transit.

We give a comment from each of the conferences:-

- **Makeni** - *"The teaching was very helpful to me especially in the clarification of very important key issues that pose serious challenges to my Christian life and my church ministry... I thank God for Pastor Alan Levy."*
- **Freetown** - *"It is very helpful to my life and ministry because it has revealed to me the many unorganised and unsystematic approaches we're used to doing, contrary to the Word of God. I learned from this course the truth about the Word of God. It was really a wonderful experience in my personal life. Never have I been involved in such a Bible seminar before. I really appreciated it."*
- **Kenema** - *"I also learnt that Jesus must be the centre of our preaching and not ourselves. I always preach textual and topical sermons thinking that the people can understand. I now believe that preaching expository sermon is best for the people to know more."*
- **Bo** - *"I learned that effective ministry of God's Word demands serious and faithful commitment to reading it."*

MINISTRY IN MYANMAR AND THAILAND

Due to communication problems with pastors in this country, feedback and follow up are difficult and therefore we are unable to give the same detailed information from those who attended. However, on his return to the UK Ken Brownell has reported as follows:

On 27th-28th February I spoke at a church leaders' conference sponsored by the Yangon Evangelical Free Church. There were leaders from three YEFC congregations as well as a number from other churches. The conference went well. I taught 6 sessions entitled 'The Big Story', 'The Story of the Bible' and 'The Unfolding of the Plan of Salvation'. They would like to build the conference up next year and to invite more pastors.

On the 29th I visited several outreach ministries about 40 miles from Yangon and spoke at the graduation of a school of evangelists. On 1st March I saw different contacts and also spoke at the meeting of the Yangon City Fellowship, a ministry of YEFC. It is really a life skills course to which many Buddhists come. It was very impressive to see so many there in the YMCA. On 2nd I preached at Immanuel Baptist Church (founded by Adoniram Judson and the main Baptist church in the city), Peace Evangel Church (an AOG congregation in a poor area) and Yangon New Life Church (very lively).

The next day, 3rd March, I flew to Chiang Mai in Thailand where I joined David Tucker in teaching the 'Barefoot Doctors' at the training centre of Frontier Labourers for Christ. FLC is a mission led by a Burmese, Daniel Kalnin, working in the border areas of Burma, Laos and Thailand. The BFDs are pastors and evangelists from Burma being given a basic medical training that they can use in their ministries in Burma. David and I were not teaching medicine, but the Bible - David took Ephesians and I took Acts. Again the week went very well, There is a lot of potential here future work. Daniel wants to use the very well equipped training centre for leadership training in theology and preaching.

CONFERENCE PLANNING UPDATE

Ghana

Despite much time spent trying to organise this conference, it became clear that it was much wiser to leave this until next year. Our friends there are in complete agreement with this. MacDouglas Ampadu recently wrote: *"Venues for the two conferences have been secured - one at Nkoranza in the Brong Ahafo Region to cater for those in the northern part of Ghana, and the other at Fise in the Greater Accra Region to cater for those in the south. The Team is working hard to promote this program to the rural folks. Though, those whom we contacted earlier, were not all that happy that we postponed it this year, they have expressed their utmost desire to wait for it next year, God-willing. This postponement has afforded us the opportunity to pray much for this program. I know that you are all in earnest prayers with us as we wait patiently for next April."*

Zimbabwe

With the many difficulties and uncertainties in this country we have decided to postpone our visit until 2009. We plan to meet with John Stambolie from the Evangelical Theological College of Zimbabwe and Irving Steggles from Pretoria in June, to discuss the conferences and an opportunity to supply literature to pastors in the townships of South Africa.

Zambia – August 2008

Plans are well under way for two conferences to be held this year in **Mongu** on 4th-8th August, and in **Mansa** the following week. Alan Levy has agreed to visit again, and as Ian Harrison is not able to go this year Kenneth Brownell will be taking his place. Peter Seccombe is to speak at **Chipata** for the week 18th-23rd August, and the preceding week at a venue to be arranged in the **Copperbelt**. He will be assisted in the teaching by some Zambian brothers. Please pray for the ongoing arrangements for these conferences.

Ukraine – May 2008

This is an exploratory visit to an area that is new for us. From 20th-25th May, Gareth Jones from Milland will be based in **Chudniv** both conducting a conference for pastors and preaching. Please pray that we would know the Lord's leading as to future partnership with brothers ministering there.

