

MOZNEWS

MOZAMBIQUE OUTREACH NEWS 1 OCTOBER 2000

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We preached and demonstrated the good news of Jesus to the people of Mozambique this month with amazing back up from the Holy Spirit as always, who gave the people great signs and wonders to contemplate. "And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us." - Paul. Very humbling.

Church

Our church is growing every week as people become aware of the place under the trees where the gospel is preached and the miracles are flowing. Our people are grasping the principle that to really live, is to die to oneself and live in the service of the king. They are enthusiastic about visiting people and telling them the good news about Jesus. One of our ladies is leading many to the Lord during the week and bringing them to church on Sundays.

Many prisoners have been released from prison, including Mandish who had the amazing miracle on his knee. For 30 years he had been in constant pain until God healed him instantly in prison. He came to church and testified of God's love and miracle power. We have had 6 ex prisoners join our church since their release, and most of them are attending the new Christian classes - and moving forward with God.

Miracles

One of our members told us that every night he and his wife suffered greatly from nightmares. I asked if there were any witch doctors living near his home. He told me that there were many who lived in the very same building. So we went to visit him.

His house was near a dirt road which we could get our car down without too much difficulty. We discovered that he lived in a communal type building where as many as 16 other families live as well. It was like a rats den. Fernando and Anna, who have only recently given their lives to Jesus, lived in the end room with their 3 children - 5 people in a room the size of a bathroom.

We squeezed in, ducking our heads to clear the low door frame - the door screeching on the floor as it only opened a quarter of the way before it jammed. Fernando, Anna and their three children followed and then another two women and some more children. It was a very tight fit and very dark inside - both physically and spiritually. We began to sing "When Jesus passed this way, sadness left, happiness came". Then I began to pray for the Lord's blessing on the house, binding up every evil spirit in the complex and rendering the witch doctors powerless to influence Fernando and Anna and their family. There was a very obvious change in the atmosphere in the room. The two ladies who had come in with us felt compelled to leave, and we continued to pray, finally anointing the door of the house with a little oil and declaring that their humble home was from now on God's property. Then we left.

From that day, their daily nightmares ceased and they haven't had one since. They both say that their house is completely different, full of peace. The two ladies who left the room were actually witch doctors and couldn't remain in the house when we began to pray. Their Satanic influence over this family has been completely destroyed..

We praise the Lord that He has total authority over the realm of darkness.

After leaving Fernando's house, I walked back from visiting Fernando, down a small track to where our church meets. Jay was just finishing her ladies meeting and I noticed an old woman dancing with such joy and enthusiasm. When she saw me she became embarrassed and started laughing. I did not know what was happening but soon some of the ladies around her came to tell me that she was dancing because she had been miraculously healed. She had never been able to dance like that before. Until then, her body had been completely bent over, and she had only been able to walk with a shuffle, and in great pain. But Mama Jay had prayed for her in the ladies meeting the previous week and she had been completely healed. She said that now she can even cuddle her husband. He doesn't quite know what to make of this new wife who suddenly wants to suddenly kiss and hug him but is very thankful for the wonderful miracle. Glory to God.

Books & Bibles

We wrote, translated and printed two new books for our church. The first is the New Christian Class book of 10 lessons and the second is called Foundation Classes - another 10 lesson course covering everything from creation, heaven and hell, angels and demons, to the return of Jesus.

The people are enthusiastic to learn the Bible. They sit and discuss the Bible together before and after church. They meet in their homes what the pastor has taught them. It really is like revisiting the time of Acts where everybody met as often as they could to learn more about the things of God.

We are buying as many Bibles as we possibly can to give to these hungry people. Thank you to those who have enabled us to do this through your giving. We purchase Bibles mainly in Portuguese and Shona (local dialect), but aim to acquire more in some of the other dialects (There are over 20 local languages spoken in Mozambique alone)

Luis took over the New Christians Classes while Arone took on the Foundation Class. Both men enjoy the opportunity to teach God's Word. (See picture)

Leaders

We have begun to train two more leaders- Zaccareus and Mario. Both were previously pastors of small churches but felt that they would like to come aside and learn with us. They are participating in every area of our ministry - from prayer meetings, to home groups and visitations, to prison visits etc. We have Bible study four days during the week including training in preaching and teaching.

