

March
2020

Our
Itinerary



- Feb 26-March 14: Nepal Ministry
- April 5-24: Philippine Ministry
- April 25-May 1: Malawi Ministry
- May 2-10: Rwanda Ministry
- May 17: First Baptist Church, Duncan, AZ
- Aug 2: Mesa Baptist Church
- Aug 9: Calvary Crossroads, Wenatchee, WA
- Aug 16: East Wenatchee First Baptist Church, WA
- Aug 30: First Baptist Church, Quartzsite, AZ
- Sept 13: Sandy Ridge Community Church, UT
- Oct 8-17: Malawi (tentative)
- Oct 18-24: Rwanda (tentative)



Nepal: The Door Remains Open for Now

As you read this, I am once again in Nepal. Along with my colleague, Richard Spencer, I am leading two classes in Kailali and Kohalpur. I am taking them through a course on pastoral care. I have never worked with the Kohalpur group before. I am excited to meet them. In addition to 'Pastoral Care,' I will also be sharing with them our 'Sanctity of Life' fetal model presentation. Although I don't know the individual circumstances of the people who hear this, it always seems to be impactful.

As I teach and work with these students, I am very much aware of the growing opposition to all things Christian in Nepal. We must be much more wary. As you know, our Nepali partner was arrested nearly a year ago on false charges of coercing people to convert to Christianity. After the trial, no verdict was rendered for many months. There were numerous delays leaving our friend and the entire Nepali Christian community under a cloud. Finally on, February 25, the court held its long awaited 'final hearing' and found him **NOT GUILTY**. I am rejoicing as I go. However, we continue to keep a low profile. So far, GTN staff are carrying on our work

in Nepal without interference. **The door remains open for now.** Our Christian friends continue to welcome us with open arms. The training ministry continues to be very effective and the students remain very grateful. **Pray that the door remains open.** There is much yet to be done.



It's that time of year, basketball fan! March Madness! Time to make those predictions as to who eventually wins the NCAA men's college basketball championship! American basketball is hugely popular in the Philippines. Filipinos yawn at the mention of the Superbowl, choosing instead to use that Sunday afternoon to fill out their brackets in advance!

Many centuries before basketball was invented, a Babylonian king named Nebuchadnezzar had his own version of March Madness. In fact, it involved seven Marches.



NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S
**MARCH
MADNESS**

Nebuchadnezzar's descent into insanity is in Daniel 4. It happened because God wanted this powerful king to learn one of the most important life lessons there is! What lesson? Well it is no mystery:

And the king answered and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?" While the words were still in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: The kingdom has departed from you, and you shall be driven from among men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. And you shall be made to eat grass like an ox, and seven periods of time shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will." Immediately the word was fulfilled against Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from among men and ate grass like an ox, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair grew as long as eagles' feathers, and his nails were like birds' claws. (Daniel 4:30-33)

For seven Marches the greatest king on earth grazed on grass like an ox. He thought he WAS an ox! Somehow, the kingdom of which he was so proud functioned well without

Nebuchadnezzar's March Madness (Cont'd)

him. They even managed to keep his mental illness a secret, thus enabling him to eventually return to his throne once his sanity returned.

At the end of that time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever... Now I [] praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble. (Daniel 4:34, 37)

How important is humility? The extreme measures God took to instill this lesson in the heart of King Nebuchadnezzar should give us some idea. God regards the struggle against pride and self-exaltation as a central (perhaps THE central) struggle in our spiritual lives. The centrality of this lesson can be further understood by realizing that sin entered the universe when Lucifer exalted himself believing that he could become just like the most high God. Sin entered the human race when Adam and Eve decided that they deserved to know God's 'secrets' and so ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Pride was the entry-level drug that addicted the world to sin. Some suggest that God's punishment of Nebuchadnezzar was unduly harsh. (I will set aside, for the moment, the fact that making such a moral judgment of God's actions presumes one is morally equal or even superior to God(!) and is therefore an example of extreme human arrogance in and of itself.) The fact is, Nebuchadnezzar's insanity was not a punishment at all. Nebuchadnezzar's pride had

destroyed his perspective. Pride does that. He was living in a make-believe world in which his power, glory and kingdom were all things of his own making. A departure from reality is a *subtle kind of insanity*. Make no mistake. Nebuchadnezzar's March Madness began long before he started chewing his cud. In allowing his temporary descent into the barnyard, God provided Nebuchadnezzar with needed strong medicine to restore his sense of ultimate reality. In the end, Nebuchadnezzar recognized God for who He is and what He is able to do! This was no punishment! It was an act of grace!

What role does pride play in your life? Is it an occasional participant in your world or does it leave you out of touch with the twin realities of God's greatness and our own smallness? Nebuchadnezzar's March Madness is a cautionary tale. May we learn to give God glory for all that we have and all that we achieve! We have nothing that we did not receive from Him! (I Corinthians 4:7) Let's take this lesson to heart. It's the only sane thing to do.



**Vision 2020:
Matching Fund,
Off and Running**



This year's matching fund drive is off to a great start with two generous gifts pledged totaling \$8500! The challenge is to match these gifts for a total of \$17000 or more! Every cent will be used to help train more leaders more effectively throughout 2020. If you would like to participate, please follow the instructions below!



Our Praises and Prayer Requests



- Praise God that so far our travel has not been restricted by the coronavirus.
- Praise God our Nepal partner has been found NOT GUILTY of coercing people to convert to Christianity!
- Praise God our Matching Fund Drive (March-May) is off to a great start with \$8500 in challenge gifts.
- Please pray for our Matching Fund Drive.
- Please pray for productive ministry in Nepal (started Feb 27).
- Please pray for health and protection from coronavirus as we travel.
- Please pray as we prepare for a three nation journey through the Philippines, Malawi, and Rwanda beginning in April.

Ministry Partnership

Your financial partnership is essential as we carry out our God given ministry. Please follow the instructions below or on the enclosed response card (US mail version).

"Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account... And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:17, 19)

You may give online at:

www.globaltrainingnetwork.org

Just click on "Give," then scroll down until you can click on our picture. You can fill in the form (for regular support) or scroll down and select **"Matching Fund"** (for training expenses).



Support also accepted at:

Global Training Network
PO Box 6507
Peoria, AZ 85385

(Please include a note indicating that your gift is preferred for the **Edmondson Matching Fund #43502**, or #435 for regular support.)



GLOBAL TRAINING NETWORK

Please call GTN at 623-217-3867 if you need any assistance.