



Door-to-Door Evangelism

Bakali, one of our young Bible School teachers, takes a leading role in carrying the Gospel from the classroom to the roads and villages. Evangelism is a serious part of ministry at the Mission. Teachers, students, and the local preachers who live in this area, walk from door to door among several villages that are about an hour east of the Mission.

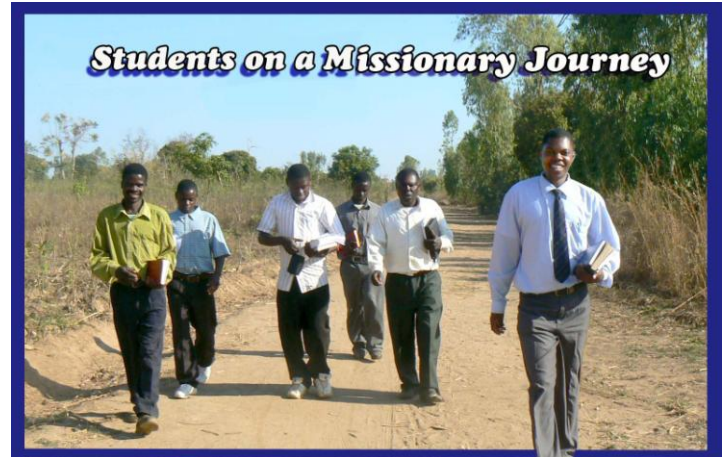
OFF-SEASON

It is now the off-season for most garden farmers in this sub-Saharan nation. This is the best time for evangelism because families have fewer demands on their time. The timing itself is taken into consideration – in the afternoon hours, most people are at home resting. At the first home they visited, they were welcomed by an old father with nine other family members.

Another of our young teachers – Chitani, reads and teaches from John 3:14-17. He carefully highlights the great love that God gave to the world by giving His son to die for us. Thomson Matebule (our Mission driver, who is also an Elder in the Thondwe church) comments by reading from Romans 10:8 and reminds the gathering that salvation is free. He asks us, “If we had to pay for it, who could afford to be saved?” He concludes by pleading with the listeners to choose to follow Jesus and have a real, complete life. A total of 27 people were taught about Christ in this village. Questions were invited at the end of each lesson, on any subject they wished.

TRACTS ARE DISTRIBUTED

This also provides an opportunity to reach many people with Gospel tracts. These tracts were written years ago by the late Brother John Thiesen. They remain useful tools to reach people who can read. There is also a high probability that the



Students on a Missionary Journey

tracts will be shared with many other friends and family members. The young people here have just learned to read and they are very eager to read any possible piece of paper available. Then they will be sharing it with others long after we are gone.

BIBLE STUDENTS

This time provides a good practical experience for Namikango Bible School Students to practice reaching out to people. “Blessings” Musisi teaches from 1 Peter 1:18-19. “We are saved by the precious blood of Christ” he said, as he taught at the next house where five family members were in attendance. Students like Musisi join their teachers at the end of each day to discuss what they learn from the day’s activities.

As they call it a day, the schedule is made for visits the following day. Many places want us to return to their village again. There is a feeling of satisfaction when you see people wanting to know more about Christ. “None of us would wish to miss this special moment.”

– Bisani



Sharing the “Good News”

Remembering ■ ■ ■ by Mark Thiesen

I was a Missionary kid, raised in northern Malawi, with a great love for Malawi; for the people, their gentle ways and their hunger for God.

I left Malawi when I was 19 to go to Harding University and from there I went to serve as a missionary in Ukraine. There I met and married Era, the lady who would serve the Lord by my side in the years to come. After serving in Ukraine for four years, we returned to the States. As much as I loved Ukraine, I could never get Malawi out of my system and I jumped at the opportunity to meet the overseeing elders of Namikango Mission when the news came to me that they were looking for a replacement family for the Wilkses, who had served in Malawi for 36 years and were planning to retire. We traveled to Houston to meet Sidney Vaughn, B. Shelburne, and other leaders involved in overseeing the work at Namikango. From the first meeting it was clear that we all shared the same dream for Malawi, *spreading the grace of Jesus by training Christ-centered leaders*. I was totally accepted and embraced by the church and by the Elders. This outstanding partnership was soon joined by the Anna St. Church of Christ in Amarillo, which agreed to sponsor our family, loving us and treating us like royalty over the next 8 years. We will never forget the blessings we received from that congregation.

