



August 2018
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ALABASTER MINISTRIES

UPDATE

Dearest Friends,

Mat 5:33-37 "Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.' But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

If we say we are going to do something, then we had better carry through. Are we a people of integrity? When we say we will do something God takes us at our word. He regards it as serious – He regards it as an oath. An oath is something that should never be broken.

This is one of the main problems we have with raising children today. Our yeas are no longer yeas and our nays, nays. We tell them not to do something and if they do we will discipline them, they try it again and we do not follow through with the discipline. We become a liar in the eyes of our children and they think they can carry on because we do not do what we said we would do. We are sending them confused messages. There is no sincerity

In what we say. When Mom says NO to something, they run to Dad because he is the easier touch and sure enough, Dad says yes! It is no wonder that we have children playing parents off one against the other and there is confusion and the kids do exactly what they want.

Recently someone said something about their leadership when they were angry. When challenged they said they were joking. We had better think before we open our mouths because we can either send messages of blessing or messages of cursing. Once they are out there they cannot be reclaimed. They cannot be taken back – you said it and sent it forth. Let our yeas be yeas and nays be nays.

As men and women of Christ, we are His representatives on the earth and we need to watch what we promise and what we say because God does hold us accountable. When we do not say what we mean and mean what we say we are hypocritical, and the Bible regards that as a sign of wickedness. When we do carry through and are sincere the Bible says it is a sign of righteousness.

Let us walk with integrity and be an example. Let us ask the Lord to help us bridle our tongues and help us to keep our word.

ALABASTER | MINISTRIES

8514 N. Donna Ct. Kansas City, MO 64153

"He shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meant for the master's use and prepared for every good work."

Photo updates



Smiling faces of the elderly



ABOUT US

We, Alabaster Ministries are based in the United States with a tax-deductible status under 501(c)(3). We also have representation in the United Kingdom and are covered by Stewardship Services

Our representatives there are Michael and Penny Shellswell.

Phone: +44-7780-383452 (Michael)
+44-7551974316 (Penny)

In Malawi we have Oresti and Julie Yiannakis who are a wonderful support and without whom it would be extremely difficult for us to operate.

Our staff comprise of local Malawians, and volunteer staff in the USA and UK.

It is our belief that we should train the locals to one day be able to totally run every aspect of the ministry in their nation and to train the next generation to one day take over while we support and give advice where needed.

God has blessed us with an amazing team of people who are always ready and willing no matter what comes against us. God is in charge and is faithful when we are about His business.

This is an exciting ministry to be a part of and we so appreciate your support.

CONTACT US

You can support this exciting and vibrant ministry by sending checks to:

Alabaster Ministries
8514 N Donna Ct
Kansas City, MO 64153
OR

Via the web site direct to PayPal.

☎ Telephone (636)358-4615

✉ Email alabastermin@aol.com
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REPORT FROM FRANCIS

GOD HAS NOT FORGOTTEN YOU, HE WILL NEVER ABANDON YOU,
AND HE WILL DELIEVER YOU.

Dearly Beloved,

We are living in an age where there is so much going on in the world that we cannot process and fully comprehend every concept or aspect of everything that is happening. The big economies of this world, the movers and shakers of our societies are ever changing policies that affect our lives faster than we can say hallelujah - from ground breaking economic discoveries to trade alliances and other things which we might not really understand. It is very easy to think that perhaps God has left the threshing floor for man to manipulate our fate and destiny in whatever way he pleases. It is easy to think that God has abandoned us and forgotten His people and that He is not operational today as He was in past centuries.

