



Our Work for the Lord in Southern Africa -- May 2017

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Dear brethren,

Classes:

The Bible classes on marriage at Phoenix every Thursday (I teach men and Linda teach women) have benefited our own marriage (teachers always learn the most), and we hope it has helped others too. The studies that I have with Simphiwe are going well. He is growing and asking a lot of questions and always expresses immense appreciation for the class and amazement at how packed with wisdom the Bible is. We are studying James. Our up-coming trip to Zimbabwe coincides with his student teaching, and he will be sent away to a rural school. A young Christian who recently moved to Durban has asked me to study with him and a friend on Saturdays, but that will have to wait until our return from Zimbabwe. This brother moved to Durban from a rural area because he was able, through the recommendation of a friend, get a job, literally digging ditches – and he is so happy to be employed. On some Wednesdays I have been accompanying Paddy to his class with Daddy. The purpose of the class is to encourage Daddy, a brother at Silverglen who lost his wife a year ago, and the class has really helped him a lot. I have also enjoyed better getting to know Daddy and Roy, another brother at Silverglen who sometimes attends. Linda and Sandi co-teach a class with Bommie each Friday, to encourage her after the recent death of her husband Thumba, and also a class with two sisters at the Shallcross congregation who are seeking guidance in raising children. Linda teaches a ladies' class on Psalms each Wednesday morning.

Bible Correspondence Course:

We are always handing out tracts and correspondence courses, but it is seldom that anyone gets back to us. Mnisi was different. He has completed the Know Your Bible course and a difficult follow-up course on Ephesians, answering almost every question correctly. However, he lives in a very remote area. A few weeks ago Paul Williams and his foster-son Zipho were travelling relatively near where Mnisi stays, and offered to go 50 kms out of their way over a gravel road to see him. We were thrilled about this, but Mnisi did not agree to the visit. He says he works very long hours and would not be able to study with them. We can only pray that he will keep studying and one day understand the truth better.

New Congregation:

Hendrik Morris has faithfully served the Lord for many years, being a pillar and the main preacher in a congregation at Nigel, near Johannesburg. Hendrik is an amazing personal worker, and the congregation has really grown. Now Hendrik is in his 80s, and after the death of his wife a couple of years ago, he converted a lady and has married again. Irene was originally from Warrenton, a small town in the Orange Free State, hundreds of kilometres from the nearest faithful congregation. So Hendrik and Irene determined to pull up roots and move to Warrenton to begin a congregation. Hendrik has baptized one man and is having studies with several. He reminds us of Caleb in Joshua 14, who was as strong to fight for the Lord at 85 as he was at 40! We hope to visit them on our way home from Zimbabwe – actually it is quite a detour.

Zimbabwe:

First we want to sincerely thank all those who have helped Bigboy with support – he seems to be doing OK at the moment. Classes have been arranged for us at various places in Zimbabwe by Elias Chikozho (Beit Bridge area), Bigboy Dube (Gwanda area), Solomon Chikomba and Darlington Ndlovu (Tsholotsho area), and Enoch Ncube (Gweru area) in the months of June and July. During our time with Bigboy, David Maxson and his daughter Anna will be with us, and we look forward to that. We are actually at this moment busy travelling to Zimbabwe and, Lord willing, will return to Durban at the end of July. We plan to spend 4-5 weeks in Zimbabwe, but also visit other congregations

that we worked with in the past in the Pretoria/Nylstroom area of South Africa. We will update you on all this work once we return to Durban.

Prayers:

Because we are older and our camper is older, we ask that you please keep us in your prayers as we travel – that our journey will be healthy, safe and break-down free so that we can do the work we have planned -- and that our work for the Lord will be a blessing and encouragement to the brethren.

For several months, actually years, we have been praying for Sienna Reddy, the 6-year-old granddaughter of George Reddy, who was an elder together with Thumba at Shallcross. Sienna's parents are both faithful Christians in Johannesburg and have two autistic children, but the younger one, Sienna, is severely autistic, not even able to speak. The family has been saving their money and fund-raising for Sienna here in South Africa for several months because the treatment is not available in South Africa (nor in the USA because the procedure is still in experimental stages). Recently they set up a website whereby people in the USA can donate. Here is the website address that also explains a bit about the procedure: <https://gogetfunding.com/help-sienna-get-a-life-changing-operation/> Please pray for Sienna and her family. Calvin and Rishika really demonstrate amazing love for their daughter who doesn't know how to respond to them or how to express herself – who scarcely sleeps and who has to be watched at all times because she doesn't understand danger.

Finally, brethren, we ask you to pray for South Africa as well as for the USA and Zimbabwe. The murder last week of one of the pillars in the church at Empangeni (about 150 miles north of us), especially as it is the second strong brother in this congregation who has been murdered in the past 18 months, compels me to ask you to pray for this congregation and for the government of South Africa. The country is corruption and crime-ridden, there is a violent demonstration somewhere in the country virtually every day (because the government failed to keep their election promises or because criminals they know are not brought to book), unemployment is (officially) at 27%, and the country is headed into a recession. Last Sunday in his prayer, one of our young African brothers poured out his heart to the Lord, expressing how difficult it is to survive without paying bribes, and asking the Lord to look on the situation and intervene. Many brethren here in South Africa, as well as in Zimbabwe, are struggling to provide for themselves the basic necessities of life.

We are so thankful to have a heavenly Father who listens to the prayers of His children. May He bless us all in all our labours for Him,

Les Maydell