Every Monday morning we have a leadership meeting in our home. Eight of our leaders join us for leadership training and planning for the coming week - over a coffee and sweet bread.

Youth

Feeling the need for a burst of new life in our swelling youth group and after prayer, we invited Manuel and his wife Judith to look after the youth. They happily accepted the new challenge and straight away we noticed a new vitality and passion for God amongst our young men and women. Each week they delight us in church with great African, gospel singing and dramas.

We are planning to send some of the youth to teen missions this year - 200 km away in Chimoio.

Manuel is currently serving out a 5 year prison sentence for a crime he didn't commit (quite common in Mozambique). Formerly a policeman, he became a "fall guy" for a more senior officer. So our youth leader is currently a prisoner (low security) who can come out of prison on Saturdays, Sundays and for Monday mornings meetings. His life story is similar to that of Joseph's from the Old Testament.

"... but I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell" - CT Studd

When I was in Mozambique 18 months ago, I was in prayer one day when I felt the Lord say that the area of Mutarara (located in the province of Tete, just south of the Malawian border), was a problem area to this country. Further investigation proved that in this area young girls are still sacrificed to the snake god in return for good crops. Still further investigation gave us the name of this diabolical satanic 'god' - Bona. A family, with inherent rights to the name and "power" of Bona, lives in this area. The local people bring sacrifices to appease him. Some even bring their children, in complete desperation, and throw them to the river crocodiles as a sacrifice. Bona sends teams of his representatives into the local villages and performs miracles to prove his

power. I was told that even on a cloudless day, lightning can strike a person and kill him if he is unfortunate enough to be a victim of someone's death wish and if a big enough sacrifice has been paid to Bona. With all this in mind, the Lord sent us a man named Ishmael, from Mutarara, willing to continue to serve the Lord there. We gave him intensive basic training course and sent him away with our New Christian Class material, Bibles and a deep conviction that God is more powerful than Bona. Our aim as always is to preach and demonstrate the good news of Jesus Christ to the people of Mozambique even if it means grasping them at hell's door and pulling them back into the Kingdom of light. According to a recent article in a world missions booklet, there are more "unreached people groups" in Mozambique than any other country on earth. I cannot say first hand whether this is true, but I do know that there are an estimated 29 of these groups in Mozambique. Our long term goal is to reach them with the good news of Jesus, to give them a Bible and to teach them His word.

The Stirring Of The Waters

We see so many demons manifesting that we have become quite used to it. Because this country is deeply spiritual, people seek after spiritual things and often get trapped by evil spirits. It is not uncommon for people to go the witch doctor. In fact it is more common than going to the real doctor because there are so few real doctors. The person pays money to the witch doctor who speaks certain words and gives medication, or conjures up the "spirits of their ancestors", or pronounces curses on members of their family or relatives that they want dead. Witch doctors cause women who cannot conceive, to have babies etc. The people believe in them strongly.

When people come to Jesus, we get them to confess to God their sin of trusting in demons instead of Him. Very often in baptism, we see demons manifest, unable to resist the power of the Holy Spirit, combined with the person's will to live for Jesus.

Up until now we have been bussing people down to the beach for baptism, which was truly a wonderful experience but was proving to be quite expensive. So we built a baptism tank instead, under the mango trees on one of our properties. This month we baptised 20 new believers. Of course there were many demonic manifestations.

One of the dear old widows (see picture), had been to a witch doctor to have a curse put on her husband. She presented a pair of his underpants, they were cursed, and the man was dead in two weeks. But on coming to Jesus, she sincerely repented of this heinous crime and is now loving and serving her Lord Jesus. We love to baptise people.

Home groups

We started 3 home groups on the second last week of September. I have been looking forward to this for a long time - to multiply our effect of preaching the good news of Jesus beyond where our church's influence can reach. Zaccareus led the group in one of the poorer areas - Ferro. Here is how it unfolded.

