

HEART FOR AFRICA
"TRANSFORMING BIBLICAL PREACHING ONE PASTOR AT A TIME"
JUNE 2019

Strength in Flexibility

*"...not my will,
but Thine be done."*

Luke 22:42

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As missionaries, we are taught to be flexible in the field because you never know what the Lord will bring your way. And as we have learned many times over the years, you never know when you will have to make adjustments for an earlier decision...even if it seemed reasonable at the time.

We've reported many times over the last 8 years about the deep need for the Lord's people in Africa to have a firm foundation built upon the Word of God. Although they are deeply spiritual people, they are malnourished and naïve about what the Bible says and means in regard to day-to-day application. This is why the biblical education we provide is in such high demand by pastors here. They're recognizing Truth when they hear it and want much more.

Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

Titus 2:3-5

Quite a number of women come to the Inductive Bible Study seminars, and then a smaller number of ministry leaders are selected for the Bible College. Many of the churches here are comprised mostly of women. Their lives are very challenging and difficult; they bear the brunt of most of the physical work needing to be done around the home and village, while also needing to tend to familial and domestic duties. There is very little rest for the weary, so they seek rest and restoration in Jesus. We want them to be equipped to find solace and strength in God's Word whenever they need it, without having to wait until they attend a Sunday church service and get fed wrong ideas.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls...."

Matthew 11:28-29



Janice teaching at the college

Along with other doctrinal topics pertinent for all women, Janice often teaches on Titus 2:3-5 about God's plan for

older women to have a vital ministry teaching younger women how to adorn themselves in Godly conduct, appearance, and speech. The seminars were in high demand and the need greater than she could meet single-handedly while still trying to administer ICM-TZ, so this led to the birth of a separate ministry by women and for women. We've chosen some outstanding female leaders from among our Bible College classes to impart correct doctrine to, and equip them to go out among their regions and put Titus 2:3-5 into practice. Learning how to be good wives and mothers does NOT come naturally, otherwise the Lord wouldn't have had to leave instructions about it. So it's vitally important that women who are spiritually mature are teaching younger women what it means to love husbands and children when they are the least loveable, because that's the way the Lord loves us. And behind every command of God is the omnipotent power of God to carry it out. But if we don't know that--much less know *how* to tap into that power—we're simply trying to figure things out in our strength and knowledge.



The class of women

To date, we've utilized separate men's and women's classes of students in the college, primarily to be sensitive to their cultural norms. What we have found over the last few years is that the women excel in the college because they are willing to do the work required, and they have impressed the male Tanzanian instructors so much that it became their idea to integrate all future classes. They felt the women would set a good example to the men, and incentivise them to work to a higher level, raising the overall standards of the school. We were all for that!

All this to say that we just graduated our first and final all-female class from the college, and four of the nine graduates are instructors for this important women's ministry. We were a little sad for this day to come because there was a special comradery built among each class of women. They came from different regions, different denominations, different tribes and customs, and not knowing any of the other women students. Five times they left their families behind for 10 days, which is a big deal. Their hearts and minds were back home, and many were homesick—having never spent time away before. But they

quickly realized that God had called each of them to an important ministry—that of teaching God’s Word to others.

“But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.”

1 Corinthians 14:3

That’s what a prophet does: they edify; they exhort; they comfort. *To edify* means “to build up.” *To exhort* means “to fire up.” *To comfort* means “to hold up, and shore up, and lift up.” And we are thankful for women who have been given these gifts and are willing to use them for the benefit of others. Over the course of 2.5 years, they have developed their knowledge of God’s Word and honed their gift of teaching with each other. They went out 2 by 2 when they did their first IBS women’s seminars, for the primary purpose of edifying, exhorting and comforting each other as they stepped out into unfamiliar territory. But they were well received by other women around the country and modeled Titus 2:3-5 in a phenomenal way.



We’re excited about the future of the women’s ministry program and ask you to continue to keep it lifted up in prayer. There are many challenges facing these few instructors, and the need is great. Please pray for the Lord to lead more women to the college where they can encourage and be encouraged in the new co-ed environment, and continue to help build this important aspect of the ICM-TZ discipleship ministry.



Above: Instructor Angela (center) with women who attended a seminar.



The 2019 Bible College Graduating Class of Women



Catch up on our personal journey through our website news, and find many more pictures there.

www.jimandjanicelarson.com

Pictures of the Month



Our sons came to visit last month, and they climbed Mt Kilimanjaro with Jim. It was their first trip up the mountain, but Jim's third. It was a rainy and cold trek the majority of the time, but they all made it and we're thankful for their safety. To God be the glory!

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PRAYER REQUESTS

- 23 students participated in the new evangelist/church plating certificate program at the college last month! Praise the Lord for the many valuable lessons we learned in the first session, and may we always be open to His leading and not our own ways.
- We have 2 graduations this month; one at Mwanza on June 14 and the other on June 21 at Morogoro. These are the first graduations for these campuses. Please keep the students and preparations covered in prayer.
- Traveling mercies for an ICM board member coming here to participate in both of the above sessions and graduations, as well as for us traveling with him between Moshi and these campuses.
- Prayers for safe travel for us as we return to the US on June 27 for a short 5-week furlough. We have many meetings and quite a bit of travel during that time.