



# Ferguson Report



Vol. 2 No. 11

*“Go ye unto all the world”*

November 2005

## Chimala Mission Bible Library

A craftsman is no better than the tools of his trade. The Tanzanians have a word in the Swahili language to describe a craftsman or a skilled worker: “*fundi*.” A number of “*mafundi*” (plural form) were employed to increase the size and usefulness of the Chimala Mission library. With shovels, they dug into the soil and carefully formed the foundation with stones and cement; they burned bricks and made the mortar; they measured and sawed the lumber for the rafters; and they secured the tin roof sheets in place using hammers and nails. In just a few weeks, the renovation to the library was complete waiting only for the windows which were shipped from the states. At last, there stood a much-improved library facility produced by the skillful use of the carpenters’ tools.

Similarly, the tools of the trade for preachers, evangelists, and Bible teachers are books. Naturally, the chief tool is the “Book of books” – the Bible. By this Book, all other books are measured for their usefulness. Why is a Bible library necessary at Chimala?

To begin with, those who teach the gospel must remain life-long students of God’s word and world. In our desire to make the Chimala Bible College a world-class preacher training school, a resourceful and usable library is a must. At the Chimala Mission, there is



*Chimala Mission library undergoing renovation with added offices and increased space.*

an existing but limited library. One of my objectives has been to increase the quality and number of books for the library. Already there are a good number of books waiting to be unloaded from a 40-foot shipping container that was sent back in April of this year. In addition, most of our short-course teachers will carry student textbooks with them to be used in the classes. These books will remain the property of the Chimala library for the use of future students.

Second, the Chimala library will serve the region as a valuable resource for local preachers and future graduates of both the Chimala Bible College and the Chimala School of Preaching. Our brethren in East Africa are confronted with the same doctrinal errors and difficult questions as we are. Like us, they could profit from the studies of men who have wrestled with those same issues. Yet, unlike our condition in the states, their access to *any* Biblical material—much less *sound* material—is nearly non-existent. Are they less deserving of sound Biblical resources than we are? When they visit the Chimala library, they will have access to Bible atlases and maps, Hebrew and Greek word studies, concordances and commentaries, debate books as well as books that deal with specific subject matter. A wealth of information will await them to assist their ministry.

Third, I truly believe that schools of preaching and Bible colleges are greatly influenced by their libraries. The popular computer slogan, “Garbage in, garbage out,” is a relevant factor with libraries as well. A good, sound library will go a long way preserving the Biblical integrity of the Chimala Bible College and its graduates.

Jesus said, “*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it*” (Luke 14:28)? The physical labor and cost of building the library renovation has been fulfilled. The “tools” for building souls for eternity, however, are still in the process of being provided. As before, our faith is in God who has always provided for any worthwhile effort through His church. If you would like to help us build the Chimala Bible College library, please contact me for details. Help us “*have sufficient to finish it.*” Howell

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***“Ferguson Mission”***

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## Thank-You

One of the great joys of my work is the experience of witnessing brethren respond to the needs of the Lord’s work. In my last newsletter, I informed the readers of some “Immediate Chimala Bible College Needs.” I was needing to 1) raise \$100 a month for one of our students at CBC, Julius Mkisi, 2) raise \$100 a month to complete the CBC teachers’ salaries, and 3) request reimbursement for 17 students’ textbooks. I don’t suppose it was much more than a week later that the elders of the Madison County church of Christ near Jackson, TN responded to the call. They wanted to help not just with one of the needs, but with ALL THREE! In addition, they wanted to increase my personal support.

What makes this story all the more unique is this is a very small church that was newly-formed to provide a congregation in a needed area of Madison County. Their response reminds me of Jesus words: *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things;”* and *“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much”* (Matthew 25:21; Luke 16:10). Did not Jesus say *“If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall*

*remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you”* (Matthew 17:20). Jesus never considered great numbers to be a pre-requisite to accomplishing great things in His Kingdom—only great faith! Gamaliel, a prominent Pharisee unknowingly predicted the growth of the fledgling religion of the Nazarene: *“But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God”* (Acts 5:39). Truly, nothing is small if God is in it.

I do not write these words to exalt one congregation over another – for we are all one body. To the contrary, I am *deeply* appreciative for *every* congregation, eldership, and individual who assist in this work in any way or amount. In fact, there were at least two individuals who informed me they wanted to help, but the support needed was already attended to. To you I also say **“Thank-You!”** Others of you have on-going works that require your commitments. Even though you are unable to assist in this work, I still say **“Thank-You”** for your faithfulness to those other good causes.

As most of you know, Josh Barnett and I will be departing November 14<sup>th</sup> for Tanzania. I wish for all of you to know that this *“open door”* of teaching at Chimala is a result of your prayers and desire unto God that the gospel of Christ might flourish around the world. **Thank-you!**

Howell