

# Zambia Newsletter

Zambia Missions

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Church-Planting Initiatives. For the past two months we have been focused on re-training our staff and developing their spiritual character. The first three weeks were devoted to classroom training here on campus. Our staff was, then, sent out to put into practice what they had learned. I had realized it until just now, but we have twelve men and women involved in this effort (one woman). They all returned to campus this past week after four weeks in the field for debriefing and further training. We were most encouraged to hear that our group of 12 have successfully initiated 22 group Bible studies! Already two study groups have produced several baptisms and are in the process of becoming a church.

This is a new approach that we are just now implementing. It is an approach that strictly follows the instructions that Jesus gave his twelve disciples in Luke 10. Jesus told them to go out into the nearby villages and search for a man of peace. Upon finding the man of peace, they were to share with that person the good news of the kingdom and stay in that house (the implication being that they were to bring that man and his whole family to the Lord which is exactly what we see happening in the book of Acts). However, if the disciples did not find a man of peace in a village, they were instructed to leave.

Method. We are employing an indigenous approach that does not rely on trained outside teachers but utilizes whatever spiritual leadership is already present in the family or village. Once a man of peace is found, the evangelist works with him to organize a Discover Bible Study (DBS) with his family and whatever friends and relatives are interested in studying the Bible. The evangelist, then, leads the group through a Bible study that basically trains the group to study the Bible for themselves (discover truth for themselves rather than being taught by an outsider). We have a series of 24 group Bible-studies that, if completed, will lead a group to discipleship.

This approach is based on a belief that we have often professed but seldom practiced. We say we believe that God's word is sufficient to lead people to faith in Christ. But, do we really believe that? If so, then why do we seem to emphasize the role of the teacher so heavily? Research also reveals that people learn best and are far more likely to apply that knowledge when

they discover truth for themselves. Research also shows that people are much more likely to disagree with and reject truth that is communicated through another person (teacher). It is just too easy to dismiss another person; but it is a different matter when a group hears truth directly from God through His word. It is not so easy to dismiss what a group learns from God's own word!

The Goal. We must also understand that our goal is not just to plant a church filled with baptized members. Our goal is to make disciples (Mt 28:18-20). Disciples are followers of Jesus who obey his teachings and continue to grow in their faith and obedience through continued study of God's Word. Churches are filled with church attendees who know little of true discipleship. This new approach strongly emphasizes what it means to be a disciple of Jesus – a knowledge that comes through group discovery rather than from a outside teacher.

Secondly, our goal is to plant churches that are self-sustaining and can continue to grow toward maturity with little dependence on outsiders. One of our greatest problems in our previous church plantings was the high degree of dependency that our new church plantings had on the church-planter (evangelist). In fact, we soon realized that if we didn't continue to supply the new church with a trained leader to preach and conduct the worship, the church would soon die. Because this new approach does not rely on a trained, outside teacher (evangelist), it develops leadership from within the group and trains the group to study and obey the Bible for themselves. The evangelist functions more as a coach and guide, training the group from the very beginning in how to study and obey God's word on their own. It doesn't take long before the group becomes less and less dependent on the church-planter who can now go on to start other DBS group and churches.

Recent Visit. This past week we were greatly blessed by the visit of two elders from the USA: John French (elder from our sponsoring congregation) and Grant McDaniel (elder from Jonesboro, AR). Most of their time was spent with our twelve staff members (above) and was focused on spiritual formation and prayer. We believe that prayer is the most important component to church planting and we are trying to train our staff and students to rely on God. John and Grant also spent a great deal of time meeting with the board members in an effort to encourage them and to establish a good working relationship between them and our sponsoring church in the USA.

Former Student: Aaron Chilembe. *I recently asked Don Boyd who is an American missionary up in the Northwest Province to write a short report on how one of our former graduates was doing upon his return to the Northwest. Below is the report that Don wrote to me.*



Aaron baptizing a woman.

Aaron Chilembe has been a great asset to the Lord's church here in the Northwest Province. He has dedicated himself to work with several of our new church plants and has worked diligently while helping plant two new congregations at Kayonge and Lunsala. His latest efforts have been to begin a new preaching point at Muyashi. He is a natural for this work as he has

many contacts through family and friends here in Chief Mumena's area. He is a real servant of the Lord as he preaches and teaches to help spread the gospel in our community. As a farmer and carpenter Aaron neither receives nor expects any payment for this work.

Mapepe Bible College has also played a key role in spreading the gospel here in Northwest province. The training Aaron received during his two years at Mapepe has more than equipped him for this work. He has adequate knowledge of the scriptures and is capable of doing valuable research. Aaron's training has given us incentive to seek for other candidates to attend Mapepe.

Don Boyd  
Missionary, Mumena Christian Outreach Centre

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## Lorie's Reflections

I send greetings from your brothers and sisters at Mapepe. The rains have been strong this year and we feel very blessed. We thank God for you all each day.

The morning sun filters through the mist which rises up from the Kafue Hills. People begin to start off down the dusty roads toward the little earthen brick church on the hill. The church building is set against the brilliant colors of the African sunrise and seems to invite all of the passers by. The excited sounds of the children on campus form the symphony which begins this most wonderful Lord's Day.

I can remember when I was a little girl in Georgia, each Sunday morning I could hardly wait to get dressed for worship. Not that I loved to wear dresses with scratchy slips, but I loved to be a part of the body of Christ. "I was glad when they said to me come let us go into the house of the Lord". I especially enjoyed coming together around the table of the Lord. In my mind I was back around a table with Jesus and the disciples breaking bread and sipping grape juice and fellowshiping. That same excitement still lives within me and is even more appreciated against the backdrop of an African sunrise.

The table was spread with all kinds of food: Fresh corn from the Mapepe Bible College garden, chickens raised by Bro. and Sis. Kalimanshila, potato salad prepared by Mrs. Mulenga, steaming rice cooked by Mrs. Mbulo. The women were huddled under the dog-

trot while the men were under the nsaka (a grass roofed hut). The rains were pouring down but the fellowship was vibrant and alive. I couldn't help but think about "the house that was built on the rock standing firm". When God's children come together to celebrate, whether it be for a feast of remembrance or a meal of fellowship they share the blessing of being loved by our heavenly Father. How blessed we are to be called God's family. We have many reasons to rejoice!



Brothers Sandi and Melvin  
at Mapepe Staff Fellowship Meal