

For those of us blessed to participate in our recent mission efforts in Tanzania (TZ), these observations give a perspective of the church there that, we hope, will paint a picture for you of the challenges and potential our brethren face. The Lord's church in TZ bears many similarities to

the first-century church we read about in the New Testament, learning a new way of life that is much different from their heritage. We share Brother Pollard's optimism about the church in TZ and want to continue our prayers for them and all our "church family" around the world.

—the Elders

If You Were a Tanzanian Christian

Neal Pollard

Kathy and I count as among the most uplifting, growing experiences of our adulthood each of the four trips we have taken to Tanzania to do short-term mission work. We always come back renewed and also mindful of how blessed we are. We are humbled by the great work going on there and how content and spiritual-minded the Christians there are.

Paul preached, *"The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; neither is he served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things; and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him; though He is not far from each of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, even as some of your own poets have said, 'For we are His offspring'"* (Acts 17:24-28). Paul said that on Mars Hill, and its principle is relevant even today. We are blood relatives with those of Tanzania and the rest of the world (26). There are many, including so many in Tanzania, who are seeking for God (27). Every person across the globe bears the image of God, as His offspring (28). Allow me to share with you some impressions these trips have made upon me about those Tanzanian Christians. (continued)

*In memory of **Johnny Ramsey**, a great soldier of the cross, who was laid to rest last week.*

How to Save America

Johnny Ramsey

Since Jehovah still *"ruleth in the kingdom of men"* (Daniel 4:25), and in His sight *"the nations are as a drop of a bucket"* (Isaiah 40:15), we must face up to our immediate responsibilities if we are to preserve America. In one of the most familiar and greatest statements regarding national concern, James Russell

Lowell declared, "Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide. In the strife of Truth and falsehood, for the good or evil side." An impartial appraisal of American degeneracy demands that godly citizens awaken, arise and meet the challenge before us. In 1940, in one of his famous "fireside chats," Franklin Roosevelt made this monumental statement that is so apropos for today: "We build and defend, not for our generation alone. We defend the foundations laid by our fathers. We build a way of life for generations yet unborn. We defend and we build a way of life, not for America alone, but for all mankind."

Those even remotely conversant with the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, and the many parallels in world affairs today, ought to be convinced that now is the hour to stand up, speak out and help save America. So many people in the world are looking to us for guidance, maturity and leadership in the crises of life. However, presently, we are a great disappointment to many friends of the past due to the rebellion and immorality of a whole generation of our citizenry. Will it be said of us, as it was of Rome, that "our vicious lives alone have conquered us" and "there is more wickedness being committed than can be counted"? Truly, America is on the verge of committing spiritual suicide.

What can we do to stem the tide of reprehensible conduct that will eventuate in hell? There are several things we must restore if America is ever to be strong again:

1. Godliness in our homes
 2. Respect for authority
- (continued)

If You Were... (continued)

If you were a Tanzanian Christian, you would likely be a new convert. The Arusha and Moshi congregations had only 35 members each as recently as 2001. Arusha has well over 200 members today, meaning that nearly 80% of them are babes. They seem very hungry to learn God's truth (cf., I Peter 2:2). If you were a Tanzanian Christian, your faith would be very new, and you would have so much to learn. You would need to become grounded and settled in the faith (cf., Colossians 1:23).

If you were a Tanzanian Christian, you would have a unique cultural and societal view of things. You would identify yourself by what tribe you came from—Luo, Chaga, Masai and any other number of tribes of East Africa. You would have great pride in your family heritage. Your world might include polygamy and arranged marriages. You would be horrified by immodest dress and homosexuality. If you were young, you would more likely have been exposed to TV and Hollywood. In the church building, with growing exceptions, you would not sit with your wife. You might not even stand with her or the children while at services. But, like our society, you would be conditioned by your culture. To become a Christian, you could keep some cultural practices, but would be required to give up sinful ones.

If you were a Tanzanian Christian, you would likely come from a religious background. Back to Paul's preaching in Athens, you would be described, like them, as "very religious" (Acts 17:32). In fact, you would probably have believed Jesus to be the Son of God before you were converted. Yet, any affiliation would most likely have been Lutheran, Anglican, Sabbatarian or Pentecostal. You would have likely always believed the Bible to be God's Word, but you might have studied it for yourself. Most of the Tanzanians have converted from denominationalism, though some come from Muslim and tribal religious backgrounds.

