

IN TOUCH MISSION

i n t e r n a t i o n a l

Monthly

1 April 2016

Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Malachi 3:10

The One Idea You Must Embrace to Be a Kingdom Builder

ITMI Monthly chats with ITMI partner, [Charl van Wyk](#), for a behind-the-scenes look at what happened a couple years back that turned his ministry around.



ITMI Monthly: Going back a few years ago, what challenges were you and your ministry facing?

Charl: The usual struggle that most missionaries have to deal with i.e. lack of funding to put food on the table for my family; and seeing many in desperate need of, not just spiritual help, but also in desperate need of physical help - and being unable to attend to them.

ITMI Monthly: How does that compare to the way things are now?

Our team in [Stone Hill](#), for example, is so excited about our container buildings. We are praying to have a roof over the containers soon.

We are running math and science classes – the state schools are disastrous; Bible studies are taking place; shack (small sheet metal houses) building for destitute families

is taking place; one of our students has started college; another, at 25, has been helped to complete his schooling – he is very excited; [Christmas gifts for the poor, from ITMI partners](#), almost caused our chairman to be arrested – the police questioned him when helping kids carry mattresses to their shacks – this was very funny; open air Sunday evening services are taking place; youth are coming to faith in Christ and are being discipled. Praise the Lord for His Grace!

In other countries: [a chicken and rabbit farming project, with the help of ITMI, was started to support a pastor](#) earning a minuscule salary from the 8 bush churches he is overseeing; church buildings are, and have, been built in Zambia; orphans are fed; [Bibles and bikes](#), including a few motorcycles, have been distributed to ministry leaders; mission outreaches to God-hating foreign countries have been financially supported – we can't say much about this; we've helped a pastor get to an overseas missions conference; a laptop was purchased for a struggling missionary.

ITMI Monthly: What happened that led to this change?

Charl: [Steve Evers](#) and I were chatting at the Phoenix Airport in AZ before I took a flight to another appointment on my ministry speaking tour. Steve explained that I should seriously consider physical projects to support

the poor and marginalized in Africa. I needed to 'put feet to my faith'.

My mind was racing with all the reasons why I should not! Issues like import and export challenges; foreign exchange challenges and banks ripping us off; the fact that in Africa you cannot trust anyone (sometimes, even in the Church); the accounting (this I really despise); the cost in time and money of having to personally check up on projects and report back to partners; the list can go on...

ITMI Monthly: What did you do to take that advice?

Charl: I followed the example right in front of me. Steve lives his life, and his ITMI leadership role, in this very manner. He looks for ministers of the Gospel that he (ITMI) can help be more effective for God's Kingdom here on earth. So, it wasn't too difficult to put into practice what Steve was suggesting, because the role model already existed and is Biblically sound.

I'll never forget a mother bringing her baby in her arms to the church I was preaching at in Lubumbashi, Congo. The baby looked drained and lifeless - dehydrated. A pastor friend prayed over the baby and the mother left the church in tears. It was pretty obvious that the baby would die soon if not put on an IV.

An IV would have saved that baby's life! The fact is that there weren't any anywhere.

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From the Director

Dear Team,

I've caught myself saying, "...it was my greatest trip ever." This statement didn't come out of my mouth just once, but numerous times. In fact, almost every time someone asks me about it. I have been on a lot of trips in my early life, and even more in the last almost 15 years I have been the Director of In Touch Mission International. Over the years, I have been asked quite a few times this question, "What is your favorite place to go or have been?" My answer usually was... "the last place I visited."

But now I have a new answer.

Each country, continent and national partner has "uniqueness" that sets them apart from other places and people, and makes them special. ITMI Founder, **Bill Bathman** always advised mission teams he led to focus on the country you are in, not where or whom you are visiting next. Even when crossing the border and into a whole new country and culture was just a day away.

In March, Darlene and I boarded a plane with our pastor and his wife, **Roger and Dianna Ball**, along with a group from **First Baptist Church of Tempe**. We were headed for ...the Holy Land.

