



February 2018
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ALABASTER MINISTRIES

UPDATE

Dearest Friends,

I have started the year off with a bang. Things should never be mundane or boring in the Kingdom but should always be exciting for us all. If you are bored with life, then you are not following the true calling that the Lord has placed upon you and I challenge you to find out what that is.

I had the privilege to be part of a small team of people who met together in Ede, Netherlands. These people are all doing the work of the Kingdom in various parts of the world. We spent time sharing and encouraging one another and "brainstorming" for the future.

I began to realize that some had grown up in the Church and had the joy of having "fathers" in the faith who were there to help and counsel them in their walk and ministry for the Lord. Many of us were spiritual orphans who learned by trial. This is one of the reasons we need to have fellowship one with another so that we do not end up as orphans in the faith. We need to have others speak into our lives just as we need to have the freedom to help others when they are in trouble. Yes, Jesus is our covering, but I should never be so proud that I cannot admit I am wrong or that there is a better way than mine.

I also had the opportunity to visit the U.K. and while I was horrified at the state of the church – beautiful old cathedrals that are no longer the place of worship – where people meet once a week for the most part, there is a remnant and I had an opportunity to meet that remnant. They were so hungry for the things of God and yet were not being fed because the leaders are so fearful of not being "politically correct." There is His remnant out there and they are exciting to be with.

When I have questioned about the lack of the gifts operating in services I have had pastors tell me that they do not want new converts or visitors to be offended if someone were to break out in tongues or give a prophetic Word. I know that in the past this was abused from time to time and that was because leadership would not correct for fear of belittling people. Grow up church, the Word tells us to beware of offense.

How dare we ban the gifts of the Holy Spirit when it is He that draws people unto the Lord and not we. How dare we deem that the Holy Spirit should be an offense in the church. There is something seriously wrong with this whole picture. How close are we to blaspheming the precious Spirit of God? Let us be a part of the remnant in these days because that is truly where we will find Him.

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."

Report from Francis

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has been faithful to us and we pray that you are all well. It has been an adventurous three weeks in Nsanje and we have enjoyed fellowship with the old people in all our five centers. We set out from Blantyre on the 26th of February and started with our first distribution program of this year 2018.

Every distribution provides a wonderful opportunity to witness to new faces who come to hear the Word in all our centers. It provides us with a great learning experience every time we come down here. It is truly amazing when you see how the little that you do makes a such big difference. We are truly grateful to all our supporters who are always reaching out and touching so many souls thousands of miles away. Only God alone can put such a love and compassion in your hearts and He forever be praised for positioning his faithful remnant in all our lives here in Malawi.

We have received a wonderful testimony from Chimombo and Chididi where the elderly have had a radical change in their attitude towards sharing the Word of God. This has been a result of intensified Bible studies and encouraging each other to step out in faith do something that will change not only one's life but reaching out to others in our communities too. We praise the Lord for Chimombo because it was one of the places that was a more than a little challenging to work in with respect to the culture of their community. We have a great testimony that more and more people are breaking away from traditions and customary laws and have adopted the traditions of the Kingdom. We can never begin to appreciate Kingdom living unless we break away from tradition.



Chanazi's new cottage. When I met her seven years ago she could see - now she is almost blind and takes care of her mentally challenged Elderly son

We are truly blessed and grateful to you our dearly beloved for making Chanazi Makwiza's dream come true. We had just finished distribution in the Shire Valley plains and we headed up Chididi hills for the final day of the distribution program and it suddenly started pouring with rain for a couple of hours. We went by Chanazi's house which is about six miles away from our center and we could not believe the status she was living in. Her house was literally falling apart; the soggy clothes being dried outside her house and the soggy walls moved all of us. Her blanket didn't serve the purpose it is intended for because it was all in tatters, so we made a 35-mile trip to get her a new blanket and began building her house the following day. Once again dearly beloved, we are truly grateful for all your support, you are real champions in the Kingdom of God. Your support makes living in places with bad phone reception and no electricity for weeks well worth it if it is to reach out and do our little part in making people such as Chanazi Makwiza's lives better. We praise the Lord for His goodness and mercy and pray for more showers of blessings.



