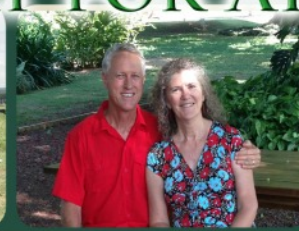


# HEART FOR AFRICA



*April 2016*

*Larson Mission Update*

## *the* WORDS *of* ETERNAL LIFE

JOHN 6:68

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One thing you notice when someone develops a true passion for God's Word is their normal conversation becomes laced with words from Scripture. Bathing their mind in the Word begins to encompass every part of their life...their thoughts, actions, and words. We do not mean they quote chapter and verse from the Bible; that can be overwhelming to others. But the more you converse with them, you will hear phrases and ideas from the Bible as part of the conversation.



**Meru area,  
high in the clouds**

This happened to us recently with our valued minister, Pastor Loth. He conducts many seminars for ICM-TZ all across the country and also serves as one of our pastoral training center instructors. His faith in the Lord is great and abiding. His burning desire to teach Inductive Bible Study (IBS) and God's Word to his fellow Meru tribe members and the people of Tanzania is quite evident.

The last time we visited Pastor Loth he was very excited to show us an amazing "new development" on the grounds of his church up in the mountains. In the distance we could see a fresh new building. A closer inspection showed it contained a number of small rooms, almost like classrooms. We could not guess as to their planned usage because the rooms were still in the process of taking shape. Pastor Loth soon solved the mystery as he began to share about his heart for training more pastors and church leaders, and his desire and vision to establish a Mount Meru-based Bible training center in the same model as our ICM-TZ pastoral training center. He pointed to the building and said Phase I of his God-given vision had come to pass. Completion of the project would occur in the Lord's timing and provision.

***"And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do."***

**Exodus 18:20**

Naturally, we were very surprised. The building would have been costly to construct and even more expensive to equip and furnish properly. The rooms we saw would provide overnight accommodations for up to 12 students and two teachers. We know Pastor Loth, his family, and church quite well. The expenses for the building and other facilities were not something that would be trivial to them. Before we could ask, Pastor Loth offered up his explanation on how everything had come to pass and his words were absolutely stunning to say the least. First, some context...

Pastor Loth has been doing seminars and teaching at the pastoral training center for almost 4 years. Though each minister is called by the Lord to this work, we do not expect them to teach and instruct for free, so we provide a stipend on days they teach and also fund their travel costs. The amount is extremely small; enough to show our appreciation to them and their family for their hard work and sacrifice, yet small enough so that no minister becomes financially dependent on ICM-TZ. We want to ensure they maintain the right priorities with respect to their own ministry and provision for their families.

***"Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain."***

**Psalms 127:1**

So Pastor Loth shared how he had set aside most of the money from the daily stipend to fund the dormitory portion of this Meru training center. It is amazing because it is so far outside the norm for what we see here, and also because it spoke volumes about Pastor Loth's character. He was not content with talking about a vision; he was driven to see it through. When nationals here have a vision that involves a building, they usually seek out a Westerner for financial underwriting, and sometimes construction. Pastor Loth took a different approach—he shared how he sought the Lord, and that the Lord impressed upon him that the resources to bring the vision to reality were available already. He has not relied on anyone but the Lord to make it happen.



***"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."***

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

The other important part of this amazing work is Pastor Loth has understood and applied important aspects of what we teach and emphasize. He used IBS to deal with a great challenge and is reaping the positive fruit from it! Many times he has heard us stress that ICM is a training and equipping ministry that focuses on teaching and empowering gifted Tanzanian disciple makers to fulfill the Lord's Great Commission. We can reach more people with that approach, but it often takes much convincing of the nationals to implement. Many Tanzanian pastors have grown comfortable and complacent with allowing Western missionaries to do work the Lord has called them and their church to do. Both sides share some of the blame for a system that has fostered unhealthy dependency.

***"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom..."***

**Colossians 3:16a**

To be honest, many times we have perched on our proverbial "soapbox" and preached hard to pastors against this wrong approach, while trying to encourage them that they can do the work. It apparently stuck with Pastor Loth! We had to ask him, "Why?" All he could say is that he truly believes in the work of ICM-TZ. He shared

that many other ministries have come and gone among the Meru people with no lasting fruit. Then he said, "You know, truly ICM-TZ has the words of eternal life." It was so profound to hear that the words of John 6:68 have been etched on this man's heart, and that he felt they were the best words to show us what was deep inside him. He made sure we understood he was not comparing us to Jesus. He was simply saying that ICM-TZ is teaching a better way—not a way of our own thinking, but God's way as provided in His Word—a lasting way that honors and respects the dignity of the people here and empowers them to put forth sustaining work. To God alone be the glory!



**Above: Frame for 1 of 6 bunk beds**

**Bottom Left: Original building that Loth expanded**

**Bottom Right: Finished dormitory for students/teachers**



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

**[www.JimAndJaniceLarson.com](http://www.JimAndJaniceLarson.com)**



# PICTURE OF THE MONTH



How to get a giraffe to go up stairs!

## CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE & MAILED TO:

Intensive Care Ministries  
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## PRAYER ITEMS

- Praise for Jim's safe travel to/from NW Tanzania, and the MKPTC instructors handling a 10-day class in Moshi without his presence! God is bringing everyone along in His timing.
- Grateful for a 1-day visit from one of our Floridian supporters in March, and for a blessed Resurrection Sunday remembrance as well.
- Pray for the secondary students we minister to each Sunday. They are normal teenagers struggling with home life issues and the temptations of the world.
- Another MKPTC April 13-22, and teaching college-bound students about relationships April 18-19