"Jay dropped us off at the edge of the district of Ferro. Zaccareus and I were met by Joachim, who would lead us to the house where we would be having the home cell group. We followed him down a dusty track for about 600 to 700 metres, winding between tiny stick, stone and mud dwellings with thatched roofs (some have old scrap iron sheets with holes, picked up from rubbish piles in the city most likely), drawing a lot of stares from people who don't usually see white people in this out of the way place. When we arrived at the house, we were warmly greeted by Joao and Louisa. They rent the house. Joao is a fine Christian man, married with many children. He works as a guard in the city. It takes him 3 hours to walk to work each day and 3 hours to walk home. He works six 12 hour days and gets paid 400,000 Mt per month (\$25USD) - less than \$1 USD per day. On his day off he helps rebuild widows' houses for us and in his "spare" time he attends our Christian courses to further himself in things of God.

I noticed that the house was in bad shape, with multiple cracks in the walls and rotting bamboo protruding where mud or cement has cracked and fallen away. There were a few small stools ready outside, probably borrowed from all the neighbours. It was here in the shade of coconut trees that Zaccareus commenced the praise and worship at 2pm sharp (The locals don't have watches but judge very closely the time by the position of the sun. Nonetheless I stress to the leaders that they start exactly on time). Apart from us there were 3 adults and about 5 children. Within just a few minutes, four ladies with babies arrived and joined in. They were not from our church but heard the singing and came to see what was happening. Keeping to a tight schedule that I had given each of the home cell leaders, Zaccareus moved to a time of testimonies where Joao shared that he had once been a heavy drinker and used to beat his wife and children, but now that he received Jesus, his life is completely different. The beer is gone, the beatings have stopped. His family is happy and he is growing in the ways of God.

Zaccareus continued with the day's teaching (notes from the Sunday message which we prepare each week for the leaders), followed by a time of discussion and questions. These discussion times are culturally interesting for me with questions such as how to deal with the problem of a husband who gets angry and beats his wife for coming to church, or what does the Bible say I should do when I am my husband's fourth wife and I have 6 children. Zaccareus seemed to answer the questions very well. At least the look on the people's faces told me so.

Then Zaccareus started to pray for something (I hadn't understood any of the service because it was conducted partly in Shona, partly in Portuguese and with a splattering of Sena). Three people came forward and knelt in the dust for prayer and finally Zaccareus closed the meeting at 3.30pm. By this time there were eleven adults. We gave them some packets of seeds and then Joachim led us back down the track to wait for Jay to pick us up."

The following Sunday, two of these ladies, came to church and received Jesus.

The people are so hungry for Jesus. I haven't seen a hunger like this any where. Just a simple faith. A desire to know God. One can preach the gospel and people will come to receive Jesus. Our problem is as Jesus prophesied - the field is white to harvest - the labourers are few.

Do It Yourself Mechanics

The Moz mobile once again had an off month. The "Junta de escapa" - exhaust gasket - blew out. For a whole month it sounded like a single engine aircraft taking off (some said it sounded like a tractor - how inglorious - aircraft sounds better). Of course nowhere in Beira is there such a thing as a spare part for this particular problem, so we had to scrounge around for some material that could be made into a gasket, and we made one. We fitted it and it seems to work all right.

"Like A Thief In The Night"

I was awakened by the sound of a small bang followed by a louder bang. I pulled back the mosquito net and raced to the kitchen. It was - 1.36am and very dark. As I reached the kitchen I noticed that our back door was open. As I had just woken from a deep sleep, it took a few seconds for me to realise that we were being robbed. I just stood there, face to face with the thief. I grunted "Hoi". The man stepped back out of the doorway and took off. I informed the guard - yes the guard (we actually pay a guard to prevent this type of thing), who was at the front of the house, puzzled as to why the dog had just run whimpering under the car.

Nothing had been taken - we stand firmly on the scripture that the Angel of the Lord encamps about those who fear Him - especially in Mozambique.

The following day, we secured our back door. It now looks like the door to Maxwell Smart's apartment with new locks and latches.

