



April, 2020

Our Itinerary



- April 5-24: Philippine Ministry CANCELLED
- April 20-24: Online Class, CBS Asia, Quezon City, Philippines
- April 25-May 1: Malawi Ministry CANCELLED
- May 2-10: Rwanda Ministry CANCELLED
- 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)



March: More Madness Than Expected

Last month, I wrote an article about Nebuchadnezzar’s March Madness. That was before I knew that March would come in like a lamb and then...stay in like a hibernating bear. For real March Madness, old Nebuchadnezzar had nothing on us. COVID-19 has turned this into the most memorable March on record. Obviously, I am neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet. Oh well.

For the training ministry, March was not entirely shut down. I did spend the first half of the month in Nepal ministering to two groups in the far West of the country. I am often surprised by the testimonies I hear about the effect of our classes. One man spoke up during a feedback session in Dhangadhi. He did not speak about ‘pastoral care,’ the subject of the course. He was blessed instead by the lesson on goal setting which we include in all of our Timothy courses. He felt that this alone would make his ministry more

effective. In Kohalpur, a lady named Lalita spoke to us about our course from six months ago on Christian marriage. She beamed as she said that following biblical principles had brought great healing to her marriage.

I returned to the U.S. just in time for the coronavirus crisis, passing through uncharacteristically quiet airports. I’ve been home ever since. Our training events in the Philippines, Malawi, and Rwanda have all been cancelled. Fortunately, I am able to teach one of those classes online starting April 20. I will also be mentoring another GTN staff member in the Timothy Training Program with the aim of getting him certified as a TLT Trainer. We are meeting regularly online with other GTN staff members and taking part in online Bible studies at church. We are also catching up on our reading, research, and a backlog of home projects. Like all of you, I am anxious for life to return to normal; but, by God’s grace, we have plenty to keep us busy.



WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH...stay home

Well, here we are: looking at another month (or more) of economic and social shut-down while the coronavirus runs its course. As someone said, this is like being a teenager again: gas is cheap, but I’m grounded. Those who are older can recall other national crises, but for many this is a brand new experience. It is certainly a unique experience for us all. Most of us have lost money. Many have lost work, others are sick, and some have lost their lives. Where do we look for meaning in these events? How do we find perspective to carry us through? Perhaps this can be a start.

Things are NOT out of control. As a teenager, I once had a panic attack. Things were out of con-

trol at home, and felt that I had no one to whom I could turn for help. It was terrifying. Since becoming a Christian, I’ve endured other crises, but I’ve never felt that panic again. Not once. I know that, no matter what happens, there is a benevolent God who is wise, compassionate, all powerful, and always available to hear our cries. I don’t pretend to know His plan in these days, but I know what He is like. That understanding gives me a bedrock of certainty that goes beyond the uncertainty of this pandemic.

There is rest to enjoy. Don’t underestimate the importance of this. The principle of ‘Sabbath’ began when God rested on the



WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE TOUGH...stay home (Cont'd)

seventh day of the very first week. It is not merely a law for Israel. All creation is designed for periods of work and rest, of productivity and dormancy. We are part of that life rhythm and shouldn't fight against it. Unfortunately, many of us do. When Israel ignored God's instructions to allow the land a periodic rest, God gave the land all the 'Sabbaths' it had missed by allowing it to lie fallow during the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity (Jeremiah 36:21). Could it be that God is now giving you the rest you've not been giving yourself?

There are lessons to learn. All of life is a schoolroom for those with attentive hearts and minds. A period of forced quiet is a perfect time to reflect and learn important lessons from God. Those lessons may be different for each person depending on where you are in your spiritual journey. Some of us have learned to trust in money. Now we see our retirement accounts sinking like bathwater down the drain. What is the lesson here for us? Some of

us have learned to trust in our own ability to 'get things done.' What do we trust when there is nothing we can do? Some of us are seeing



first hand the reality of the brevity and fragility of life. Have we focused too much on THIS life instead of the NEXT?

These are the kinds of questions you should wrestle with before God in prayer with an open Bible before you. Now is a good time for it.

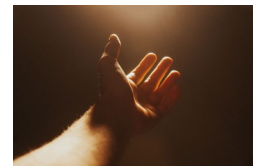
There are priorities to realign. When something destroys your routines and prevents you from pursuing life in the same manner you always have, it's a good time to evaluate: "Have I been investing my time and energy in the best way possible? What should have a higher priority for me? What should have a lower priority or perhaps be dismissed altogether?" Again, now is the time to wrestle with God over these matters.

There are relationships to strengthen. I find myself missing my kids and grandkids. Oh, I was missing them before since they live in different states now, but something about this crisis makes me value them all the more. I want to see them, if not in person, at least online a bit more. I want to strengthen those bonds. How about you? Is this crisis making you value the people in your life a bit more than before? Why not act on that? It may prove to be a blessing far more durable than this emergency.

Don't let this crisis go to waste! Start with an assurance that God is, in fact, in control. Then submit to His perfect work in your life during these unique days while the going is tough and the tough have to stay home.



Our Praises and Prayer Requests



- Praise God for a productive time of training in Nepal.
- Praise God I am home now and COVID-19 free.
- Praise God our Matching Fund Drive (March-May) is up to \$12,800.
- Please pray for our Matching Fund Drive. Our goal is \$25,000 for travel and conference costs.
- Please pray that our regular giving remains strong in spite of this economic crisis.
- Please pray for churches around the world during this pandemic.
- Please pray for one another as we all weather this storm together.

Matching Challenge Off and Growing



The Edmondson Matching Challenge is off to a good start with \$12,800 given so far. We are more than halfway to our goal of \$25,000. This remains an investment in eternal results, and, unlike stocks and bonds, the value of this investment will *never* decrease. The challenge runs through May. If you would like to help fund our travel and conference costs with an extra gift to the Edmondson Matching Fund, our pastoral students will be greatly blessed. Instructions are below.

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 preferenced 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.