Bricks for Chanazi's house



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.

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

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

Email: rozheyns@gmail.com

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NEEDS

We need to supply our elderly and pastors with blanket for the next distribution. Each blanket costs us \$5. Please would you sacrifice one cup of coffee so that we can make our elderly more comfortable.

Rains are almost over and we are starting to make bricks. Bricks are \$0,10 a piece. Are you willing to give to the brick fund? Thanks and blessings

U.K. VISIT

From Penny Shellswell

Roz visited us here in the UK in February. It was a wonderfully encouraging time. She spoke in church on the Courts of Heaven about bringing our prayers to the Father. God is the Judge, Jesus is the Advocate and Satan the adversary who is always accusing us before the Father. Jesus is there interceding for us according to the scriptural prayers we are lifting up. We need to be sure however, that the adversary has nothing that he can accuse us of - that our hearts and motives are pure. This teaching went down superbly, and many came to say how it had really encouraged them. Subsequently, at a coffee morning at our house, Roz shared her testimony of growing up in Africa and went on to compare our earthly inheritance with our spiritual inheritance and the importance of course of the latter. Roz also shared the latest news from Malawi.

Others came to visit Roz separately and some we visited in their homes. We were able to pray for those who were sick and had a wonderful time teaching about the infilling of the Holy Spirit after which people began speaking in tongues. One couple are beautifully changed and so thrilled. Overall there are a few for us to follow up on a regular one to one basis. Others wished that Roz had shared for much longer. So, we are thrilled with the visit and really seeking to persuade her to find the time to visit again soon!

Ed note: I definitely have to pick a different time of year to go. The weather is miserable! That damp chill that gets into your bones!

Roz with Penny and Michael Shellswell

NEGATIVITY

Negativity can begin as a visceral reaction to offense, suffering, or fear, but the longer you let it grow, the more power it will steal from you. It will take over as your interpreter of relationships and circumstances and become your main defense system. Unchecked, it can develop into a worldview, a way of life, and an idol replacing a genuine relationship with God.

Negativity isn't just a synonym for being practical, realistic, or somewhat pessimistic. Those with a negative mindset are always searching for what's wrong, or studying what could go wrong, to protect themselves from the possibility of pain, failure, or loss.

Those with negative hearts look for wrongs, faults, and failings in others to affirm their judgments of those who don't think exactly the same way they do, and to rationalize their need to distance or destroy anyone they can't control. The insidiousness of being focused on what's wrong in others, is that you become your own version of what you judge. You are transformed by the thoughts you cultivate—the more bitterness, criticism, resentment, fear, arrogance, and hate you hold onto, the more negative your identity becomes.

That negativity creates its own theology, politics, and social systems, and won't ever let you rest, be happy, or content. If you let your heart become so hard you can justify devaluing a life—any life—you'll probably have to spend most of your time finding ways to hate what you fear just to survive.

So, what's the point? It's that you have a choice. You have the power to surrender every negative judgment, thought pattern, and memory, and invite God to begin displacing all of it with the thoughts He has for you, thoughts of peace, life, and blessing, not one of negativity, to give you hope and a real future (Jer. 29:9). He may want to deal with some of the roots of negativity, so they never have control of you again. Some might need to get pulled out by forgiving those who've hurt you. It will take time and discipline to build a new thought-life with Him, but it's a discipline of grace and joy, one that makes you feel whole and energized, not broken and exhausted.

"The one who seeks good finds delight; the student of evil becomes evil" (Prov 11:27).

"Don't angrily obsess about the wicked, or envy those who do wrong. Trust in the Lord and do good, and you'll live safely in the land and feast on His faithfulness. Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything to the Lord—trust Him, and He will help you" (Psalm 37:1-5).

ARTICLE FROM STEVE HILL AT HARVEST NOW

I was recently sent the article below and in view of the editorial decided that I would share it with you:

"Maybe you have read about the mega church in China that was recently destroyed by government agents? The church was in a very poor area of China. The people sacrificed millions to build it and it was reduced to rubble.

Maybe you have heard of the church buildings destroyed in the north of Nigeria? Indonesia? Philippines? India?

