

October
2020



GLOBAL TRAINING
NETWORK

Our Praises and Prayer Requests



- Praise God for plans firming up for a return to Rwanda in December.
- Praise God for the slowly improving coronavirus picture.
- Praise God for His provision.
- Please pray for travel restrictions to be eased enabling us to train in person.
- Please pray for our ongoing online training events for students in many countries.
- Please pray for Christians suffering persecution in Nepal, India, and elsewhere.
- Please pray for the health and safety of students in Nepal, Rwanda, Malawi, Philippines, and Myanmar.

Our Itinerary



- November 7-15: Malawi (tentative)
- Nov 29-Dec 12: Rwanda Ministry (tentative)
- Dec 14-18: International Online Training



Our Ongoing Need for Humble Prayer

In our August newsletter, I urged us to humble ourselves and seek God in prayer during this time of national crisis. Today I'm renewing that call. It is safe to say that our country stands at crossroads. Of course the coming election springs to mind when I say this, but please look beyond that for a moment. Our issues as Americans cannot be finally solved by politicians. They never could. They still can't. Our current political and cultural problems are merely a symptom of deeper, more dangerous currents flowing in our culture. Much could be said on this subject. Let me simply say that at their heart, these currents are spiritually dark. Hence our need for prayer. Should we vote? Sure. But should we bow our knees and cry out to God for mercy and deliverance? A-B-S-O-L-U-T-E-L-Y! Can help be found with the right politician? Maybe--to a degree--for now. But can God touch hearts,

save souls, and make an eternal difference in individual lives, in churches, and whole communities? A-B-S-O-L-U-T-E-L-Y! The psalmist did NOT write, "I will lift up my eyes to the capitol. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the king..." That idea was always laughable. It still is. No. He said "***I will lift up my eyes to the hills! Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord!***" (Psalm 121:1). It always did. It still does. 



October Surprises

It is no surprise that we are in the middle of an especially crazy election. However, we've been hearing over the past few weeks about the possibility of an 'October Surprise;' some contrived last minute event/revelation designed to change the outcome of the election (yawn). All this has made me think about the role of surprises in our spiritual lives.

We don't expect the unexpected. A surprise is always... a surprise. As a result, we are usually not ready for it. It could be an unexpected promotion at work, the announcement of a child or grandchild on the way, a surprise party, or an especially creative or appropriate gift. On the other hand it could be a car accident, an outsized bill, a frown on the doctor's face, a sudden pink slip, a prodigal child, or worse. I've seldom met anyone prepared for such events. We tend to function as though things will continue just as they always have. Yet, look around. I am 61 and 11/12 years old and I have never before seen a pandemic or the general fearfulness occurring right now. Have you? As they say in the investment world, "past performance does not guarantee future results." Life is NOT a smooth and level path. This is self-evident, yet for some reason we continue to be shocked when the ups and downs of life move... up and down. This dynamic affects people's spiritual lives, making them complacent and even dismissive. "***They will say, 'Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.'***" (2 Peter 3:4) Yet these assumptions about the routine path of history ignore the reality of past cataclysmic events, like, for example, the universal flood (vs. 5). Jesus himself predicted that this sort of complacent attitude will be prevalent when He returns. "***For as in those days before the***



October Surprises (Cont'd)

flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man" (Matthew 24:38-39). If you think the world was staggered by the COVID pandemic, just wait until the return of Jesus!

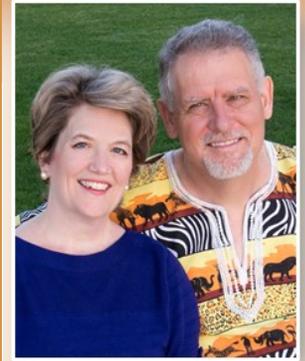
As believers, we need to adopt a biblical expectation that this life offers NO guarantees! Jesus warned us not to invest our treasures merely in this world since **"...moth and rust destroy and...thieves break in and steal" (Matthew 6:19).** He was teaching us, 'Don't put your money (figuratively or literally) in a bag full of holes!' 'Don't place your trust in a world where things periodically 'head south!' Expect that things can and will go wrong! Nasty surprises will come! It's not just an October thing.

Instead, we should expect that our only real guarantees lie with Jesus and the world that is coming. In Jesus' kingdom, **"neither moth nor rust destroys, and...thieves do not break in and steal" (Matthew 6:20).** God's grace means that, although we live in a world with no guarantees, we have the amazing opportunity to focus our lives on a world where God himself is our guarantee! God passionately wants us to invest our HEARTS in this coming world!

"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (Colossians 3:2).

When our affection is set on future, better, more permanent things than we can ever attain here, God is

blessed! Moreover, this inward change in focus changes us outwardly. We will invest our time, our money, our passion, and our gifts and talents differently. These daily investments will then gain a guaranteed return in that new world! Best of all, we won't be shocked or dismayed when the world disappoints us again! Oh...one more thing. When this is our attitude, we will be prepared for his return. We will long for it and welcome Him when He comes, even if He comes in October.



**Looking Forward to 2021:
(Boy Am I Ever!)**

Recently an optimistic friend suggested online that a series of events in amateur sports could make this "a perfect year." My first thought was, "Wait a minute. This IS 2020 we're talking about!" In all seriousness, God has provided many blessings for which to be thankful in 2020. Never-the-less, I, for one, am looking forward to moving on. As you know, Eileen and I have already been working on our ministry goals 2021 and have been sharing them over the past few months. Here is our next installment. Because there is a great need for short term training of pastors all over the majority world, we continually look for new groups of leaders with this need. Here are our 2021 goals for new fields of ministry.

- Pursue ministry possibilities in Asia. Of particular interest are Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, (or other countries not currently on the GTN list).
- Develop relationships enabling future ministry in Mongolia.
- Consider further opportunities in Africa including Timothy Leadership Training invitations in Uganda and Tanzania.



I am excited about the possibilities that this new year will bring and thankful for your partnership which enables us to go.

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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)

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