



# Ferguson Report



Vol. 4 No. 7

“Go ye unto all the world”

July 2007

## To Do It All Over Again

Every so often you have one of those “moments” in your life. You know—one of those times when your mind begins to be filled with lightening-fast images of what actually is a history of your own life. You think about your old home, your parents, your siblings, your school, your spouse, your children, jobs, things you’ve done, and people you’ve met along life’s way. And inevitably, you begin to ask yourself questions like “How could I have made my life better?” “Why did I make so many mistakes, and how could I have avoided them?” “What have I accomplished, and what good have I done?” and “What would I do differently if I could do it all over again?”

Without trying to sound like a philosopher, these are questions I think all people ponder eventually. What we mortals in fact want to know is “What was it really all about?” At about this point, it really is soothing to the soul and mind to reach over and pick up the Bible, open its pages and point to the Eternal Creator of this world and giver of Hope: God! The Christian’s hope is in Christ Jesus our Lord who causes our days to make sense and gives purpose to life. One of our favorite passages of Scripture is Matt. 6:33: “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*” What a simple, yet profound statement! God says, “You take care of my business first, and I’ll take care of yours.” With all of my blunders and mistakes I make, imagine *now* God taking care of *my* things for *me*. Who better to take care of *my* things than God?!!

Oh, how often we fail to take God up on his offers. Like Sarah of old who gave Abram her handmaid Hagar instead of trusting God to provide her and Abram with a son, we try to take charge ourselves and generally make a mess of things like she did (Gen. 16). There’s a big difference, however, in walking by faith in what God says to do and walking blindly by my own sight. When our life’s goal is God’s kingdom we can take risks, make tough decisions, live on the edge, and make a real difference in people’s lives. When God’s agenda is our agenda, everything will work out good in the end (cf. Rom. 8:28).

Sociologist Tony Campolo once asked 50 people

over the age of 95 what they would do differently if they had life to live again. The following were the top three answers:

- 1) They would risk more.
- 2) They would reflect more.
- 3) They would do more things that would live on after their death.

Did you notice that those surveyed did not say, “I wish I had hoarded up more retirement money,” or “I wish I had gone out to eat more, or gone to Wal-Mart more”? Why not? Because those kinds of things are of no significance in view of the “big picture” of life. Those kinds of things don’t feed hungry children. They don’t relieve suffering. They don’t feed the emaciated soul. In essence, they don’t involve risks or sacrifice. They have no ultimate significance. And they won’t live on after I’m dead to become a living memorial to my love and service for Jesus Christ. They don’t really matter. When you’re lying on a bed at 95 reflecting on your life they will leave you with nothing but regret.

How many of you reading this article are still in the prime of your lives? Even if you’re a little “over the hill” it’s not too late to challenge yourselves as Moses and Abraham did in the latter periods of their lives. As you stop, think, and consider with intensity in those quiet moments of life; are there things you have taken for granted? Are you failing to give due attention to things that are important—things that have ultimate significance? Why not take the “risk” of placing faith in God’s promises. He hasn’t promised you frolic, fortune, or fame. But He will give you your daily needs (Matt. 6:11, 33), supply you with spiritual strength (Phil. 4:13), give you peace and contentment (Phil. 4:9, 11), provide you with lasting purpose (Eccl. 12:13, 14; 2 Tim. 1:9), forward your treasures onward to heaven (Matt. 6:19-21), and take really good care of your soul (2 Tim. 1:12).

Max Depree once said, “In the end, it is important to remember that we cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are.” So when you have one of those “moments” to reflect on, why not do something that matters? Stretch your spiritual muscles a bit and take on new challenges that can develop new spiritual growth. Come on out of your comfort zone? The water’s great!

Howell

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## We're Making Progress

It has been nearly two years since the beginning classes commenced at the Chimala Bible College. Funds were then on short demand. We were unsure who exactly would be the teachers. Many of the first students had other responsibilities that would call them to other duties. The curriculum schedule had to be tailored to meet the shortage of teachers. Books and research materials were insufficient.

But things are gradually changing. Several of you have agreed to support a student. Students with other responsibilities have been successful in “balancing” their busy lives with their studies. A standardized curriculum has been completed and is now guiding the course scheduling. All of the short course teachers from the States have been able to raise support for text books and other materials and bring them with them for use at CBC. At the present we have 18 students living on the Chimala Mission campus and studying at CBC. A new dorm has been built with an ideal capacity of 24 students; and a new student bath house and toilet facility has been completed. Also in the plans is the enlargement of the existing cafeteria/dining hall into two separate buildings to accommodate the increasing student body. And on a personal note, if all things continue well I may be able to spend more time in Tanzania to assist in the

teaching and administrative role at CBC.

Lord willing, our first class of graduates will be wrapping things up by next spring. And 24 new student applicants are in the process of being interviewed and prepped for coming to Chimala Mission and studying for two years at CBC beginning January of 2008. But the fuel for the “home fires” continually needs to be fed. Without support from home this work (and all other works) could not continue. What you can do:

1. Support a student \$100 a month for two years at CBC.
2. Help me complete my monthly work fund goal. At present it is \$700 short.
3. Assist me in fulfilling my travel and operating expenses for the remainder of the 2007 year.
4. Invite me to come to your congregation to give a PowerPoint presentation about the BVVID extension work and the Chimala Bible College in particular.
5. Go with me on one of these trips to Chimala.

As hard as I try, it is impossible for me to explain what you can only really know unless you experience it. I understand everyone can't go. That's why I encourage elders to send their preacher, or go themselves and see the work first hand. I make the guarantee without fear of failure: *you will never be the same again! Please, we need you!* Howell