Jay's Column

Well gold dust we don't seem to get here under the African sun. If we did, people would probably bag it up to sell for a simple meal. Despite the lack of gold dust, the presence of God is evident throughout our meetings as well as in our baptism services. Demonic manifestations are common also. All part of the work as we push forward with what Jesus commanded us to do, preaching the gospel, making disciples of ALL nations, baptising them...

Many people wrote and asked about Kate's background. She was born in Maputo and her parents are not contactable. She was labelled as "abandoned".

She has no birth certificate and so we are giving her a second birthday on tenth of October. Both Kyal's and David's birthdays fall on the tenth of the month - July and December respectively. Kate lived in the orphanage for about a year before she came to Beira to be with us. It took her less than a week to respond to her new name, but she retains her birth name as a second name should she ever wish to revert to it. She is very popular here among the people, and tends to be a ringleader of the older children. I have a beautiful woman in the church who helps me a few afternoons a week to look after her and on Sundays so that I can continue with ministry. Our "little ray of sunshine" appears to speak a bit of Portuguese and understands some English. Greg speaks to her in English while I tend to use the Portuguese more. Confusing? She manages.

Well we are here for both the spiritual and the natural. Much of our support money goes to purchase Bibles for the hungry Christians here, or feed and house widows, but we also have been able to use a small portion given by you to help out one of our desperate staff members. Rosa works in our home helping with cooking, cleaning, and also serving our numerous leaders that frequent our house. With all the work she does for us, we would not survive without her.

She is a widow with ten children ranging, in age from 23 down to her ten year old daughter. One evening Rosa sent her youngest child to our home with an urgent message that her 21 year old daughter, Zita, needed to go

urgently to hospital with abdominal pains. Our night guard and I boarded the Mozmobile and headed off into the night to Manga where Rosa's home is. Her daughter was in a very bad way, unable to speak or walk. We bundled her into the back of our ambulance (Mozmobile - ever ready in season and out) and headed off for central hospital. In this country a \$5 note gets you into places you never knew were possible. Superman may leap tall buildings in a single bound, but we dodged and weaved through the medical system - a feat he would never have achieved. Poor Zita had to stay the night in the best hospital in town, which wouldn't pass Australian health department regulations.

The following morning Rosa came to work after visiting her daughter at the hospital. Zita had lapsed into unconsciousness. As Rosa walked through our front door I saw that her eyes were filled with tears. Upon investigation (minus interpreter) I learned firstly that Zita needed an urgent operation; secondly, the doctors wouldn't operate while she was unconscious; and thirdly that she had to pay the equivalent of \$50 Oz before they would commence the operation. With the economy in this country, the local people don't earn that type of money in six months. Naturally Rosa didn't have it. Due to your support, however, we were able to provide the funds, and again journeyed in the Mozmobile back to the hospital to try to save Zita's life. Rosa managed to cry sufficiently to the staff, and they agreed to lower the medical charges to \$35 Oz. Today as I type, Rosa is in the hospital visiting her daughter who has had the operation - only possible because Rosa is a praying mother, God called us here, and you supported us. In normal circumstances Zita would have died, because the people here don't have the \$50 Oz dollars to pay the necessary costs. I must mention that Rosa still does not know what was wrong with her daughter; they just don't tell you here. Thousands of people die annually from unknown medical problems, which could have been remedied by simple antibiotics if they had been administered in time. On behalf of Rosa and her family we want to thank all our faithful supporters who back us in prayer and finance.

" With God all things are possible"

Jay

Sum Up

So much happened again this month, that it is difficult to write it all down. What an exciting, fulfilling way to live. I am returning for the COC conference in Australia this month to get recharged and pick up necessary supplies. (Sounds like a trip into town but it is over 11,000km away).

Thank you - our intercessors. You are invaluable, changing the spiritual atmosphere over this fabulous country. Thank you our financial supporters. The life changing Word of God is going out more and more as we pick up momentum, and altering the course of history and bringing new hope and blessing to the future generations of Mozambique. Thank you so much.

God bless you,

Greg, Jay, Kyal, David and Katie

PS Mozambique's golden girl - Maria Mutola - gained a gold medal in the Olympic games in the women's' 800 metres running - the first in the history of Mozambique. (See Pictures) Mozambique's flag was hoisted for all to see - we are all very proud.