Ethiopia – October 2008

Ken McIntosh and David Sercombe are due to return for a second visit to Ethiopia from 6th-17th October, where they will again teach at **Addis Ababa** and **Ginchi**. Please pray for Ken and David as plans are made in co-operation with the friends there, and for their own preparation for the teaching sessions.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2009

While we are not yet a third of the way through this year, we have to lay some foundations for the ministry next year. In addition to those already mentioned, we have received an invitation to visit the Bassa peoples of **Nigeria**. We also plan to meet with Jyoti Chakravartty from Kolkota to explore the possibility of visiting **India** as well. This meeting is scheduled for first part July. These will involve a great expansion for us because we would like to add these on to our present conferences.

As our ministry expands and invitations are put before us, we need a great sensitivity to discern the Lord's mind in these things. We are conscious of the extra demands made upon our small team of volunteers and we look to the Lord for grace as we seek to build a more solid administrative base from which the work can go forward.

BOOKS

In the last few weeks we have been given a large quantity of second-hand books which will be of immense value to pastors. As well as these treasures, we have received thousands of magazines – items for which we are regularly asked. The magazines together with a very large number of Geneva Bible Study Notes have been sent to many pastors. One man who has attended the two conferences in Freetown wrote upon receiving them:

"My sincere thanks and appreciation for the GENEVA BIBLE NOTES sent. They will be of great value to me and those I will give them to. The books you have been sending me they have been a great blessing to me and the ministry the Lord has called me into. They have brought a great remarkable change in the way I preach and an immense understanding in to the scriptures. As a young pastor in the ministry with no Bible college training your ministry has helped me a lot through my private studies of the word of God and expository of the word of GOD through the books you sent me."

The situation concerning a permanent **warehouse** for the books has still not been settled, although various suggestions have been made. Please continue to pray about this matter, as we need much wisdom from the Lord to know his will. It seems that any move will involve us in extra regular expense.

You may recall that we recently purchased a large number of **French books**. William Brown of UFM Worldwide is buying 3,000 of these and they will be going in a container to Ivory Coast at the end of April. Earlier in the year William was able to visit the north where the rebels have been in control for some time. He was delighted and amazed to see how the Lord has been at work during this period, growing some churches very noticeably.

Christian Books Worldwide is an independent new trust which is in the process of being formed. The aim is to help with the translation of books into languages where there is little healthy Christian literature. While PTI is not actively involved in translation ministry, we hope to work alongside this ministry and give advice on books that may be suitable to translate. The feedback from pastors gives very useful guidance as to which books prove to be most helpful.

PASTORS' LETTERS AND COMMENTS

In response to feedback from our last letter, we are including a number of other recent comments from the many letters we receive. You will notice that as well as appreciating the books, some pastors look back to the conferences with great thanks to the Lord.

"Thank you very much for the books received... so far the commentary on Matthew and Walking with God have given me a lot of notes in teaching and preaching. These are a balanced lot of books." Ndola, Zambia

"With the books I have received so far from PTI, my ministry has grown spiritually and numerically due to the good sermons and teachings I have given them. Again with the help of the two conferences I have attended at Lukupa, I have also been helped to plan for my preaching plan consecutively on the series of topics for a few months" Kasama, Zambia

"The Bible Book By Book – I am still going over it, but from the little that I have covered, I was blessed and I am blessed by every new chapter. 1&2 Timothy and Titus is just but a gem to me and to the church as I am using it on my Bible studies every Tuesday." Harare, Zimbabwe

"Let's Study Philippians is a book I have studied with some of my colleagues. It has impacted our Christian life and ministry. Walking with God challenged my life and brought me to repentance... I am equipped by your service." Debre Zeit, Ethiopia

"I am really impressed by the wonderful books you give to the church leaders. I for one, attended your conference in Ndola under PTI. Believe me I benefited a lot for days we sat under this man of God and the books I received were of great use to me. They are grooming me a lot to be effective in ministry... I have never had such a ministry come to my aid like PTI. You are a testimony and a history in my Christian life." Lubuto, Zambia

"I want to thank God for sending brother Peter Seccombe that was in September 2007. He is a very powerful servant of God. His teaching of the book of Philippians was so clear and very touching... As our Lord Jesus commanded Peter to "feed my sheep", without the books you are sending, we would have been teaching what we do not understand, but the books help me to understand what the Bible text is talking about, or what a particular Bible book is meaning. Please don't give up." Petauke, Zambia

We had asked prayer for PTI's ministry to become more widely known at home, so we were encouraged that Alan Levy had a good response when manning our stall at the recent Banner of Truth ministers' conference.

We have shared many plans for the future. We are conscious that this is the Lord's work and we continually look to him for guidance and provision for every aspect of this ministry. Please continue to pray that we may be used by him to equip pastors for their preaching ministry, so that they are better able to feed and strengthen his church.