

September-October 2024



GLOBAL TRAINING NETWORK

Our Itinerary



Sept 8: East Wenatchee First Baptist, Washington

Sept 15: Calvary Crossroads, Wenatchee, Washington

Sept 26-Oct 20: Rwanda Ministry

Nov 28-Dec 15: Nepal Ministry

Jan 13-31: Philippine Ministry (tentative)



Kurdish Ministry Expands



We have good news from the field. The ministry of Hope Bible Institute in Northern Iraq is expanding in two directions! First, HBI is launching classes in Erbil, the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan. This long-held dream of Julius Kogge Metuge, the founder of the institute, has now become reality. I look forward to meeting the pastors in this old and traditional city. I am also currently working with HBI and pastors in the African country of Cameroon (Julius' country of origin) with the aim of launching HBI style classes there next year. The courses will be based on the 12-part Global Training Network curriculum which I helped to write. By God's grace, I plan to conduct the first training event there in May, 2025. We are recruiting other trainers and hope to have several classes each year. This is thrilling! Please pray for wisdom. We have

more invitations to train pastors than we have time. It's a great problem and we are never bored!



Grapes and Giants: How to Fight the Good Fight and Find the Good Fruit

Tucked away in the 13th chapter of the book of Numbers is a tragic account of events that changed the course of Israel's history. Miraculously released from slavery in Egypt, the Israelites arrived on the hills overlooking Canaan. Following God's directive, Moses assigned 12 men to investigate their promised new homeland. These 12 'spies' returned some days later with a two-fold report. On the one hand, the land flowed with milk and honey. They brought back some of its fruit including a single cluster of grapes so large as to be carried on a pole between two men (Num 13:23-26). On the other hand the cities were heavily fortified and the people very fierce and large. "We saw the descendants of Anak there," they reported (Num 13:28). They further exclaimed, "We saw the Nephilim and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed



to them"(Num 13:33). The descendants of Anak were (erroneously) thought to trace their roots all the way back to the Nephilim of Genesis 6 because they were warriors of such large stature they were regarded as giants.

When serving God in a hostile world, one thing is always true: where there are grapes, there are giants. Where there are opportunities, there are opponents. Where there is fruit, there is a fight. Before there is a crown, there is a cross. Centuries later, the Apostle Paul had the same struggle. "...for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries" (I Cor. 16:9). Nothing worthwhile is achieved for Christ without difficulty, opposition, and even persecution. One question makes the difference between success and failure: How do you address spiritual resistance? The Israelites saw only obstacles. Forgetting that God himself had promised them this land, they advised, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are" (Num 13:31). The Israelites refused to move forward. God assessed their persistent refusal to believe as "contempt" for

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Grapes and Giants: How to Fight the Good Fight and Find the Good Fruit *(cont'd)*

their Maker (Num 14:11). So the journey to the promised land, a trip that could be made in as little as two weeks, took the Israelites forty years and cost an entire generation.

More clear-eyed, the Apostle Paul saw an "open door" and chose to remain in Ephesus in spite of opposition (I Cor 16:8-9). This was no picnic. Acts 19 records that Paul's effective ministry resulted in the makers of statues used in idol worship nearly going out of business. They did not go down without a fight. They stirred up a riot in which Paul could easily have lost his life. Where there is fruit, there is always a fight. However, never forget that Paul's perseverance resulted in establishing one of the greatest churches of the whole New Testament era, the church at Ephesus.

Some of the most effective leaders in the countries we serve have gone through intense times of criticism, opposition, and persecution. I can tell you that spiritual opposition is unjust, mean-spirited, hard-knuckled and often arises from surprising sources. How a leader (or anyone) meets such opposition makes all the difference. First, never give up. It is always too soon to quit. You must keep putting one foot

in front of the other until you are no longer in that painful valley. Second, confront non-grace with grace. Never fight fire with fire. If you react to ungodliness with ungodliness, you suffer defeat even if you win the argument. Paul warned us, "Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted" (Galatians 6:2). Third, keep things in perspective. When you see the giants, don't lose sight of the giant grapes. When you see the opponents, don't forget the opportunity. When you are in a fight, remember the fruit. When you bear a cross, keep in mind a vision of a crown. Finally, push through in the strength Christ provides. Christian life is full of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossibilities. To take advantage of the opportunity, you have to stare down the impossibility until it flinches. There is no way around it. No cross, no crown. No giants, no grapes.

The good news is that a great reward is even now being stored up for all who fight the good fight, who keep the faith, and look forward to Christ's appearing (2 Tim 4:7-8). There will be no more crosses then, only crowns of victory.



Our Praises & Prayer Requests



- Praise God for successful training events in the Philippines and in Northern Iraq.
- Praise God for a productive planning and preparation time over the past several weeks.
- Praise God for a wonderful visit with our kids and grandkids in Arkansas.
- Please pray for our upcoming visits to partners and churches in Washington State.
- Please pray for our upcoming trip to Rwanda.
- Please pray for the ongoing health of our ministry finances.



Can You Do Us a Favor?

I have a request for those of you in central Arizona. Since we now live in Iowa, visiting our Southwest churches and partners involves several weeks in Arizona each year. We plan to come in late February and March of 2025. It is less expensive to fly there than to drive IF we can avoid renting a car for the 25 days of our visit. Here is my request: Does anyone have a car that you are not using and could loan to us for our time in Arizona? It needn't be anything special, just reasonably reliable. This would reduce our costs tremendously and be a substantial way of supporting our ministry. We can cover any additional insurance or other costs. If you can help, please email us at bobe@gtn.org. We'll arrange a call or online chat so we can settle details. We appreciate you all so much!

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



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Peoria, AZ 85385

Please include a note indicating that your gift is preferred for the Edmondsons #435 or "Books for Kurdistan #43503".

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

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