

Pray BFF #207

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Biblical Foundations for Freedom



Releasing God's Truth to
a New Generation

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Rev. Paul J. Bucknell

“MY LIFE IS CHANGED”



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“I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

Dear Prayer Partners,

God's Hand at Work

God's mighty hand was at work on this trip to Africa. Each of the four seminars were marked by significant changes in people's lives. Person after person came up to me using his faltering English to express his great appreciation. Coordinators reported that the materials were appreciated and well received.

The marriage seminar attendees recognized that as their marriages improve, they will be better witnesses to those around them. Others from the discipleship seminars were astonished at their own personal growth in those few days. They acquired practical tools to bring back to their pastorates and fields of ministry.



Attendees & Provision

Although we held seminars in two countries, a group also came from neighboring Mozambique. In Ethiopia, some traveled as much as 560 miles. Each seminar's attendance started off good and grew. Seminary students heard about the seminar in Ethiopia and came. We had over 100 people at the first three seminars and around sixty for the last one in Ethiopia.

Due to the higher than expected attendance, costs overran the budget. Finances were tight. Thanks a donation that came in after I left, the needs were met. Thanks so much to all who gave.

Many people overseas who have contact with "foreigners" think that we have deep pockets. This can cause misunderstandings. For each seminar, I request the local coordinator make a budget and I share with them what BFF can contribute—as God provides. In this case, two weeks before departure, hardly anything towards the trip had come in. One week later, it was

up to 33%. At departure, it was up to 96%. How we praise God for His timely provision! I'd rather not experience the last minute scene, but I regularly share with the coordinators and ask them to pray for financial supply. In this way, they get to see how God provides for **all** of us.

There are many other needs constantly beckoning us to give more. But we give what we are given. Not a few pastors seek help for their ministry. One man pointed to his half-built roof. Others need a computer or money to travel. And then there are the many, many orphans. We pray and trust that God will provide other means for the pastors to carry on His great work. There are many other miracles that we will one day hear of as they wait upon the Lord and see His work.



Followup and implementation

Although we receive too many invitations to remember (probably over 30), BFF has its limitations. Right now, I am the only international trainer. Except in special circumstances, I plan to visit a country only twice to produce a good series of bilingual training materials. The fourth of 40+ training videos is being formatted as I write this letter.

The coordinators have, in some cases, taken the videos, which only can be played on a computer, and have transferred them to separate VCDs so people can view them in their homes. But clearly, as these Christian leaders own lives are impacted, they will take parts of what they learn and share it with others. The translated handouts will help guide them through the training in their own languages.

God's grace and extraordinary grace

Grace from God is always extraordinary, but I like to think about the extra bonuses from the Lord as a separate category.

We have mentioned the wonderful ways God provided for this trip as well as His marvelous work in the lives of our brothers and sisters. Nothing could beat this. But I do not want to forget the ways God watched over my family, sustained me through some stomach problems, rescued my lost luggage just before I left for another part of Malawi and the grace of God to get me to airports on time, many times being too close for comfort!

During my devotions early in the trip, God challenged me to ask for extraordinary grace. Caleb's daughter was given in marriage to Othniel because he conquered Kiriath-sepher. She suggested to her new husband that he ought to ask for the springs also (Judges 15:14-19). She asked for them and got them! Not bad!



Pastors and ministers for Ethiopian seminar.

I felt God prompting me to seek Him for extras on this trip also. I was to look beyond these seminars to other things that God was doing.

One of several examples of the abounding grace of God happened to an Ethiopian surgeon missionary. He was bringing \$240,000 worth of equipment into the country to donate to a hospital. Customs wanted to charge an exorbitant 25%. He was ready to send it back. We prayed, and within 30 hours it was declared duty free. Praise God for His extraordinary grace!

Thanks again!

I greatly appreciate the wonderful cloud of protection and provision during this time. There is no way I could handle that load without you sustaining this ministry in constant prayer. Thanks for joining in strengthening and expanding God's work in needy places around the world. Sorry you couldn't hear the roar of the hippos!

Praise!

- God's strength and wisdom to speak as planned the 41 different messages and the one unplanned extra Sunday sermon.
- Care for my family, sufficient health and good travel connections. I even got my lost luggage back!
- Praise God for providing for the physical and spiritual needs of the attending coordinators and Christian leaders.

Pray!

- Do pray for extra grace for Bishop Makawa, Rodrick and Pastor Fikre as they follow up these seminars.

- Determination and discipline to complete at least ten videos per week.
- Speaking on 4/15 and 4/22.
- I did not manage to get my reams of tax papers filed yet for tax-exempt privileges. By God's grace and wisdom, this week? (Yes, please!)
- Wisdom for following up some thoughts on expanding the usage of BFF's training material.



Paul

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