Maybe you have heard about how Islamists love to build mosques on former church sites? Hindu temple sites? Synagogue sites?

Why?

Religious buildings are about projecting power.

It is interesting to travel about rural Ontario and to note that in small towns settled by Scottish Presbyterians like Fergus, the building on the highest point of land in the original town is a Presbyterian church. If you go to nearby Guelph the building on the highest point is a Catholic Church.

No Christian leader tells more lies about the Kingdom of God than the one raising money for a building program and the main lie is always on the corner stone- "To the Glory of God".

After the completion of his building program a local pastor told me that he was so glad that they had this new building so that they could minister to the community in such a meaningful way. What were they doing? Filling food hampers to be given to poor families at Christmas time. Ok? Yes, the floor space on the new gym was filled with hampers and food was being placed in them from boxes on the tables all around the walls of the hall but really? There were another 3 or 4 empty church buildings in town that would have served the same purpose. There were a couple of empty town halls that could have sufficed. Even the local fire hall would have done the same trick. Oh, and the local school or car dealership or someone's big recreation room or garage!

What do you think the local poor people would really have appreciated?

REPORT FROM STEVE HILL

A food hamper at Christmas or some significant financial help which could have been there if the hundreds of thousands spent on the building was available for actually helping someone. Oh, but our token charity on one day of the year makes us feel so good. And those poor people will still be there next year waiting for their food hamper.

The vast majority of church buildings are the most expensive and the most underutilized space in the entire community. Their primary design function is to be used once per week and to project the power of the pastor- look how many come to hear me preach!

The money spent on religious buildings in the western world could feed, clothe and educate every poor child in the world. We have the means to do it, but we choose not to. Bricks over babies. Parking lots over people. Sound systems over water systems. Carpets over children. Words week after week rather than action.

And yet we say the building is to the glory of the One who said, "Whatever you have done unto the least of these you have done unto

Me." Why build buildings for those whose religion is power to burn down? Why play that game? We are to believe in love that never fails. The death of Jesus demonstrates that might does not make right. Why not invest that money in people? Why not build something that cannot be destroyed?

Meeting in homes or under a tree or in a pub or in a coffee shop does not project power. It is powerlessness. It is the yeast hidden in the lump until all is leavened.

It is the example of Jesus.



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MARTHA KANKOCHE

We praise the Lord for being with us throughout our first gathering of this year 2018. I was particularly worried that we were going to have a poor attendance record because of the rains which started on the 28th of February through to the 2nd of March, which was the day we started our 3 day meeting. We prayed for favor and I thank God that it didn't rain from 2nd march until the day I got home on the 4th. We had a wonderful meeting and am pleased that we had about 40 people during the day and about 85 during the evening meetings as people from the surrounding villages came to attend after finishing their daily endeavors.

Pastor Mac Peterson requested that we should teach on marriage because his church asked on this following challenges that his community is going through. My husband usually does children ministry in the afternoon when the kids come back from school and marriage counselling and Francis preached in the evening. I was very pleased to see two of the Bible school cooks in a women's choir and sharing the Word. I have Pastor Roz to thank for this because it is her constant encouragement and teaching that has caused Mrs. Chagaka to finally start ministering. My son David got seriously ill on the second day of the meeting and I was tempted to ask Francis to drive take me to Nsanje hospital, but my husband asked the group to pray and his fever immediately left him. Sometimes we miss out on the things that the Lord has set in plan for us because we allow our emotions to get the best of us instead of focusing on the Cross of our Lord Jesus and learning to trust in Him. Paul the apostle trusted not his own intellect but in Christ. He records "I count all things but dung but for the knowledge and excellence of Christ Jesus our Lord". I am encouraged by the wonderful testimony of God's love and Power.

The local chief came to thank us for there has not been any such teachings in his area in a long time and he said that his area will truly be transformed by the Word of God. We left Dziko branch packed with enough ammunition to go out and do more at the next meeting in June at Nyanda-ndanda, on the border with Mozambique. We would like to request for Bibles and we pray that God raises up some real women of God to transform our families and our land for the Lord blesses and transforms a nation because of a few that are hungry for the Gospel and are about His business. May the almighty God bless you all, Amen.