



Alabaster Ministries

He shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the master's use and prepared unto every good work." 2 Tim 2:21

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Roz Heyns

AUGUST 2017

Dearest Partners,

Our hearts and prayers go out to those in Southern Texas after hurricane Harvey swept through bringing with it the torrential rains that seemed to have no end. Many church leaders are calling it the judgement of God just as they did after New Orleans. If that was the judgement then why was the New Orleans "red light" district untouched especially since it is below sea level. It is truly amazing that so few died in this Texas catastrophe when you look at the vastness of the flooding. Surely, He reached out and protected life. It is always a tragedy to lose everything – I have been there – but we can rebuild and if I know anything about Americans they always rise to the occasion and you cannot keep them down for long.

The opportunity for the CHURCH is huge as it always is in calamity so let us not miss that chance. Instead of trying to assign blame or stating that this is God's judgement let's put our backs to the plough and become the living vibrant church that God has called us to be. If we cannot go or give then let us hit the floor and begin to intercede and travail. If you feel nothing then get on line and take a look at some of the photographs that are coming out of that area and that will surely move you. Ask God to give you a heart of compassion for these people.

Jesus never operated from a position of pity but always out of a heart of compassion. What is the difference because I believe that if we understand it, it will transform us. Perhaps this is the reason we do not see miracles when we pray for people.

Here are but a few differences: -

1. Pity is the feeling of sympathy for another human being or an animal while compassion is the feeling of mercy, empathy, and a desire to help the suffering person or animal.
2. Pity is an emotion while compassion is both an emotion and a virtue.
3. Pity can sometimes be tinged with contempt or dislike while compassion is part of love and is therefore free from any negative feelings.

The definition of pity comes from the Old French term "pite" which means "duty," from the Latin word "pietas" which also means "duty," and "pius" which means "dutiful." Because of the way we are brought up we have a "duty" to feel something for those less fortunate than ourselves. It is time for us as Christians to move on from that "feeling" and begin to express ourselves as Jesus did.

Compassion, on the other hand, is considered by Christianity as one of the greatest virtues man can have. It is seen as a part of the emotion of love. It has depth, passion, and vigor and is distinctly apparent by an individual's great desire to alleviate another's suffering or misfortune. It has the attributes of being merciful, kind, and forgiving, oftentimes showing empathy as well. The term "compassion" comes from the Latin word "compassio" which means "co-suffering" and "compati" which means "to suffer." The Latin definition "co-suffering" is the best because it talks of identifying with those who are in need of our compassion.

I believe that Jesus always identified with those with whom He prayed. If the CHURCH could get a revelation of the differences and began to operate with hearts of compassion we would see amazing change as we prayed for those who are naked and those who are in prison and those who are hungry and those in chains – both physically and spiritually.



This is not the time to allot blame or for us to sit in righteous judgement but it is time to be counted. If you do not know how to pray then ask God how He would have you do it and He will surely answer you. This does not just impact Texas but the whole of the United States – all of us.

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REPORT FROM FRANCIS BANDA

Dearlly beloved;

We are living in exciting times and we have seen both the word of God in operation and the signs of the times come to life before our very eyes. The work that God has given us is without end and we must diligently stay the course until our Lord comes to reign again.

The church in Malawi is growing and the work that we are doing in rural Malawi is making an impact. An assessment of the 24 pastors we currently have at our Bible School has shown us that most of these pastors have developed some understanding and knowledge of the word of God than was the case when they first joined the Bible school. We know that the word of God is liberating as well as empowering and we have seen pastors change from being shy men to individuals who can actually interact with people as well as breaking through the traditional barrier to reach out to the lost and help out with domestic chores. We do have testimonies of our team going against the cultural divide in our communities, for instance, men carrying water and going to the maize mill, let alone cooking in the home; this is a clear indication of true transformation towards making our societies better. By transforming ourselves before we reached out to others – leading by example - many have strived to emulate good examples and it has made the gospel easily shared to others who had no time for the things of God.

We have tried to get women and the youth involved in ministry and have had them gather in several meetings we have organized so as to teach them the living reality of our Lord and Master Jesus as well as life skills which could be very helpful. The women are taught simple cooking skills, how to manage their homes and have a good nutrition using the locally available food resources as well as how they can have small businesses to improve the quality of life in their homes. We have just started the program and it is still in its initial stages so too early to conclude that it has been a total success but I believe we can assess the progress in three months at the end of October 2017.

Pastor Peter Kankoche, Martha Kankoche, Chrissy Kamchila, and Pastor Ndaluzza held a women's conference and taught the word of God and encouraged others to do the same. We have had a good report that so many are now not sitting around and waiting for their husbands or men to do everything but they are now striving to become self-reliant people in a land where the custom dictates that women do not have a voice. I believe that we are on the right track and that there will be a lot of successful testimonies through these gatherings.

The youth are another vulnerable group, not only in Nsanje, but Malawi as a nation. An idle mind is the devil's playground and we have taken several strides to engage the young people in the

Report from Francis continued.....

Church with spiritual training, education and sport. It is shocking to see the demographic results of young people who have no purpose for their lives and are preoccupied with drink, drugs, prostitution, and robbery because these provide the best solution for their frustrations and needs. There is not much that our nation has done to change the situation on the ground because we lack infrastructure and the economy is not vibrant enough to introduce programs which take the youth off the streets and that is where the family, the church and the schools have to come in and make a difference. The church must do her part in rescuing those who are blindly falling into the mire of life by helping to improve the quality of their lives. The educational system in the rural areas do not adequately prepare students for higher education. There is not enough staff and learning materials for primary school students to be ready for high school and likewise high schools do not have enough to prepare students for college. Not only that, the churches have no programs for these children and this is why we are encouraging our pastors to begin Sunday schools for them. We cannot change the nation unless their spirit is changed no matter how much education we pour into them.