So the opportunity was there for me to return to Malawi, this time not as a missionary's kid, but as a Missionary at Namikango. The timing was perfect, more than perfect, it was providential. In Malawi, I could share the wonders of Mission work in the land I loved with Era and our 3-year-old son Erik.

After our arrival in Malawi, the language of my childhood, Chitumbuka, quickly returned to me and it was easy to add Chichewa, the language that I would be using at Namikango. There are many different but similar languages throughout Malawi. But, since Malawi was originally a British colony, English is still the national language, and both English and Chichewa are taught in the schools. Nearly all the stores and businesses have someone who is fluent in English. Visitors from the states can manage very well.

I was at home with these gentle people once again and I was eager to share God's saving message with as many as possible. I was overjoyed at seeing the extent of the teaching program already in place at Namikango, begun by B. Shelburne and continued by others. What a treat to administer this ongoing ministry!

The Mission was so effectively reaching out into the village areas with studies that it encouraged me to want to expand this even more. And this we did, increasing the number of Village Study Centers by about 300%. We began to include northern and central areas of the



country in our ministry as well as Mozambique, where Namikango has long been actively involved.

We did have some rocky-road experiences at times; for example, one worker at the Mission did not like the accountability system we set in place – that of requiring receipts for all Mission expenses. It was obvious this one man was pocketing Mission money and it had to stop. He resisted by trying to get the local church and some of the Mission workers to rise up against me and request that I be sent home. He asked the Elders for a new Missionary. This was a tough time, but the NBC Elders along with Gene Shelburne stood firmly behind me with sound advice and much prayer. I did not have to face these problems alone. Thankfully, this insurrection only lasted a few months and the work was able to continue on its outreach journey. More recently, a libelous letter was circulated, claiming Namikango Mission was involved in a plot to take over churches and create a new fictional denomination. But this ludicrous letter was soon discredited because Malawians know about our work. They knew that none of these things were true.

All these obstacles serve as a good reminder that we must be doing something good, because the evil one is hard at work trying to hinder, distract or destroy all who stand with the Lord.

The size of our family has grown during our time in Malawi. Our "Baby Dana" was born in Malawi in 2005 and she has been a joy.

I see the *future of Namikango as a bright one*. Ben and Becca Hayes are an outstanding young couple very dedicated to serving God faithfully and their gentle nature will fit right in with the Malawi tapestry. They will do well in the leadership of this work. I believe God has groomed them well and chosen them for this very time and this very work.

Next month in "A Time of Remembering," I will share with you three things about my work that encourages me most.

The kids miss their dogs. The dachshund in the photo is Sosiska, our dearest pet in Malawi. Her name means "hotdog" in Russian and I think you will agree that she is appropriately named. Before we left we found her a good home with friends in Zomba.



The friend she left behind



Dana has a new Friend

The other dog is our new pet "Mavuto," which means "troubles" in Chichewa, a common name for dogs and even a nickname for people in Malawi. She really isn't much trouble, but sometimes she does like to chew on our shoes if she finds them.

