



PTI Prayer & News – August 2008

'The Lord is good; his steadfast love endures for ever.'
(Psalm 100:5)

Dear praying friends,

The Scriptures and especially the Psalms tell us time and again that the Lord is good. We continue to experience the reality of this glorious truth. At the beginning of May we needed in excess of £10,000 to meet all our commitments for that month. In his amazing kindness to us, the Lord has provided for those needs and we ask you to join us in thankfulness to him.

In this issue:

- Ukraine conference report
- Zambia – including 3 new venues
- Ethiopia update
- Conference planning for 2009
- Book ministry news
- Pastors' letters and comments

We thank God for the reports from many pastors who have attended conferences and received books, telling that they have gained much help and blessing from these.

UKRAINE CONFERENCE REPORT – MAY

We praise him for the very beneficial time in Ukraine. The teaching was well received with many questions being asked by the pastors who attended. Gareth Jones sought to encourage the pastors to see the importance of the whole of the Scriptures for preachers



Some of the Ukrainian pastors and their wives outside the church at Chudniv
(with Gareth Jones and David Ide, front row, centre)

rather than focussing mostly on the Gospels. Each pastor was given a set of 8 books in Russian all of which had been translated in recent years. *'Pastors and Teachers'* by Derek Prime was translated in time for the conference. The pastors have been asked to write some of their thoughts and comments on this book. We are looking into ways in which we are able to follow up these brothers in a way similar to our English mentoring programme.

On his return Gareth wrote:

When I began on Wednesday afternoon I was impressed to see so many pastors, the majority of whom were probably under 30 years of age, so keen to learn. There were many subjects that we could have considered but I do believe that under God's Sovereign hand we were led to the right theme. At the end of the conference there was a renewed passion in these men to work hard in their preparation and a desire to preach the full counsel of Scripture to the glory of God. I know that God will honour this desire and His word will go forth in these areas.

It was encouraging for me to spend some time in the evenings and at the weekend to visit many of these pastors in their Churches and to preach there. They are truly serving the Lord and it is evident that the conference, together with the books given, has been a help, inspiration and encouragement.

ZAMBIA – AUGUST

This is very much the focus of our prayers and thoughts at present. There are four conferences planned:

- **Mongu** – Monday 4th – Friday 8th
- **Mansa** – Monday 11th – Friday 15th

These will both be led by Alan Levy and Ken Brownell.

- **Luanshya** – Monday 11th – Friday 15th
 - **Chipata** – Monday 18th – Friday 22nd
- These will be led by Peter Seccombe, who will be joined in the teaching by Kabwe Kabwe and Gilbert Mubanga.



Please pray for the brothers in their preparation as well as for those who attend. Alan has asked for special prayer as he meets with the leaders in Mongu to deal with one or two areas where we have experienced some tension both last year and in the planning for this year's conference.

The conferences in Mansa, Chipata and Luanshya will all be first conferences in new situations for us, while that in Mongu will be the second in the three year cycle that we plan to conduct. You may be encouraged to learn that we have received more feedback and follow up work from the conference at Mongu than from any other conference we have conducted. Only just recently we have received the following in a letter from a pastor who lives in the Shangombo area (near the Angola border). There is no post office in the area so he has to travel about 80 miles to Senanga for his mail.

"I got encouragement of continuing to serve God even in hard times because I almost resigned due to the pressure of other leaders and stayed for one year without earning any salary because of a fund problem... In November 2007 I used the book called '1 and 2 Timothy and Titus' – I was teaching on Christian Behaviour from Titus 2. The response from the church was overwhelming. I was requested by the church to repeat the lesson... In that month we had a 3 days' leadership meeting I preached from Titus 1 and 2 and the response from the leaders was overwhelming and they requested me to make some handouts from the whole book for them... The results of the conference and the books is that I am encouraged to persevere in serving God, and to keep the work God has entrusted to me and also have improved my preaching methods... I am now a district pastor who is caring for 5 big churches and 6 small branches. From January to April we baptised 68 believers and the churches are increasing in numbers each Sunday, the behaviour and character of church members are being transformed and the work of evangelism is taking its root in the life of the church, leaders are also reforming."

ETHIOPIA – OCTOBER

Please continue to pray for Ken McIntosh and David Sercombe as they prepare for this second visit. They will be teaching in **Addis Ababa** from Monday 6th – Friday 10th, and in **Ginchi** from Monday 13th – Friday 20th. Some of the teaching outlines have been sent to Ethiopia already – pray for the translation of this material into Amharic for its use by those who attend. We regularly are asked for 'handouts' at conferences and this is the first time we have attempted this.

FUTURE CONFERENCES – 2009

We are speaking with Mike Webb about another visit to **Sierra Leone** early next year. Here, as you realise, the need is great and we are keen to follow the Lord's direction for our ministry in this country. We anticipate further visits to **Myanmar** possibly in late January and to **Chiang Mai, Thailand** a little later. There is nothing further to report about the plans for the conference in **Ghana** for next April. In the all wise providence of God, our conference among the Bassa peoples in **Nigeria** has been moved back to February 2010.

We have recently had a most encouraging meeting with Jyoti Chakravartty and Mike Henson of Know the Truth Resources based in Kolkata. We met these friends last year and we all feel able to plan for a conference in the Kolkata area of **India** in September/October 2009, and to follow this with another in an area where pastors from **Nepal, Bhutan** and the Himalayan region of India can attend. Jyoti has many contacts with pastors in these areas, and we have a growing number of pastors from Nepal who receive our books.