We are grateful that there is a program to build a school in Chididi and to hire teachers who will teach in English and teach the Bible and help raise the standards of education in Chididi and surrounding communities. It is our wish to all our friends that this dream will come to reality and Chididi can have a vibrant education system in place. We are proud to say that we have engaged the youth into having Youth Meetings every 6 weeks where they share several life skills, first aid knowledge, and the word of God and indulge in sporting activities. We would like to keep this going to where we are able to teach them how to run small businesses and metal & woodwork skills which could prove very beneficial in the region.



This is the only classroom block for 500 children

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We're on the Web.
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You can donate on line.
Email: alabastermin@aol.com

SOLOMON BANDA: BIBLE SCHOOL **REPORT**

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs (John 20:15).”

Pastoral ministry and the pulpit are inseparable. One can be a preacher and not a pastor; however, it is impossible to be a pastor and not be a preacher. In light of this, we decided to take the pastors through a course in Homiletics so as to help them understand what a sermon is and the things a sermon should be designed to achieve.

Most people in our day may look down on pulpit ministry; in fact we have Christians who do not see the need for preachers in the church anymore. Christ called us to feed his sheep, He called us to be good shepherds taking Christ’s sheep to the best pastures possible. I am confident that this training will help the pastors become better preachers of the word of God thereby beholding the Body of Christ. In rural Malawi where bibles are hard to come by, you need seasoned messengers, well trained men and women of God who are able to rightly preach and teach the word of God.

This module Homiletics 1 will continue through the next session of Bible school in September. May the Lord Richly bless all the hands that make this possible.

THE ELDERLY PEOPLE: PETER **KANKOCHE**

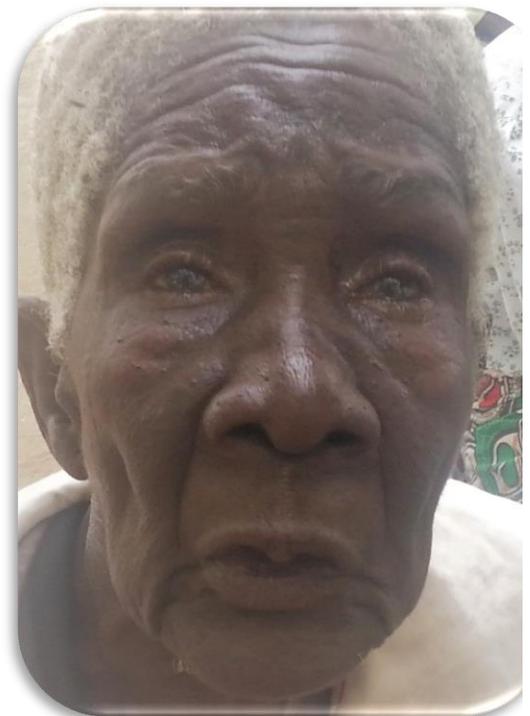
We are nearing the time when we gather in fellowship with our most cherished group, the elderly people. It was three months ago when we all gathered for distribution and after that they broke up into their various villages only to meet again village by village where they discussed and prayed for issues like how to battle droughts, farming their vegetable gardens and so on and so forth. Unfortunately, we will be without 5 of our friends who have left this world to go home where we will meet again someday.

We have visited six villages in the last 5 weeks and the purpose of our visit was to find out how our friends live when they go home. We wanted to do a little survey and we started with Chididi because it is easier to travel in the shire valley area than it is further up the mountains of Chididi into Mozambique. While the living standards remain poor, with some level of improvement here and there, there is still a big shortage of food. The roads leading to the villages on the Malawi-Mozambique boarder have not been worked on for some time now so that most of the travelling has to be done by motorbike or by foot. Nevertheless, we were very excited to meet our beloved friends and they were happy to see us too. It will be so good to have them all in one place even just for a day or two and though there isn’t that much time to sit down and have a chat with everyone, they treasure so much the little that we do and that makes everything else worth the while.

Every time we meet with them we find great spiritual growth as they put into action all that they have been taught over the years of distribution by Alabaster Ministries.



Praise and worship before class begins



Isn’t she beautiful? She is over 100 years and is a part of our distribution program

PICTURES OF LADIES CONFERENCE, YOUTH CONFERENCE AND CHURCH YOUTH SOCCER TEAM



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We have received the breakdown for the Tengani church which is as follows:

The building will measure 33 x 100 feet (10m x 30m).

Bricks 80,000	\$1,000
Roofing 85 X16 ft	\$3,800
200 bags cement	\$1,700
Transport	640
Timber	\$1,400
Window frames/doors	\$1,200
Nails, mosquito netting etc	\$1,000
Contractors	<u>700</u>

TOTAL \$11,440

BREAKDOWN OF MONTHLY EXPENSES FOR 2017

Support for each elderly each distribution x 4	: \$20 x 420	\$8,400
Support for girls (education and clothing)	5 x 10	50
Alabaster Bible school students	10 x 25	250
Alabaster Students attending PAOC school	30 x 2	60
Support – 8 pastors (13 months)	15 x 8	120
2 pastors (13 months)	20 x 2	40
3 staff members total (13 months)		<u>570</u>
	Monthly	\$5,290

Building costs for 2017:	
10 houses for the elderly	\$5,000
Upgrading pastor's homes	2,000
Bible school dormitories	6,000
Roofing churches (grass to corrugated iron)	1,750 four churches
Church at Tengani	12,000
Staff housing	30,000