If you were a Tanzanian Christian, you would likely have precious little of a material nature. A typical American bathroom would go far in filling an entire house for many Tanzanians. The house might be made of dung and straw or simple cinderblock. Your house might be crowded among several others in close quarters. You likely would not have a car and would walk to services. You might very well be unemployed or underemployed. Yet, this might help you better appreciate heaven and hell. You would not feel self-sufficient and might rely more on God. You might very deeply appreciate what little you had. In fact, you might be prone to generously invite American Christians into your home that would cost you a week's salary, and then buy gifts for those you host in your home. You would have grave difficulty fathoming the American economy, American pastimes and American culture, but there is a good chance you would be content with such as you have (cf., Hebrews 13:5).

If you were a Tanzanian Christian, you would likely be responsible for the conversion of another. So many of those whose conversion stories I have heard were brought to Christ by a friend, "just" and "average" Tanzanian Christian. Many of them seem to take to heart II Timothy 2:2. As a Tanzanian Christian, your own faith would be new, but you would be telling others about it.

I am not suggesting that Tanzania is a perfect place or that Tanzanian Christians are perfect people. We heard many of their struggles. I've heard confessions of struggles with smoking and drunkenness and seen struggles with honesty and ethical behavior. But, I will say that they have made a good beginning in their faith. Like the poor but generous Macedonians, many of these have given themselves to the Lord (II Corinthians 8:5). They have begun well, but they must finish well (cf., II Corinthians 8:6). God has people all over this world. Please remember to pray for our Tanzanian brothers and sisters, as well as all others scattered throughout this world in need of Christ. ("Daily Bread" is sent out by Neal Pollard from the Bear Valley c/C, Denver, CO.)

How to Save America (continued)

3. Bible preaching
4. Evangelistic zeal
5. Personal purity

In the final analysis, the real salvation of any nation is the personal integrity of the individual citizens. There is no substitute for purity and virtue and Christ-likeness. It is in this area that this nation is suffocating. Our morals are at an all-time low ebb. How can God allow our age of nudity, filth, licentiousness and adultery to long endure? When shall we awaken to the satanic influences we have created, allowed and catered to? There must be a major backlash on behalf of decency and common sense, or we shall, as a nation, crumble in the dust. Truly, a "monstrous contest of wickedness is going on" and, unless a deep spiritual surge comes soon, the carnality of America will bring sudden and sure decay. What a tragedy should our epitaph read:

Here lies America, a nation that died
For the lack of righteousness of its citizenry.

Where were the Christians?

"Gospel Minutes", Ft. Worth, TX

An Invisible Force

Let your first act on waking to place yourself, your heart, mind, faculties, your whole being, in God's hands. Ask Him to take entire possession of you, to be the guide of your soul, your life, your wisdom, your strength. It is His will that we turn to Him in all our needs, that we may draw closer and closer to Him. And in such prayer we gain an invisible force which will triumph over seemingly

SICK

Everett Witty, Hazel McFall's brother, is recovering from a stroke in Muncie, IN. **Sandy Bowles**, Susan Mountcastle's sister, is recovering from surgery. **Helen Coggsdale**, Bobby Paxton's sister, LGH. **Curtis Doss**, RMH; multiple by-pass surgery;. **Chastity Stricklin**, JoAnn Edwards' sister-in-law, is in early stages of pregnancy and experiencing difficulties. **Charlotte Chandler**, friend of Jo Hartman, is recovering from open heart surgery. **Tonya Chandler**, friend of Paul Mays, will have surgery to remove a cyst. **Jim Weaver**, AD, VT, surgery. **Jimmy Helms**, from Dale Ridge, has been diagnosed w/prostate cancer in its early stages.