The meeting planned for mid June with John Stambolie and Irving Steggles took place but sadly John Stambolie did not feel able to leave Zimbabwe. We were grateful that other brothers with a good knowledge of South Africa were able to attend. We were able to share together in a united vision to equip pastors and preachers and to work together where possible. We wondered if it may be useful to explore the possibility of holding a conference in the Victoria Falls area. In thanking the Lord for an extremely good meeting, we need great wisdom for any future decisions concerning future ministry in **Zimbabwe**.

BOOK MINISTRY NEWS

We praise God for the safe arrival of the **French books** along with many others in the Ivory Coast. The Lord graciously enabled the container to get through the customs quickly. By the time you read this we trust that many of these books will be read by brothers in the north of this country. Others from this large purchase are going to Democratic Republic of Congo - the Kinshasa area, Togo, Rwanda and Burundi. We have had requests for French books from all these places. The Lord's timing is perfect because we have never had such an influx of requests for French books before. In the near future we have been encouraged to send some of them to Burkina Faso and Mali. Pray for their safe delivery and for their use in the lives of the pastors who will receive them. Here is what the pastors' leader in Burkina Faso wrote when he heard of this offer

"To come to the subject of the books, how can I express our profound gratitude for this opening of a door? I assure this that this is overwhelming for me! And I can already imagine the joy of the students."

While we mention the safety of the **books in transit** to those who need them, please continue to make this a matter of prayer. A number of men have 'gone silent' in recent months and this may well be because the books have failed to arrive. We have experienced a few problems with pastors in Zimbabwe being asked to pay exorbitant customs duties to receive books. Please pray that the Lord will take books safely to their destination.

There is nothing further to report concerning the need for new **warehousing** for the books. This is an issue that will not disappear, and when the decision is made, it will in all likelihood involve a regular expense for storage. Please pray on for a satisfactory solution. We are grateful to God for the generosity of David Ide who currently allows us the use of his property.

Our sister organisation **Christian Books Worldwide** continues to move forward. It has now received the trust deed and is beginning to work. A brother from Pakistan has already translated 'The Christian Handbook' into **Urdu**, and Roop Ram Lal has translated 'Preaching Pure and Simple' and 'The Christian Handbook' into **Indian Punjabi**. A meeting is planned for the end of the month to discuss translation of literature into Swahili. We hope that before long a prayer letter concerning their ministry will be available on a regular basis.

PASTORS' LETTERS AND COMMENTS

It is always a tremendous joy and encouragement to receive letters of appreciation from the men we seek to serve. We trust you will find much to thank God for as you read the following selection.

"Thanks so much again for the two books volume of J.C.Ryle on the Gospel of Luke. These are a great blessing to me because I am encouraged to read the whole book of Luke and I am finding so much hidden treasure in the reading and study...I am finding good avenues and I recommend this to many preachers here in Africa if there are some who have not received it." Dzivarasekwa, Harare, Zimbabwe

"I am indeed grateful to you and your outfit for the literature books sent to me. In actual fact it will assist me a lot in my preaching and teaching of the Gospel, meaning it will improve my ministry work which God has entrusted to me... All said and done I will be reading the books often and often so that I may not be found wanting in this ministry and work." Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana

"You have rekindled the spirit of reading in me again...you have exposed me to books since I came in contact with you. The books you sent are really helping me in preparing my preaching and Bible Study. Some of the books I have shared with some pastors and they are very glad to read such wonderful treasure." Agbogugu, Nigeria

"These books are very helpful to me as a pastor of one of the fast growing churches in our town in that I am using them to help me prepare what to preach to my church and also to be used in Bible Study. And also my church members are free to use these books in their studies. Here in Zambia books are very difficult to get and if at all you find them they are very expensive to buy.... Please continue this wonderful work the Lord has called you to do. And may the Lord give you more resources to help us to do the work of the Lord, and may he give you the grace you need." Mufulira, Zambia

I write to inform you that I have received the books. I am very happy and I am blessed and encouraged in my spiritual life with these books because although I was doing the work of God, I had no materials. I was only using the Bible. Now I am busy reading the books and I am growing in my spiritual life which makes preaching the Gospel easier as well as guiding me in preparing talks. I have knowledge to be answerable as a leader and also correcting mistakes." Blantyre, Malawi

"I thank you very much for the books. They are clearly written and easy to follow and understand. They are full of practical application for preaching. I am challenged to apply daily in my ministry and in my private life...personally I am gaining and my ministry also. I am moving from glory to glory. Here things are not okay...despite all the problems, my ministry is built up and edified. The books are grounding me practically." Sanyati, Zimbabwe

"The books are very very useful to our church. Every month we hold seminars for leaders, every week group studies. One or two days seminar using the same stuff. Other churches join us whenever we hold leaders' seminars because of the good material we are using in our church. This is not a waste of time sending the books. They are very very useful to us. Send some more, Thank You." Kabwe, Zambia

"After reading these books, I am really blessed as I am one who among those that hunger and they that thirst to read Christian books so that I teach others. Therefore I desire to drink from the buckets of people who have drawn living water from the endless pool of God within them." Mbeya, Tanzania

With greetings in Christ,

Gordon Oram – PTI Editorial Board