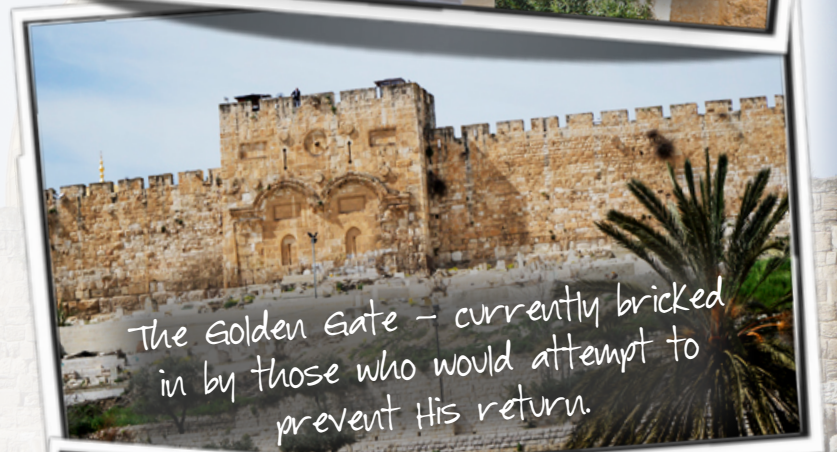
This visit to Israel was made possible, in part, by a donor in our church that "wanted to help someone go that wouldn't normally be able to go." Darlene and I now understand on a new, deeper level what it feels like to our national partners when our ITMI supporting family helps them do what they wouldn't normally be able to do (without the sacrificial support faithfully given each month). I want that donor to know that Steve and Darlene are changed.

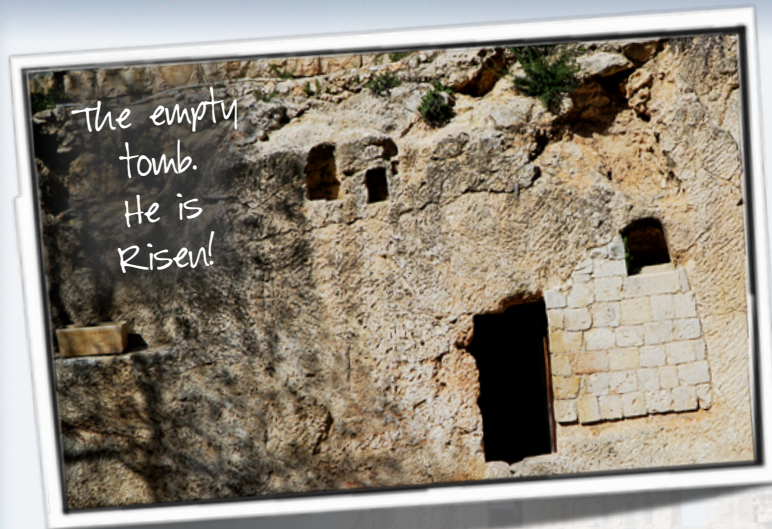
We are different than before we walked where Jesus walked.

What you feel as you sit in the early morning quiet as the sun rises over the mountains, reflecting its golden glow over the calm and placid Sea of Galilee, knowing Jesus saw the same sight is indescribable. You can try to find the words for what it was like to be in a boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, sharing God's Word with your travel companions who have now become family, but words won't do the moment justice.

One vivid memory that engaged all our senses was a Sunday morning church service. We sat in the cool of the morning, listening to the Word of God among the many olive trees on the Mount of Olives. We looked across the narrow Kidron Valley at the Golden Gate that is embedded in the old Eastern Wall of ancient Jerusalem. Knowing that this is the gate that Jesus will be entering in the last days per Ezekiel 44:1-3 and no person or circumstance - including the gate's current blocked-off state - will keep that from happening is a memory that won't soon be forgotten.

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Seeing how far from each other the well-known Bible cities and locations are will forever help my Bible reading and spatial understanding of the stories in the Bible.

Yet one of the many, many lessons that will always stand out in very clear reality is just **what Jesus gave up to live on this planet** so He could willingly give His perfect life to be the payment for my sins, and all the sins of this world.

I have known Jesus' sacrifice and gift to me for now over almost 40 years. But not until you visit Nazareth and see the distance it is to Bethlehem, do you see things a bit more clearly.

Not until you visit the Sea of Galilee and the Mount of the Beatitudes, Capernaum and then travel south to Jerusalem, do you realize the distances Jesus traveled on foot out in a Middle Eastern summer with none of the conveniences that I so regularly take for granted.

Eternity past, Jesus was always in a place of utter perfection. He interrupted this perfection of being with the Father for 33 years of sleeping - not in a bed with a pillow top cushion, in the perfect temperature - but on the ground with a rock for a pillow. He ate, not like you and I eat with such a vast variety and almost always with guaranteed frequency, but as a first century homeless person who was not always acknowledged and attended to.

He gave up so very much when He left heaven to come here, and most who met Him, were not satisfied with that, they always wanted more. He was humiliated for me. He was beaten mercilessly for me. He was brutalized, chastised, shamed, disgraced by His own people and he submitted willingly to the death on the cross. (Philippians 2:6-8)

Jesus, living in a human body, experiencing all the challenges that you and I do as humans, yet not having any of the conveniences that we have. No medicine, no modern day doctors, no comfortable means of transportation, no running water, no closet full of clothes, no smart phone, not even proper shoes to handle the lack of pavement and the intense hills that make up this country.

