



Ferguson Report



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“Go ye unto all the world”

October 2005

How Can We Prepare?

Hurricane Wilma, the most intensive hurricane to form in the Atlantic basin in recorded history, looms dangerously in the Caribbean. Even as I type these words, weather experts are uncertain about the storm’s future direction or strength. One thing remains certain, however: this is not a force to be ignored or taken lightly. Evacuations are already underway in the Florida Keys and in other Gulf Coast communities. From the bitter experiences of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, no one wants to face nature’s fury unprepared.

Yet, another fatal force looms somewhere out there. But it is invisible making it not only dangerous but illusive. It is far more intensive than a category 5 hurricane. Over 1200 lives were lost to the recent storms, but this threatening power takes human souls into eternity at the rate of 2 per second. Its name is not given by meteorologists, but by the Bible. The name of this spirit of evil power is Satan, and his tools of trade are sin and death (Rom. 8:2; James 1:14-15). He is the “*ruler of darkness of this world*” (Eph. 6:12a); the commander of “*spiritual wickedness in high places*” (Eph. 6:12b); and the “*prince of this world*” (John 12:31). He too lurks about “*going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it*” (Job 2:2). His obsession is to “*devour*” the weak (1 Pet. 5:8), distract the foolish (Psalm 14), and “*deceive the very elect*” (Matt. 24:24).

Satan’s projected “*pathway*” of misery and destruction is difficult to pinpoint. But there is no mistake of the aftermath of his presence. Innocent unborn children are killed and aborted. Marriage vows are forgotten and degraded by adultery. Proper conduct of youth is belittled and “*safe*” promiscuity is condoned. Alcohol is promoted leaving broken homes, broken marriages, broken lives, broken children, and broken bodies in the wake. Hearts full of the attitudes of lying, cheating, envying, jealousy, anger, and malice are common feelings in the workplace. The faulty “*remedies*” of idolatry, selfishness, and denominationalism make poor substitutes for true religion. And the effort to make the Bible “*contraband*” and prayer to Jehovah God “*unconstitutional*” in our public schools has filled the American landscape with moral and spiritual dimwits. Atheistic professors with terminal degrees in our state universities are given free reign of the

classrooms to pour down the students mouths their toxic amoral pollution they call “*education.*” Murder, prostitution, homosexuality, gambling, drug abuse, dancing (lasciviousness), immodesty, lewdness, worldliness and a host of other “*disaster areas*” all carry the trademark of Satan.

What is the answer? How can we make ourselves and others ready for Satan’s sure coming? First, heed the warning of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. From the cross, Jesus waves the blood-stained banner warning us of sin and calling us to come to Him for a shelter of safety (Matt. 11:28-30; 16:24-26; John 10:1-18). Second, be watchful for the “*wiles of the devil*” (Eph. 6:11). The “*tricks*” of his trade can be recognized and avoided if we put forth the effort. We do not have to be “*ignorant of his devices*” (2 Cor. 2:11); we can be alert (Eph. 5:14-17; 1 Pet. 5:8), and study to show ourselves approved (2 Tim. 2:15). Third, warn others. We should have the same sentiment as the four lepers who said reflectively of their starving fellow-citizens in Samaria when they found a great bounty: “*We do not well [if]...we hold our peace*” (2 Kings 7:9). These terminally-ill men risked their miserable lives to enter the enemies’ camp but to find the Syrians had fled and left a great spoil. How can we who have gained Christ in our lives feed upon God’s goodness and not inform others (1 Pet. 2:1-3; 2 Tim. 2:2; 4:2)? *It is not well, if we do not tell!* Fourth, make plans to save the lost. As we have been saved, we should plan for the salvation of others (1 Tim. 4:16). This can be done through one-to-one studies (Acts 8:26-39), through bringing contacts for someone else to study with (John 1:40-42), through printed material or some other media (Eph. 3:4), or through Bible classes or schools [of preaching] (Acts 16:13-15; 19:8-10). Plans to save the lost can be as simple or as elaborate as our abilities and resources. Don’t be afraid to dream big dreams for our God knows no boundaries if we are willing to step with Him in faith.

But our goal, brethren, must be to “*seek and to save that which was lost*” wherever we are; for, Satan knows no boundaries. As a supporter of the Chimala Bible College, a BVBID extension school, you have become a vital part of a program to prepare the people of East Africa for the storm of their lives – the plight of their eternal destinies! How great is the loss of one soul unprepared?

Howell

Ferguson Sponsoring
Congregation

Please send all contributions
to:

**WESTSIDE CHURCH
OF
CHRIST**

3235 HWY 54 WEST
BROWNSVILLE, TN 38012
(731) 772-3810

“Ferguson Mission”

Monthly commitments and one-time
donations still needed

***Bear Valley Bible Institute of
Denver***

A work of the Bear Valley Church of
Christ, 2707 S. Lamar St, Denver, CO
80227 (303) 986-5800
<http://www.bvbid.org>

Howell Ferguson, Ext. Coordinator
Chimala, Tanzania, E. Africa
Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver
22 Tanbark Cove
Bells, TN 38006
(731) 984-7409
hferguson@bvbid.org

Immediate Chimala Bible College Needs

On November 14th, Josh Barnett and I will be traveling to Southern Tanzania to teach short courses in the Chimala Bible College. The elders of the Westside church of Christ where Josh preaches, which is also my sponsoring congregation, has graciously agreed to fully-fund his trip including the student textbooks he will carry with him.

For my own preparations for the class on Acts, I purchased 17 textbooks. The classic work by J.W. McGarvey, *Original Commentary on Acts* was chosen for the students' assigned reading. If some congregation is able, I would really appreciate help in paying for these books. In the meantime I have “charged” them on a credit card. The total cost for the books & shipping came to \$225.89. If you are able to assist, please contact me or the Westside church of Christ (see above).

Another area of assistance is student support. According to Heath Stapleton (Chimala Mission stateside coordinator), all of the men have their support but one – **Julius Mkisi**. Julius is a 23-year-old man from Zambia who has been a Christian for nine years. He worships with the “Chimala A” congregation at the Chimala village. Even without support, he has taken a step of faith to begin his studies trusting God to make a way for him.

Furthermore, Heath says \$300 a month has been raised for teachers' salaries, but an additional \$100 per month is needed to complete the salaries.

In behalf of our brother Julius and the teachers of CBC, I would like to humbly ask for your help. Can you or your congregation assist with either of these two needs? Or, can you make an announcement to your congregation making this request known? And if you can help lighten my load of the cost of student textbooks, it would be sincerely appreciated. Below is a quick summary of the current needs:

- \$225.89 – one-time amount for student textbooks.
- \$100.00 – per month to support Julius Mkisi.
- \$100.00 – per month to complete teachers' salaries.

In addition, raising my work fund has been an on-going challenge. Thus far, the Lord has provided this need. However, after this trip in November, there will not be enough in my work fund for another trip. My work fund is set at \$12,000 per year. If your congregation can help by contributing monthly or by a one-time contribution, it would be likewise greatly appreciated.

Brethren, I realize we sometimes become weary hearing about needs. But please remember these people are depending upon you. Let us not grow weary in well-doing. Thank-you for making a difference. Howell