

# TANZANIA TRIP REPORT

October 28 - November 6, 2011

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## Grinding Out the Great Commission

David, Peter, Moses...aren't these great names for pastors? We taught these men and twenty-six others a course called "Disciplemaking for the Church around the World" in Kisumu, Kenya, along with trainers from U.S. sponsored churches. This segment was Bible Study Methods. The pastors had to attend the fifty-hour workshop *and* achieve a minimum exam grade of 90% to qualify to teach this same material to pastors where they live in Tanzania.

These Tanzanians joined other pastors from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The sponsoring churches paid the pastor's workshop expenses, but the pastor was required to purchase the 300 page workbook with their own money.

These pastors plan to begin three Tanzanian centers in July to train 84 pastors. If successful, another 20 training centers with 20 pastors each will become the third generation. These numbers are lower than the Cameroon program Valley sponsored in 2007-2010. The Tanzania church is not as strong as the church in Cameroon. Also, there is significant Islamic resistance to the Gospel in Tanzania whereas in Cameroon, Muslims and Christians peacefully coexist.

Africans are not noted for wearing watches, but each student attending our course had to be on time. Besides daytime classes from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., each student was interviewed in the evening. Part of the interview was spent recording church growth statistics since the last course meeting. Tanzanian students also took evenings to evaluate a Swahili translation of the course that our church is funding. Swahili is the first language of Tanzania, though pastors take the T-Net course in English. After a late dinner and debrief, the training team spent time preparing for the next day. The Great Commission is exciting, but getting it done can be a grind.

Our relationship with the Tanzanian pastors was encouraging. We bonded well with them. At the end of the workshop, we gave each pastor a gift of a book on Bible study. Each one made an individual statement of gratitude to Paul and me. The T-Net country leader, Pastor David, closed the ceremony by promising that each pastor would pursue the Great Commission in their country with the utmost effort and dedication. It was very encouraging to Paul and me.

Poverty is an issue with the Tanzanian pastors. Our Bible Study Methods curriculum almost assumed that each pastor owned word for word translation of the Bible. Pastor Ernest owned a Bible in a version which was more like a paraphrase. The purchase of a study Bible would require a month of Ernest's salary. Pastor Moses is planting a church in a town one day's journey from where his wife works to support the family. They can only see each other once a month. Pastor David is a missionary to Tanzania from Zambia. His visa fee has tripled and he wonders where the money will come from so he can stay in country.

Thank you for your prayers! The value of the teaching will be seen later as these pastors lead pastor workshops in their region. Valley teams will return every four months to present a new course section. Contact me if you are interested in teaching this choice group of servants, poised to complete the Great Commission in Tanzania.