Sometimes it does feel like there are great mysteries unknown to man as to why we do not see God in operation in our lives as well as the world around us. We were in the lower Shire and visited a few old people in their homes. Every time I heard the elderly despair, I was reminded of the words God said to Jeremiah, that even before you were born I knew you. God knows every one of us by name and so how can he really every forget us. All of us have memories of people we have met in our lives. We can recollect the mischievous deeds of youthful folly in our old age. We often share about that one friend we had in early childhood education class, we know their face, their name, we could even recognize some them if we met today. Our memories are limited to certain extent and thus we do forget things and sometimes we need someone to remind us of that which we wish to remember. Jeremiah came into this world hundreds of years after God created this universe and God himself is eternal, yet he says He knew Jeremiah before he was even conceived. There is absolutely no way that he isn't aware of everything that is happening in my life today and neither will he ever forget me. We know that God never forgets his people for he remembered them in their suffering and sent his only begotten son Jesus Christ to lift them up from the depths if depravity and set them free for all eternity in Jesus Christ.

The first chapter of Luke speaks of Zachariah and Elizabeth who gained favor from God. Through them came the herald for the King of Kings – John the Baptist. Most of us know this story very well and we can recite it in our sleep. The couple had no children until they were as old as some of the people we minister to in Nsanje. They were to others a subject of pity and maybe others mocked as is always the case in societies where people expect you to have a son to carry on your bloodline. I cannot imagine what they went through every time they heard their neighbors and close friends were celebrating the birth of a new born or had a birthday celebration, knowing that they had tried to have a family of their own but couldn't. Either way it was not easy for them and they hoped to have a child until age told them that was no longer a possibility.

The Scripture in Luke 1:6 says *"They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless."* That is to say they did not just believe in the Lord, but they lived it, upright and chaste before the Lord of Hosts. We know that the world is full of people who are upright and chaste. Men and women who inspire us all in their dedication to the Word of God and their works are unquestionably towards the exaltation of God, yet they have been through the worst kind of experiences. We hear their testimonies and think, how is it possible then that such benevolent

Zachariah was at the temple burning incense as he prayed. The prayers we offer up to God are acceptable and heard by Christ the intercessor. Prayers offered up in faith come before the alter of incense in heaven and are certainly never forgotten. Sometimes the petitions we make to God are answered when we are old and have been praying them for years just as Zachariah must have prayed for a child. Sometimes our unbelief causes us to stumble and miss out on what He would have done in our lives or through us. Zachariah doubted his blessing because it was physically and medically impossible hence he became dumb. God did not deal harshly with Zachariah because by striking him dumb he prevented him from sowing seeds of unbelief in what God was about to do in his life. We do God a great dishonor with our unbelief. God did not forget or abandon Zachariah, He was just as faithful then as he is now to you and me. I recall Christ in the New Testament saying even the very hairs on our heads are numbered, that if we earthly people know to give good things to our children, what more the Father in heaven who cares for the flowers in the wild and feeds the birds. God has not forgotten you, He will never abandon you so long as you remain upright and unwavering in your faith through the storms this life might throw at you.

REPORT FROM PETER

I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and pray that He's shielded you from danger and made your cup overflow for such is his nature. The work that God has bestowed on us is going well and grateful for your prayers and support as I strive to make Him known to everyone I come across.

I have had a busy schedule with Pastor Eric and it is amazing the things you learn when you step out of the comfort of your home and just go out there to interact with familiar faces and strangers too. We met people who encouraged us and others who weren't so encouraging. Some people like to take a dig at the gospel and those who believe and profess its magnificence and majesty because they only look at the surface, but those who search the scriptures to find Christ and eternal life will discover the treasures therein. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest treasure one can have. I think all peoples of the universe are busy and passionately desire to be so many things and there's nothing wrong with that. Many want to be rich, some want to be respected or honored, and others great scholars but most are deceived and take up counterfeit materials for treasures. Jesus Christ is to me a great treasure, a priceless pearl and in having him, I have enough to give me joy and make me happy now and forever. We can never get satisfied with the things of this world but when a man finds Christ the gracious savior, he finds a great thing and all else becomes immaterial.

