



Ferguson Report



Vol. 3 No. 9

“Go ye unto all the world”

September 2006

Church Leadership Course

Once the sky-blue KLM Boeing 777 landed in Dar-es-Salaam, things looked promising – weather wise. It has been over a year since I last saw rain in Chimala. Tanzania, and other East African countries have been experiencing a drought for some time now. Tanesco, Tanzania’s electric company has been rationing power affecting the entire country. At 5:00 the next morning, we started on schedule for Chimala. The clouds were thick in Dar and showed signs of rain. I can’t speak for Andrew our driver, but as for me I was happy to see rain on-and-off all the way past Chalinzi and into the mountains. Even once we arrived in Iringa a few hundred kilometers later, the skies were patterned with dark rain-bearing clouds. But with Iringa behind us, the remaining stretch of terrain toward Chimala gave witness to a continuous dry spell.

We arrived at Chimala a little earlier than I expected, yet I am very grateful that everything had been prepared. Food and other necessary items were in the house, and a delicious meal was prepared by the Marshalls. Thank-you Chimala missionaries.

Chimala Bible College Church Leadership Class

Teaching church leadership has been one of the most rewarding classes I have ever taught. Moreover, the input from the students has been very positive and revealing. Several of the students told me they have



CBC students displaying their new ties.

had leadership classes on elders, deacons, preachers, etc. in the past, but they had never studied the subject this intensely nor heard of many of the principles we studied. They were excited about these new lessons and many of them are eager to implement them in their congregations. These events remind me of Paul’s charge to Timothy: “*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*” (2 Timothy 2:2). Taking biblical lessons and principles back to their churches, villages, or countries is exactly what the Bear Valley Bible Institute extension program is endeavoring to do.

Currently, there is not a single man serving as an elder in the Lord’s church in Tanzania. It has been said the churches around the world are where their current leaderships have brought them – good or bad. Our desire is that maybe the “seed” has been planted in these keen minds that will produce needed change. These men and these scattered congregations need our prayers that leaders will rise up and step boldly into God’s service taking the Lord’s church out to meet the challenges of spiritual development and healthy



CBC students

numerical growth. May the day come when the brethren of Tanzania (as well as all of Africa) no longer need (nor ask) for the money and assistance of the “wazungu” (white men). Every mission point should have as its objective the final returning of the

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Lord’s work to the local brethren. Otherwise, it has no reason to exist, but contrariwise only cripples and makes future church autonomy an impossibility. Don’t misunderstand, I love to visit Africa and I love to observe the faces of those who are overwhelmed by their first visit to the “dark continent.” But those are all side-benefits which must give way to the greater good of fulfilling God’s dream of producing faithful, autonomous, and self-ruling congregations according to the New Testament pattern. God forbid that any missionary should consider his work on the field as “job-security.”

From Rujewa to Dar By Train

While I was able to catch a ride on the Chimala Mission bus to the Chimala Mission, someone might ask, “Why travel by train back to Dar?” The answer is that air travel back and forth from Dar to Mbeya (nearest airport to Chimala) is still non-existent. Secondly, the cost of diesel or petrol to supply four 11-hour travel legs required for a round-trip journey is embarrassingly expensive (don’t ask). “What about the bus?” you might ask. First, I am told the bus sometimes travels up to 180 kilometers per hours with not a few ending up in a burning pile of twisted steel and glass at the bottom of some ravine. Besides,

maybe I’ll do the bus on the *next* trip. But for this trip, I wanted to see what the train would be like for future CBC short-course teachers. Since the first-class compartment was full, I bought a second-class compartment for my traveler Boaz Kasiba and me for about seventy-two dollars. We drove to the Rujewa village station at 4:00 p.m. as instructed by the train master. But the train didn’t arrive until 6:30 p.m.

Once on board the roomy 6-person train compartment, the trip was enjoyable. With the day far spent, the non-air-conditioned compartment was plenty cool with open windows. After eating supper in the diner car and thumping away a couple of roaches, we soon decided to try to get some sleep to pass by the 18-hour trip. I once heard it said that “Africa never sleeps.” I believe it. Nearly every hour or two we stopped at a train station to be greeted by Swahili chatter, laughter, and small-item merchants doing business through the windows. Amazingly, however, the night went by quickly. Soon after sunrise, we ate breakfast and watched the abundance of wild game as the TAZARA train took us through the Selous Game Reserve. A few hours later we arrived in Dar, got a taxi, and spent the night. Now I am finishing this newsletter awaiting my flight back home. Boaz went back to Chimala by train. You can ask me personally what I think about the train.

Howell