

HEART FOR AFRICA

"TRANSFORMING BIBLICAL PREACHING ONE PASTOR AT A TIME"

DECEMBER 2017

"I HAVE FOUND THAT THERE ARE THREE STAGES IN EVERY GREAT WORK OF GOD;

FIRST, IT IS **IMPOSSIBLE**

THEN IT IS **DIFFICULT**

THEN IT IS **DONE"**

-J. HUDSON TAYLOR

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Contemplating a trip half way around the world is no light matter. When we were prayerfully considering visiting Jim and Janice, God confirmed His direction through 1 Timothy 4.6, ***“If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.”*** What started with a friendly email inquiring about a potential support visit, quickly escalated into an opportunity to teach at ICM and in eight different villages in the area of Moshi, Tanzania.



First Impressions – We arrived in the dark, but as soon as we walked across the dimly lit tarmac and made our way slowly through customs, we immediately felt the clash of our familiar western ways with those of a culture that holds its own pride for its people and its country. During our ride to Jim and Janice’s apartment, we eagerly caught up with our Florida friends and began to absorb information about their work with ICM, about Tanzania’s cultural norms, and about the people we would meet. The air was hot and dry, their apartment cool and inviting. Although Kilimanjaro’s majestic peaks didn’t greet us, ours was a great welcome by partners in faith that laid a great foundation for the days ahead.

First Encounters - Dave was able to spend five days with the pastors who were taking classes at the ICM Bible college. He taught through First and Second Timothy presenting the books verse-by-verse and answering questions. The men and women were eager to hear the word and were diligent in participating in the class. A lot of the questions they asked were pretty tough. The pastors were insatiable when it came to knowing the word and eager to talk about how it should impact their lives and the lives of their congregation. His word shined its light on



things culturally acceptable and yet not biblical. All are laid bear before His Word, whether American, Tanzanian, or any other nationality. With the help of his excellent interpreter, Edward, Dave spent time in between classes getting to know the pastors and felt the warmth of Christian fellowship developing.

The first few days that Dave taught, Janice and I drove into some local villages to present biblical material pertinent to the women. The rustic churches were full of ladies that were just as hungry for the word as the pastors were. We covered such topics as: relationships among women, God’s view of women, godly character in women, and even delved into some conversations that were culturally impactful. Topics that were, to me, an eye-opener of the struggles Tanzanian women face. The days were long and very hot but watching the response to His word and thinking about the dedication these women showed by just being there will long stand in my memory as an example of what it looks like to thirst for His word.



Once Dave's long days at the Bible college concluded, we visited two village churches each day. Dave would teach and I would follow up with a testimony. In every village we were met with kindness, respect, and an authentic desire to hear about His word and His presence in our lives. All of the churches we visited were being pastored by one of the instructors from the ICM Bible college. We saw first hand the fruit of their labor. Men, women, and young adults often listened with Bibles opened and notebooks in hand. Although their worship was in Swahili, the same Spirit was present, and the same God was worshiped. It was a beautiful sight and a lovely sound.



One thing that has stayed with us is Jim's continual comment, "We are a teaching ministry." Their integrity to adhere to this purpose was refreshing. The simplicity of bringing His word to a needy people and allowing it to do the work of salvation that only God can do will continue to reap a harvest for generations. At one time in our lives we would have thought it **impossible** to go to Africa and teach His Word. The time we spent there was **difficult** and now it is **done**, but we know that our perspective on life has changed from partnering with Jim and Janice for the short while we were there. We are better able to put into perspective the petty problems in our lives and to pray with fervency that God will move His people to enter into the harvest. If we are lucky, God will call us again to visit our new friends in Tanzania and to hear of His ministry to these beautiful people.

"Bwana Yesu Asifiwi!"
(Praise the Lord!)

—Pastor Dave & Sandy Vollmer

Left: Being presented with a gift
Top: Dave teaching at church
Above: Sandy passing out lunch to children
Below: Receiving gifts from Bible college students



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

www.JimAndJaniceLarson.com

Picture of the Month



This newborn Vervet monkey was having a hard time holding on to the branch where mom and dad were hanging out. He managed to scramble back up without getting into trouble!

CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE & MAILED TO:

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Note "LARSON" in Memo of check

On-line giving available via PayPal on our website



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PRAYER ITEMS

- Praise that the October and November US team visits have all gone very well! There will be more pictures and stories in future newsletters!
- Praise that the Mt Meru campus of the ICM Bible College was dedicated by ICM founder and Executive Director Dan Finfrock, along with ICM board members Tim Anderson and Ed Sanabia.
- Pray for our East Africa teams to get refreshed this month. There will be no seminars so they can focus on their families and churches. They've worked hard this year and sacrificed much for the Lord.