

April 2021



GLOBAL TRAINING NETWORK

Our Itinerary



- April 18: Mesa Baptist Church
- May 5-31: Rwanda Ministry
- June 13: Sonoita Bible Church
- June 14-18: International Zoom Training
- June 18-28: Bangladesh Ministry
- June 29-July 13: Kenya Ministry
- July 13-20: Burundi Ministry
- August 22: Floris Baptist, Floris, IA
- August 29: Chino Valley Community Church



A Splendid Start

This year’s matching challenge is off to a wonderful start with many of you giving early and generously! We are thrilled and very grateful! Already we are planning an aggressive pace of travel and training in several different countries in both Africa and Asia. Your partnership is making it possible! Keep up the good work!



The Resurrection Relevance

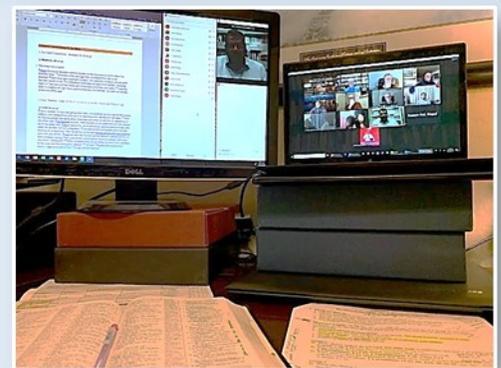
One startling aspect of the times in which we live is that we are rapidly losing our ability to discern between what is truly important and what is merely urgent or interesting. Futurist Aldous Huxley warned in his classic book, *Brave New World*, that one day truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance, entertainment, and distraction. He predicted that this flood of irrelevant information would create a trivial culture; one in which there would be little incentive to ban books since few people would care to read them anyway. Cancel culture notwithstanding, it appears that his predictions were largely on target. Examples are legion. At the gym yesterday, I spent 30



minutes on cardio exercise while watching the news. I gained tidbits of information about the \$2.2 trillion ‘infrastructure’ proposal, a wastewater leak in Florida, the rates of new Covid infections in states and countries where I don’t live, the ups and downs of stock markets, and the ups and downs of the British royals. All this was punctuated by commercials for psoriasis treatments, online loans and Burger King. I gained only two *relevant* insights: 1) It sounds like a good time to buy Tesla stock, and 2) A whopper sounds really good right now. The rest was interesting but irrelevant. By this I mean that I cannot affect it nor does it impact or inform any decision I might make.

Impacting Lives Through Zoom

In March, with the help of GTN staffer Christopher Schwarzen, I led the third class in the Timothy curriculum: “Harm to Harmony.” The class was online with a group of international students from seven different time zones. One highlight of the gathering was the involvement of two students from Pakistan and Myanmar respectively. Both nations are hostile to Christianity. In fact, both students took a real risk by spending 3 hours per day online for a class led by an American pastor. As is our custom, we began with the results of action plans made during the previous class on Christian Stewardship. Covid-19 made a big dent in many of the goals. However, it was a delight to hear of one man who bought 100 chickens planning to supplement his income by selling eggs. Instead, he is giving eggs away to those who have lost employment due to the pandemic. Another man led his church to cultivate a large piece of land slated for a church building. The resulting crops of maize and beans will also be used to feed those in need. I am delighted that these students learned that good stewardship of our resources always involves concern for those in

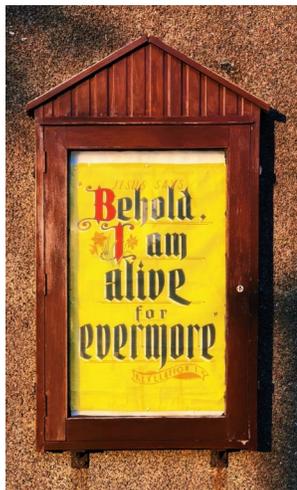


need. Our current course deals with harm and violence in the family. These godly leaders engaged in serious discussion of the various forms of family violence and harm covered in the course. They made significant action plans to confront it in their churches and communities. Seven of our students have now finished half of the Timothy curriculum and were awarded Basic Trainer certificates. In June we will meet again. It will be interesting to learn what God has done in families with this course.

## The Resurrection Relevance (Cont'd)

It is information with no practical use for me. Yet, I spent 30 minutes of focused attention on it in spite of my earlier decision to back away. In a 16 hour waking day, that's a significant investment. Between things like cable and online news, social media, online shopping, talk radio, streaming sports and entertainment, most of us invest *several hours* of our valuable time *each day* in irrelevance and distraction. In reality, that is disastrous! We can never *thoroughly* process all those interesting tidbits of information. As a result, our ability to discern between the important and unimportant or even between truth and error is dramatically reduced. Who has time to give it that much thought? Moreover the constant bombardment of emotive images and scenarios eventually leaves us emotionally desensitized. We become unable to generate much passion for the truly important things even if we *can* figure out what those are.

All this brings us to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I submit that if you are reading this the reality of the resurrection is not the question. Its importance and relevance to your daily life is. We have all just celebrated the Easter holiday. It was a nice weekend. Children gathered Easter eggs.(!) We dressed up a bit more than usual. Pictures were taken. There were special services and programs. Church buildings were pleasantly full. Then on Monday life returned to normal. Little if anything changed as a result of our annual reminder of *THE single most important and personally relevant fact in the history of mankind!* Contrast our response to the resurrection with that of the apostle Paul

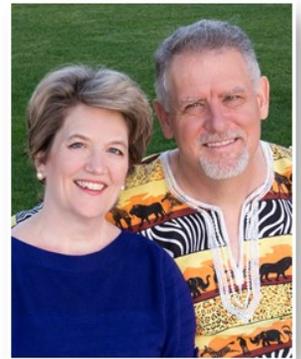


who claimed that the resurrection is *proof positive* that the gospel message is true. He also claimed that absent the resurrection all our preaching can be considered false and believers pitiable for our delusions (I Corinthians 15:12-20). Moreover, he cited the resurrection as motivation for *every sacrifice* believers make to advance the message of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:10).

Since the resurrection is real, it testifies to the truth of eternal salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. It means that an *eternity* in hell can be avoided and a *limitless future* with God in a restored world can be gained. This is the single most relevant and vastly important truth in the universe, bar none. It should change *something* in our daily lives. Ask yourself these questions: *How do the realities flowing from the resurrection of Jesus Christ affect...*

- My attitudes toward politics?*
- My financial priorities?*
- My relationships with loved ones?*
- My conversation?*
- My entertainment habits?*
- My church attendance?*
- My parenting?*
- My marriage?*

Are these important questions? I think so. Are they more important than whatever else is demanding your attention right now? You decide. I challenge you to break out of the pattern and give yourself enough time and attention to properly assess and act on the relevance of the resurrection. 



### Our Praises and Prayer Requests



- Praise God our Matching Challenge is off to a great start!
- Praise God for new opportunities in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Burundi.
- Please pray for travel restrictions to be lifted in the countries we serve.
- Please pray for the health and safety of students in Nepal, Rwanda, Malawi, and the Philippines.
- Please pray for Myanmar as the army has been shooting hundreds of civilians.
- Please pray for the church in Gatagara, Rwanda which is still closed by the government.

## 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:**

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

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

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