Continue to remember: **Herbert Baker, Sharon Basham, Norma Biller, Betty Buckner, Willard Campbell, Marguerite Charles, Harry DeHart, Jim Dorsett, Paul Faw, Winnie Felps, Bonnie Gabbard, Tony Glass, Collin & Luetta Gregory, Patti Gwaltney, Glenn & Jo Hartman, Dan Hudgins, A.C & Mickie Janney, Betty Jenkins, Sam Jones, Martha Keith, Margaret Kratz, Laven, Sophia Mays, Donnie & Susan Mountcastle, Jo Musgrove, Grace Myers, Larry Phillips, Don Prunty, Georgia Pyott, Murphy & Evelyn Scott, Annette Shrader, Ruth Stanton, Evelyn White, Teresa White, Travis Wilson E.V. & Effie Wimmer, W.J. Wood, Greg Yotka**

SYMPATHY: We extend our sympathy to **Iris Ramsey** (627 Rodeo DR, Mt. Vernon, TX 75457) in the loss of our beloved brother Johnny.

MISSIONARIES: the **Staffords** and the **TZ2000** team.

MILITARY: **Ty Stricklin, John Shannon** and **Gabriel Hayes** who are in Iraq. **Jonathan Chumley**, Kosovo; **Jonathan Simpson**, Iraq.

OTHER: **Bonnie Mellon** is in Arkansas w/her mom, Dorothy Mason, for the next several weeks while her mom undergoes evaluation regarding her living status. On-going Bible studies; "Restore 2006.

SW VA INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

It's time for West Siders and their friends to hit the greens again. The annual event is scheduled for Saturday, 10/21, 11am at Blue Hills Golf Club. A sign-up sheet is posted; limited to the first 28 golfers. See **Crawford Keith** if you have any questions.

WINTER CLASS ON ISLAM

A sign-up sheet is posted on the board for anyone wanting to participate in **Tom Rogers'** class on Islam. Details are on the sheet. **Please sign up TODAY**, so materials can be ordered.

TEACHERS' MEETING

Sunday, 10/22, 4:30pm in the fellowship room. This meeting is for ALL teachers, Junior High-Adult, and those who would be interested in teaching those classes. Questions? See **Eric Earnhart**.

WE'LL BE SAYING GOODBYE...

To **Ortie & Patsy Boyd** and **Freda Overton** who will be leaving us the end of the month when they move to North Carolina. On Sunday, October 22, after evening services there will be a farewell fellowship to say goodbye. See your team leader for details.

THIS WEEK AT WEST SIDE

Today: Last day to sign up for class on Islam. Our gospel meeting begins today. Evening service, **7pm**. Meetings begin at Ft. Chiswell & Pearisburg, also. Happy anniversary to **Charles & Hazel Maness!**

Monday: Meeting time, 7pm. Happy birthday to **Martha Keith!**

Tuesday: Meeting time, 7pm.

Wednesday: Meeting time, 7pm. Happy anniversary to **Glenn & Sandra Neighbors!**

Saturday: Youth service project, 11am-2pm.

Sunday, 10/22: Adult-class teachers' meeting, 4pm. Farewell to **Boyd & Freda Overton** after pm svc.

AFRICA PHOTOS

If you'd like to view the photos from the guys' Tanzania trip, check out tanzania2006.snapfish.com. DO NOT include www before the address. Free registration is required. See **Greg Edwards** if you have questions.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Directory sheet available for **Sandy Wood**. New e-mail address: **Herbert & Shirley Baker**, hsbaker55@verizon.net. New phone number: **Eric Earnhart**, 521-1997. Please make changes to your directory.

MISSING

One of the round tablecloths is missing from the fellowship room. If you have it, please return it.

HELP!

Junior High volunteers are needed to help organize the Junior Book section of the library. Please submit your name, e-mail address and phone number to **Michelle Earnhart** (ellenmearnhart@yahoo.com) or 312-5139.

TEAM 4 (ROGERS)

Be sure to bring bags of individually wrapped candies to put in Fall treat bags for Potter Children's Home. See **Tom** or **Melissa** if you have questions.

TEAMS 1 (DUFF) & 4 (ROGERS) COSTUME PARTY

Saturday, 10/28 at the Edwards'. A sign-up sheet and details are posted on the board.

CHECK IT OUT

"Facing the Giants", a movie produced by a football player, is playing at Valley View Grande and Tanglewood Carmike 10. **Charlie Gwaltney** highly recommends this picture. See the poster on the board.

OCTOBER ITEMS FOR STAFFORDS

Torengos (tortilla chips in a can), zip lock bags (any size)

There's plenty of room at the top.
There's just no room to sit down.

