



Greetings again from Tanzania,

Glenna and I arrived back in Mwanza on Monday from another week long trip to a village. This time it was Malya, a very small community situated about two hours south of us. God continues to bless us in our journeys and this was no exception!

We left Tuesday June 10th by bus and after winding our way through some rather isolated areas we pulled into Malya about 3 pm. Pastor Jackson, who had invited us, along with several of his friends and church leaders gave us an enthusiastic welcome. It never ceases to impress us how grateful the people in the villages are when you finally arrive to teach and preach.

Malya, as I've already stated, is a very small town, lined with the usual array of kiosks, or shops, providing the basic necessities of African life. On weekends they have a special "market day" where a large assortment of goods are hung on wooden racks or spread on the ground. Much of it, including clothes and shoes, are used items that have been refurbished and proudly displayed for resale. Glenna remarked that it's the African version of a North American mall and I couldn't agree more. It's always amusing and yet reassuring to see a basketball jersey bearing Michael Jordan's name and number, or a New York Yankees baseball cap, or a hockey jersey from the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Malya, because of its size and distant location possesses neither electricity nor running water, as we discovered again when we checked into the guest house. Cell phones are quite numerous over here, which is surprising, considering the poverty, and one entrepreneur managed to purchase a solar panel and is in the business of charging all the village phones

On Wednesday we finally began the seminar. Since Pastor Jackson's church is small, he put up some well worn tarps next to the building and we did our first open air crusade – so to speak. In Africa you're always learning to ADJUST and when an occasional herd of goats or a crowd of small children came drifting in, you just said a silent prayer, kept to your topic and pressed on. By the way, a hen and several small chicks strutted behind Glenna during one of her sessions. (The biggest challenge came Saturday when high winds brought down part of the tarp on Pastor Frank, our translator, and me.)

Despite all that, the teachings did go extremely well! We had an overflow crowd with each session. Glenna covered many aspects of our Christian walk, including remaining faithful to God, as well as to our spouses. Adultery and polygamy are real problems in Tanzania and these talks were especially needed. Using several passages from the Bible, she also went into great detail about each of us taking proper care of our spirits, minds and bodies. She again emphasized the importance of daily prayer and study of God's word. Her teaching on Ephesians and putting on the whole armour of God, as in previous sessions, resonated well with the people. As did her warnings against witchcraft and seeking favour and guidance from ancestral spirits.

I emphasized how precious each one of us is to the Lord. We are His children; "fearfully and wonderfully made," as it states in the book of Psalms. And through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we are given a "new life," a "second chance," to fulfill all the plans that the Lord has for us. I encouraged them with a bit of my own testimony, of how I never planned on being a missionary to Tanzania – there are so many unsaved people in the U.S. – but God had a different purpose for me and since surrendering to His will, I've NEVER experienced such fulfillment before. As I've said so many times, "it's wonderful to be in the right place at the right time when everything in your life finally comes together for some great purpose." God is good! I went on to explain that if the Lord can do wonderful things in my life He can do wonderful things in theirs. If He can use me, He can certainly use them!

Following that theme, I proceeded with Bible studies of such unlikely people as Gideon, the woman at the well, and a reluctant Moses, in being utilized by God in His great plan of salvation. The Lord never ceases to use the "weak and lowly to confound the wise."

On Friday we conducted a rather large prayer service and several individuals eventually made a decision for Christ. Pastor Jackson was extremely excited with the prospect of new believers joining the church. He has already begun doing follow up with the people.

We were also very pleased with being able to distribute another case of Bibles. Pastor Jackson and his staff had the whole process well organized and people who wouldn't normally have an opportunity were able to purchase God's Word at an affordable price. Praise the Lord!

In closing, we again would like to thank all of you for your prayers and financial support. We realize that for some it is a real sacrifice, however God has promised to bless those who remain faithful. (Glenna and I know this from past experience!) We also want to reiterate that we raise each of you up in our prayers as well. May God continue to be the source of our hopes and dreams.

Yours in Christian love,
John Paul and Glenna

P.S. On Wednesday, June 25th, we are beginning a week long seminar in the village of Misasi. As always, we ask for your prayers.