When I look at the challenges I face and in this case the people who laughed us to scorn I cannot help but wonder how God sees us in our natural state. A believer is as a fisherman casting his net into the vastness of a great ocean and relies on the blessing and anointing of the Holy Spirit to draw the fishes to his net. We do not have any assurances as to what sort of fish will be drawn to that net, but one thing is for sure, the fishes come and oh are they so diverse. So, what should we do as the ambassadors of Jesus Christ when we cast our net looking for Nile Perch and we get cat fish instead - do we throw them back in the sea or do we rejoice in the day the Lord has made and thank him for what he has given us to work with? All experiences

Continued Page 4....

Peter's report Continued from page 3.....

(both old and new) and observations in this life are useful and because our place is at the feet of our King Jesus we ought to learn old lessons over and again and new ones too; whether that means being reviled for the gospel or persecuted, we must turn to the scriptures and look at the lives of the apostles of Christ. Look at how they were reviled and scolded but went on to teach the Gospel with Love and such passion. People repulsed Christ saying, "Is he not the Carpenter's son?" They knew who he was but because of their unbelief, they repulsed him either way and The Lord did not do many works in their lives because they did not believe. Unbelief is the great hindrance to the favors and treasures that Christ has in store for us. One might say I have so much, but I do not believe. King Solomon who had it all ended up saying it is all vanity. Dearly beloved, store up treasures in heaven where they do not perish and keep faith with Christ our savior who has made our peace with God.

REPORT FROM SHADRECK

May the blessings and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit be upon you. We are grateful to God Almighty for his faithfulness and lovingkindness at Nthondo and we pray the Lord has been good to you just as he's been faithful to us and continues to bring us from glory to glory.

We have two weeks between now and the quarterly distribution meetings. I am passionately looking forward to fellowshipping with the rest of the elderly group in one place and sharing our experiences as well as testimonies. I am pleased to report that we have had more and more come to the house group meetings and of course the most gratifying thing is to see the elderly going forth, sharing the gospel and not waiting for their chaplain to visit them every now and again. We are also fond of turning to our elderly for wisdom and counselling in our African setting.

I am pleased to report that more of the elderly are stepping up and

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REPORT FROM SHADRECK

becoming a light for others in their home villages and really teaching the word of God. I had an afternoon meeting in Chididi on the 26th of August and I prepared what I thought was a good sermon for the occasion as per custom and as soon as I got to the meeting Malifa Machika says, "Pastor you sit over there today." She's a dynamic young lady about 67 years of age and boy did she rock my soul. She preached on repentance and did that very well. It is an unpopular message and has been since the time of John the Baptist, especially for a generation that has a dislike of reproof as we see in the world today. It is always amazing when the student becomes the teacher, and such is the program believers should follow. We who have been taught of Christ, have been blessed, and anointed by His Holy Spirit for years should run our race with Him here on earth and become fountains of living water for all who are thirsty and in need of a touch of God in their lives.

My home church is doing well, and I praise the Lord for the vibrant young team and a dynamic elderly group. One of the things that burden my elderly team throughout all the villages in Chididi is the livelihood and productivity of the younger generation. So many have not discovered what their purpose is, and they lack a proper guidance in their lives. The moral decadence along with the social setting is unimaginable and I have been challenging them to take measures to change the status quo in their families and communities. I am pleased to report that there's quite a few who have taken up the initiative to mentor and give counsel to the youth. I strongly believe we have a real chance with the youth and that we can bring about an effective transformation through the teaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I do not think it is ok to say that young people are only interested in the social aspect of life rather than the Gospel because I believe they take up the social aspect to fill a void that is inside them. All we have to do is reach out to them with the right message just as Paul reached out to the Greeks by telling them of the unknown God they worshipped, only this time without man made images. For so long we have had "man-made images," figures and excuses that we chose to fill up that void inside. I chose the Living reality of our precious Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Ed Note) Shadreck is a young pastor from the mountain area. We roofed his church last year. He is at the Bible School and when we expanded to have pastors help with the elderly he agreed to assist with Chididi area. His wife had dealings with witchcraft growing up and was possessed and manifested during praise and worship. She was finally set free and is a wonderful part of the Women's groups.