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MONTHLY REPORT • Namikango Mission

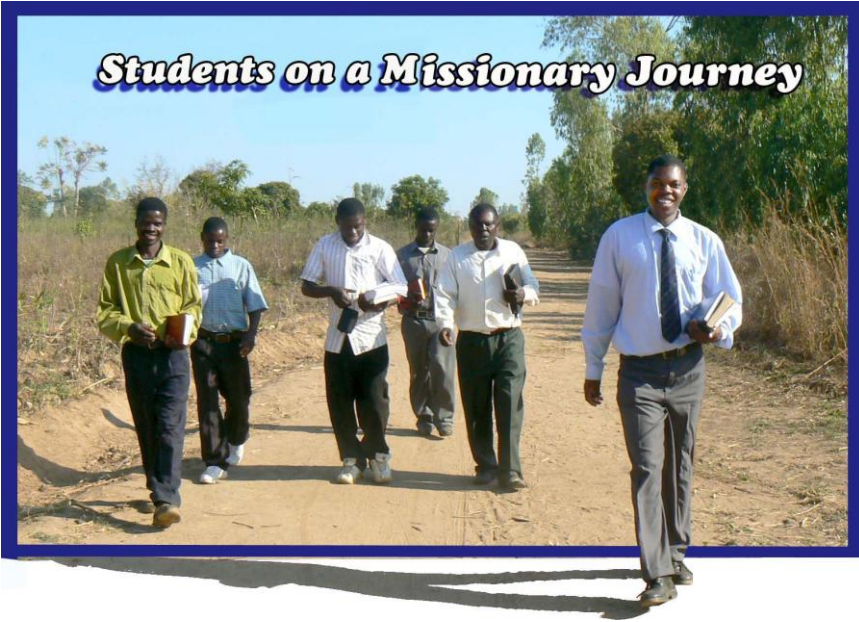
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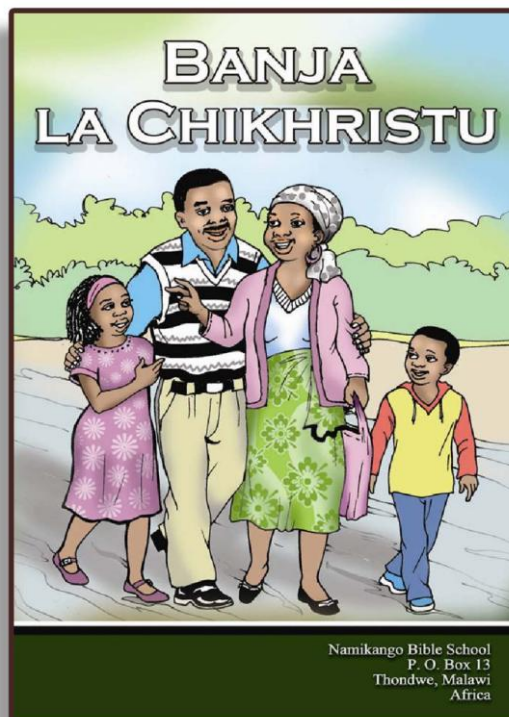


The Supply Has Run Out !

We are in the process of revising and printing one of the most important books we have ever used in our Bible Studies, "The Christian Family." The world continues to mount vicious attacks on the family and that is why this study is so crucially important. The sad thing for us is, since this has been such a popular study, we have run out of these books and have not been able to cover this subject for over a year.

However, we have been hard at work revising and preparing it to take to the printer. Rodrick, our Chief Editor, is a trained marriage counsellor, and has been diligently revising the book to produce the very best material possible. We have a nice cover picture in place and it will be ready to print soon. The cover was drawn by a local newspaper artist at a very low cost.

We hope "The Christian Family" booklet will be ready to use when



studies resume in April. What a blessing that will be.

The cost of printing 3,000 of these books is \$2,000. We will need another special contribution to cover this expense.

Our next revision will be "The Old Testament Survey." This is another important study and we will begin to prepare it for printing right away.

This study wasn't presented last year since the supply of books had run out on it also.

The growth in students who attend the studies has been great; we are thrilled at the response, but it presents the challenge of keeping the supplies up to meet the demands. We are diligently working toward this end . . . with glad hearts. Thanks, Bisani

(Note: If you are able to contribute toward the printing of these books, it will be greatly appreciated. Indicate "printing" on your check. sv)