

June 2020

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Doing The Best Things In The Worst Of Times

by Al Serhal – Executive Director, USA

“But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.”
(1 Corinthians 16:8-9)

Let that verse sink in! The Apostle Paul announces his plans to stay over in Ephesus because there is a great opportunity to reach people for Christ there, IN SPITE of the fact that there are also “many who oppose me.”

Paul was a Missionary - the greatest Missionary! And I would suggest the thing that made him so great was his perseverance! Through the delays, discouragements, disappointments, difficulties and dead ends.....He just kept going! He knew that he had been called by Jesus Himself to go to these difficult places to preach the gospel and establish the Church. This sense of Divine Purpose kept him going in spite of knowing that so many challenges and hardships awaited him. And believe me, there would be many!

Later, in 2 Corinthians, Paul reluctantly lays them out for us:

“I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. 24 Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, 26 I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. 27 I have labored and

toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. 28 Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.” (2 Corinthians 11:23-28)

The very worst of threats would not stop Paul from his mission work!

This is a sobering reminder for me! To be honest, I have never experienced anything even remotely similar to what Paul faced in my 35 years of Preaching and mission work! I would agree with Biblical scholar and writer, N.T. Wright who famously said,

“Wherever St. Paul went, there was a riot. Wherever I go, they serve tea.”

Yep. That’s me! I’ve had it pretty easy!

There is an inscription over the door of an old church in Leicestershire, England. It says this:

“In the year 1653, Sir Robert Shirley founded this Church. His singular praise is to have done the best things in the worst times.”

17th century England was the worst of times! Yet this man, Sir Robert Shirley, forged ahead and founded a church!

And that is what I hope to do!

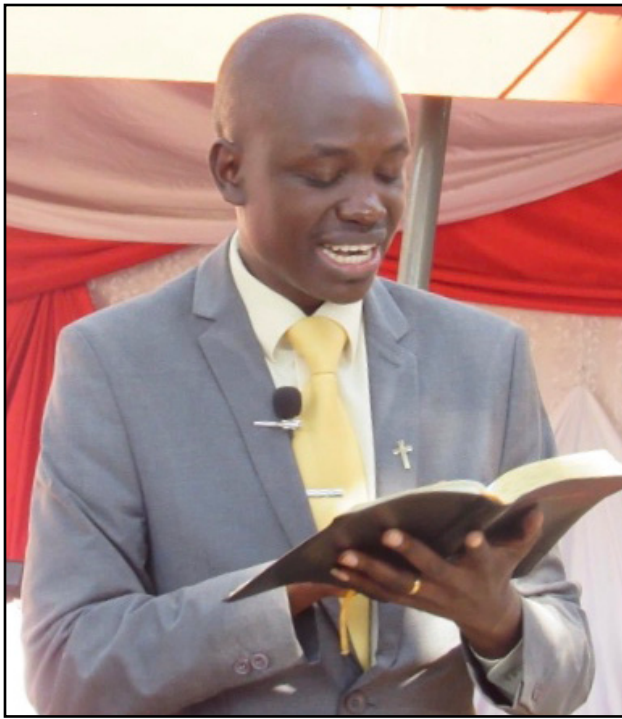
It is good to be reminded of these things from time to time. As we at HVCN, along with our supporters here in the U.S. face OUR economic challenges in the days ahead, it is my prayer that we will faithfully persevere through whatever difficulties and hardships we face. It is my prayer that we will do the Best of things in the Worst of times!



And we pray the same for you!

Thank You!

Thank you to those that gave extra to help make up for those needing to pull back. For anyone still wishing to give an extra gift to help the mission during these challenging times, please go to our website, email, or call us.



Proudly Zimbabwean

Emmanuel Tembo, Living Proof Chaplain at Dewure High School

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. When I sit and bask in the early morning sun, and listen to the birds chirp and chase the fat worm, I breathe in the beauty and let my senses suck it in.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. When I watch the sun set in the golden horizon of a savanna dust, and hear the sound of cow bells tink as they return from pasture, I feel my heart settling into the rest that comes with the end of the day.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. As I watch the children, all covered in the white of African dust, dance in the silver of a moonlit night. I silently sing along to their age old songs of abandon joy and celebration.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. As I look at the mother of the motherland gracefully balance a pail of water on her head and sing a lullaby to her son strapped on her back. I see strength and love merge.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. As my eyes skim the heights of a majestic mountain shrouded in hazy mist, I ponder the mysteries that gave it birth and the ones that so inhabit it now.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. As I follow a father and his son traverse the breath of their field with an ox drawn plow. I savor the beauty of their coordinated, incessant and spirited whistles as they urge on their oxen.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. As I notice the gusto filled handshakes and hefty smiles of friendly souls in the marketplace, I am more convinced that humans can really be good to each other, even if it be for no particular reason.

I affirm that Zimbabwe is beautiful. I am a Zimbabwean, a very proud one for that matter.

Uniforms & Letters Delayed

Many Living Proof students received their new school uniforms, shoes and socks during the first few months of the year. However, distribution was halted with the early closure of schools and many are sitting in our office still waiting to be distributed. Term 1 letters from children to sponsors are normally sent to our stateside office right before break in March, but with schools unexpectedly shut down early many schools were unable to send in their letters.

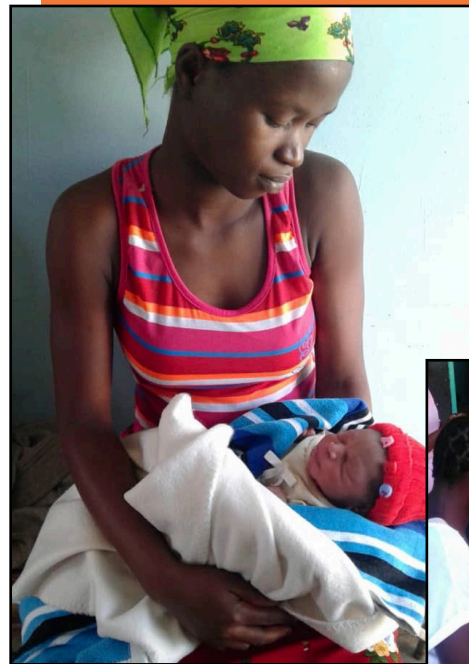
As soon as the lockdown is lifted and school resumes we will work to finish uniform distribution and finish sending out Term 1 letters to sponsors. The school system is utilized to send letters to children, so we are only able to send those out when schools resume. Thank you for your patience as we work through these unprecedented times.

COVID-19 in Zimbabwe

Schools were released about a week early in March to their normally scheduled break between Term 1 & 2. Term 2 was scheduled to begin in early May, but has been delayed with the country still on lockdown. So far, Zimbabwe has seen relatively low confirmed case numbers and deaths, but many speculate the worst is yet to come for much of Africa. Please pray for the people of Zimbabwe as the lockdown may be more damaging than the virus.

Donated Yarn Truly a Gift in Zimbabwe

HVCM partners with HASTEN Christian Mission to support the work of our Damarakanaka Clinic. In March, yarn donated to the Mission Thrift Store was used to start a ladies group ministry of crocheting baby blankets, hats and booties for the newborn babies at the clinic. Check out some of their first creations!



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