

August 2022



GLOBAL TRAINING NETWORK

Our Itinerary



- Sept 1-10: Kurdistan Ministry**
- Sept 18: Calvary Crossroads Church, Wenatchee, WA**
- Sept 25: East Wenatchee First Baptist Church, WA**
- Oct 6-Nov 6: Rwanda Ministry**
- Dec 1-18: Nepal Ministry**



Renewing Old Friendships

One of the joys of returning to a full travel schedule following the Covid pandemic involves renewing old friendships. An underestimated side-effect of the pandemic has been the simple fact that it separated people. People are precious and losing them,



even for a time, makes our lives poorer. It has been good to see our brothers and sisters in Christ again after two years. Lately I've been thinking about separations and reunions. Life seems to be filled with separations. Recently there have been several stories of celebrity deaths in the news. Some of them have been household names my whole adult life. Now they are gone. It is a reminder that no matter how wealthy or famous one becomes, no one is truly 'bigger than life,' much less bigger than death. The same destiny awaits the famous and the obscure. "It is appointed to men once to die..." (Hebrews 9:27). Sadly, for those left behind the pain of separation can be overwhelming. But there are plenty of lesser things that separate us from one another too. The first things that spring to mind involve conflict: divorces, friends falling out, church splits, etc. Too many of us live with those heart-aches. But life can separate us in other ways. Our own experience provides some unfortunate examples.

Books for Kurdistan Update

In July, you gave \$800 to "Books For Kurdistan" raising the total given this year to \$6650. This moves us closer to our goal of \$10,000 for 2022. These funds are enabling us to translate solid texts on pastoral ministry for the leaders in training at the Hope Bible institute in Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan. On behalf of our Kurdish students, thank you! Keep up the good work!

Where in the World Were the Edmondsons THIS Month?

July found Eileen and I heading off to Nepal following a short turn-around from our June ministry in the Philippines. Just as our Philippines ministry represented a return to regular ministry there after a long hiatus, so our return to Nepal represents the re-inauguration of our training ministry there following the pandemic. We trained two groups of leaders in the southern Nepali towns of Hetauda and Kohalpur. In Hetauda we worked with 26 Pastors and leaders offering them an introduction to Hermeneutics which will enable them to interpret the Scriptures more carefully and handle them more faithfully. One of the pastors there leads 11 churches! His takeaway from the class was that he will now be presenting 11 better sermons each week. The second week we spent in Kohalpur. It was a wonderful "reunion" week. GTN staff member Richard Spencer and I were the last two GTN trainers to visit Kohalpur before the pandemic set in, and I was the first GTN trainer to return there following the pandemic. We had 22 students and also taught them Hermeneutics. Our feedback from both groups indicated that they were greatly helped by the principles we taught them concerning the proper ways of observing, interpreting, and applying a given text of Scripture. Eileen was able to travel with me in

Nepal and was a great help. The weather was uncomfortably humid, but we were blessed with more air conditioning than usual so we didn't suffer too badly. I started with a cold which I acquired during my return from the Philippines, but it disappeared after a few days. God is good. Now we have returned and have celebrated our 41st anniversary as well as Eileen's LX birthday, both in the first week of August. We now have about three weeks to prepare for our next ministry foray in Kurdistan (Northern Iraq).

We depart on Sept 1. It's a pilgrim life, but in the final analysis, we are all pilgrims here. It is a blessing to be so often reminded.



Renewing Old Friendships *(Cont'd)*

Over the years, our ministry has been both challenging and rewarding. One of the challenges has come from God moving us around a lot. It seems we've been all over the world, but seldom near our own family. We have made good friends along the way—then moved away. This has been painful and, oddly, more painful the older we get. We know that "here we have no continuing city, but we seek one that is to come" (Hebrews 13:14). Still, we miss so many people we have walked with for a season only to go separate ways in the end.

Good news: I'm not going to leave you in the middle of these morose musings. But let's consider the lessons they teach. There are at least four:

- 1. People are precious so we should invest our best time and energies in them.** Most things in our lives are temporary. **Only three things are eternal: God, His Word, and people.** Don't live your life for things that wear out faster than we do. Make people your priority. You are blessed to be a blessing—to people.
- 2. Things change so don't burn bridges. Maintain them.** You never know when you may be able to **renew** friendships that have lain dormant for years. I said ministry is challenging, but ministry is also rewarding. One reward has been the renewal of old friendships in recent years. What a joy to reconnect with people from our earliest days of ministry as many of them now partner with us in our work. They are more precious to us now than ever. **In the serendipity of life, sometimes old friendships become new.** It is one of God's unexpected graces. Allow for it. Don't burn those bridges. Keep them clear and crossable.



3. Eternity awaits so recognize that you never really lose a believing friend. As we grow older eternity becomes clearer. **Life is too short. What a relief to realize that the end is not really the end.** In heaven there will be no more painful separations. All those believing friends you have known through life will be there. The only things missing from that reunion will be the shadows that darken our friendships here. We will have "fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, will have cleansed us from all our sin" (1 John 1:7 past tense reference mine).

4. Broken friendships will be reconciled in heaven so why not reconcile them now? There's an old saw that says: "To dwell above with the saints we love, oh that will be glory! But to dwell below with the saints we know, well that's another story." God loves it when His people live together in unity (Psalm 133:1). It breaks His heart when we are alienated one from another. God values reconciliation so much that He gave His son to reconcile us to Himself (2 Cor 5:19). We did all the sinning, but God made all the sacrifices to reconcile us to Him. This is an example for the godly. **Grace means that the one wronged is still willing to do the work to heal the friendship.** You can't sincerely celebrate God's grace and forgiveness while withholding grace and forgiveness from another (Matt 18:23-35). Don't take a broken friendship with you to the throne of heaven. Reconcile now and enter God's presence with joy, having finished well with no loose ends remaining.

Life brings separations for good reasons and bad. "In this world you will have trouble..." But better days are coming. "...but take heart! I have overcome the world." 



Our Praises & Prayer Requests



- Praise God for health and strength for Eileen and me during an extraordinarily busy travel schedule these last few months.
- Praise God we have returned to Nepal after a 2 year absence and have had two successful training events there.
- Praise God for good progress in our Books for Kurdistan fund.
- Please continue to pray for the development of our Kurdistan ministry.
- Please continue to pray for the launch of our teaching ministry among refugee leaders in Rwanda.
- Please pray for good productivity plus good rejuvenation for Eileen and me during August as we look toward a very busy fall and winter travel schedule.

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:

gtn.org/edmondson

Under "Ministry Designation" select "Bob and Eileen Edmondson (435)" or "Books for Kurdistan (43503)".



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 Edmondsons #435 or "Books for Kurdistan #43503".

Come visit us at



www.inhispriponline.org

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