Yet Jesus did all that and more. He allowed Himself, *for our benefit*, to become...sin...for me. Imagine, the Creator of the Universe (John 1:3) setting aside all that was due Him, all that He deserved, all that worshiped Him, and descending to a first century Middle Eastern culture and place just to be misunderstood, abused, beaten, mistreated, falsely accused, lied about and be killed in a tortuous way. And for me! So that I (and you!) could be fully cleansed from my sin and eternal penalty, reconciled, given a new name, given a new eternal address and able to someday be in the presence of my Heavenly Father.

Yes, I knew all that before I went to Israel, but now I know it on a much deeper and experienced level.

My travels always end with me bringing back pictures and stories of what we are all doing in the lives of those dear partners who live in places that don't have the conveniences that we experience each and every day.

These partners may have always known a bit more what Jesus experienced in the convenience-less first century, but now I can assure you, as I have seen it both with my eyes and with my heart, that our Lord willingly gave up so very much, on many levels, for our benefit.

Maybe that is why each of us are so committed to helping those who live in darkness and eternal penalty, to come to the light of Jesus Christ. To know Him. To accept Him. To be reunited with the One that created us.

In His Service,

John E. S.

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Since then, the church opened a medical clinic; we helped with a donated x-ray machine. Later the clinic closed, waiting for the church college to build new premises in which the clinic could be housed, and students could practice their medical studies.

A businessman friend, who visited the Congo with me, donated \$15,000 USD to the clinic building project.

I don't think we must be shy to introduce our supporters to the ministry of others. Helping each other grow the Lord's Kingdom on earth is one of our primary responsibilities and taking the Gospel to the sick is a phenomenal opportunity.

ITMI Monthly: What has God done with your ministry as a result?

Charl: The results have been spectacular, not because we've done everything right; it's more like, in spite of us, God has done amazing work. One of His amazing blessings has been the help of the staff at ITMI, whose professional, helpful ministry on our behalf, with and to our partners in the US, has been the greatest help in the field. I cannot overemphasize how much their help means to our partners and us.

ITMI Monthly: Were there any unexpected results?

Charl: The Lord has blessed our ministry with wonderful, caring Christian friends who are very serious about His work. Everything revolves around teamwork. There is no way that one person alone can run multiple projects across foreign borders. A doctor and dentist freely help with health issues; and an accountant helps us for free with our (seriously complicated) financial reports.

ITMI Monthly: What advice could you give ITMI readers looking to put this principle into practice in their own lives?

Charl: I think the most important idea is what Steve says: "God's bank account is not the type that can ever, ever be drained."

On a personal note, we always try and double tithe our personal financial support – off the gross amount. This is difficult, but is doable with God's Grace.

The Lord uses funding, or lack thereof, as a means to sanctify us; we have to be prepared to learn from experiencing both abundance and scarcity. I don't want this to sound easy or pretend that there are 5 easy steps to follow and then you'll have loads of resources. We struggled for years before we were blessed in this way. And who knows, maybe, we will return to struggling in the future again.

It is easier to raise funds to bless others, but far more difficult to raise funds for your own survival in the field.

We need to pray for and market our ministries. This can be done by treating each supporter as a partner; thanking them for their prayers and financial sacrifice in the Lord's work; keeping them up to date with personal letters of thanks and general ministry news updates. Praying for them and their families when they let us know of challenges they are struggling through. Our ministry to our partners shouldn't be any different to us ministering in the "field."

The way God works is so incredible. I stand in awe of His ways and watch how He brings people across our paths, even some whom we've never met before, or may have been on our mailing list for years and never gotten involved. Then He works in their hearts and friends become partners in working towards seeing "His Kingdom come and His Will being done" in Africa.

They get fired up; some come and work with us; others do more than us; many pray and send funds; still others just love on us. This is God's work.

-Summer Kelley, Steve Evers

For Praise

1. Zambia – Excellence Christian Academy - Providing Christian Education to children who can't afford it for 19 years.
2. South Sudan – Vicky Waraka – Church growth and effective visitation ministry leading to new believers.
3. Poland – Banicki Family – Eliza, who suffers from Niemann-Pick Disease, is doing well recently.
4. South Africa – Charl VanWyk – Happily putting hands and feet to the Gospel all over Africa!

For Prayer

1. Poland – Gospel Joy – Wisdom for leaders in Namyslaw, trained and ready to disciple 15 interested after GJ Workshop.
2. Poland - Tomek Jezyk - Salvation and growth for the 19 kids participating in Kalisz International Church.
3. South Africa – Stone Hill – Provision of a home for Mabuti and his brother.
4. Poland - Daniel Machlowski - For relationships built at a Chess tournament outreach to be deepened and lead to opportunities for declaring and demonstrating the gospel.



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