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## TPI Africa Trip Report 11

1 message

J Balmer &lt;jbalmerjr@yahoo.com&gt;

Wed, Sep 1, 2010 at 8:16 PM

To: John Balmer &lt;jbalmerjr@yahoo.com&gt;

*John has been home now for just two weeks, and has been busy! After such a long trip and long flights home, it was a great missions trip to Africa this summer! The email below concludes the fourth week in Kinshasa , DRC. Over 300 pastors attended the institute, and 247 certificates were given to those who came to all the sessions. It can be difficult in the Democratic Republic of Congo , but it is very rewarding.*

*The email also contains details of John's travel from Kinshasa to Harare , Zimbabwe , via Nairobi , Kenya . Once again, there were difficulties and miscommunication, but it all worked out in the end.*

*Thank you so much for praying for the teams while they were gone. We are so pleased with the trips and rejoice that many people came to Christ and leaders were equipped. Please continue to pray for the pastors, as they face many hardships and challenges daily. Jennifer Balmer*

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This begins the fuller missions journal:

The next day, [Friday, July 30<sup>th</sup>](#), I woke up early in my Room # 103 at the Imperium Hotel in the Lemba Estate in Kinshasa , DRC. I spent some typing on my Email Report at the laptop computer at my desk. At around 7 AM, I took a hot shower in the adjoining bathroom, which has an overhead nozzle in a shower stall but no curtain, so the water goes all over the floor. The water is heated from a water heater in the bathroom, and it was a nice hot shower. Then I got dressed and ready for the day and I met Scott Girard for breakfast at the restaurant on the second floor. We had an omelet, two pieces of toast, African Chai (tea), and water. Then we went back to our rooms and finished getting ready for the day. I worked some more on typing my Email Report at the laptop computer at my desk. Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa arrived at the Imperium Hotel to pick us up around 9:00 AM to take us to the venue for the beginning of the TPI Mpsa, Kinshasa Institute, which will be at his church, Bible Faith Church , about thirty minutes away. Kimana Ndeko B. J. drove his vehicle, a Mitsubishi Shogun SUV, over to the hotel, and it was a much newer and better vehicle than the previous vehicle we were using. We took our small bags downstairs and some of the hotel staff helped us pack them in the vehicle that was parked in front of the hotel on the dirt road.

Kimana Ndeko B. J., our driver for the last part of the week, drove us in his Mitsubishi Shogun SUV down the dirt road away from the hotel, through paved streets into the city of Kinshasa , which was packed with people along the route. We stopped three times to pick up interpreters and others who were coming with us to the institute. We picked up Winner Lozolana, who is interpreting for Scott Girard and me this week. We did not pick up Caleb Kanku, our other interpreter, since he was not there at the designated pickup place, so he will have to get to the institute using public transportation. We also picked up Nehemiah Dennis, who is the husband of Manek Eulalie Dennis, who was an interpreter for us at several TPI Kinshasa Institutes, including last year in 2009 in Matete. She is having a baby boy any day now, but still no news of the arrival. All of these people got into the back part of the SUV and sat back there. We also picked up Rev. Benjamin Undugu, the Assistant DRC National Director, who is the key Administrator for our Kinshasa Institutes. He

got into the SUV next to Nepa Wa Msambelwa, and when we stopped at the next junction, Benjamin went to one of the shops and he bought water for Scott and me to drink during the day. This process did not take up much time and many came by to see us as we took pictures of everybody. Finally, Kimana Ndeko B. J. drove us past the N'Djili International Airport on the main road in the city. Then we came to a turnoff onto a dirt road, which was filled with deep white sand where we always get stuck, but this new vehicle had no problems negotiating the difficult driving terrain and we made it through the difficult first road without any problems or having to get out of the vehicle. We turned down each road and continued the trip down the sandy roads, and we drove deeper into the village until we got to the deep sand right in the middle of the small town on a wide sandy road. Once again, the driver drove right through the difficult terrain without any problems since he had a four-wheel drive and it worked perfectly well. Finally, we got to a more hilly terrain that was easier to maneuver since it had hard sand and rock upon which to drive the last portion of the trip. We drove down some narrow dirt roads until we came to Bible Faith Church, Mpsa I village, in the Nsele Estate on the other side of the N'Djili International Airport in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. This is a one room village church with a tin roof and temporary walls and a dirt floor since the more permanent structure had been destroyed several years ago when a strong wind destroyed the church and blew the walls down. The walls went most of the way to the top, but there was an opening at the top of the walls and in the back of the church. There was also a split in the tin roof into two parts with a crack right down the middle of the roof. There was also one light bulb right in the center of the church, which did not seem to give off very much light, but it was not needed in the broad daylight like today. There was a big banner across the outside front wall advertising the TPI Mpsa Pastoral Training Institute, which is taking place here this week.

As we went inside the building, the place was packed and the TPI Institute had already begun, and the worship leader was leading the pastors in several songs of worship while several men accompanied the singing by beating their hands on two bongo drums. There were also two others who beat the side of the drums with sticks. After playing several songs of worship, it was now time to begin the institute. When we got there about 9:30 AM, the pastors were now ready for the institute to begin. [We started the fifth and final day of the TPI Mpsa Institute around 9:45 AM with 316 pastors, evangelists, and national missionaries for the morning session.](#)

Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa opened the TPI Mpsa Institute with a few announcements, and then he introduced me to begin the fifth session on Expository Preaching, which deals with the study of a particular passage of a book, and developing an expository message from this passage. I began by reviewing over the need for Expository Preaching since most preachers in Africa do not study the Bible before preaching from it only because they have not been taught how to study the text before preaching it. Many also take verses out of context and impose their own meanings on the text and preach messages which do not reflect the original intended meaning of the text. Pastor Nepa had a big chalk board in his church and I used it for this morning's session. Fortunately, we had asked yesterday that no one should erase the blackboard from what we did yesterday, so thankfully, the blackboard was still in tact and the passage was still written on the board with all my notations written on it from yesterday. I started by reviewing over the definitions of expository preaching and went back over the need to study the text from 2 Timothy 2:15. I also set the context of the first step of studying the text, which is observation. We reviewed over the process of studying the whole book and making a chart of the book. We also reviewed over the process of looking at the details of the text by studying the grammatical specifics of a particular passage such as the one we chose in Ephesians 2:1-10. We looked at the chalkboard, which already had the whole passage of Ephesians 2:1-10 copied on it so we could observe the grammatical details of the text. Therefore, we reviewed over the structural markers of the passage to be able to observe the structure of the passage. We took the observations yesterday about the clauses combined with the grammatical details of the parts of speech and the structural markers of the text in order to develop a Biblical outline of the Ephesians 2:1-10 passage. We then developed a Biblical outline of the text, which will become the basis of developing a preaching outline of this passage. We divided the passage into

three sections such as Our Past Life before Christ (vs. 1-3), What God did in Christ (vs. 4-7), and Our Present Life in Christ (vs. 8-10). Then we divided each of these major divisions of the passage into smaller divisions within each major division. After looking at some of the other factors to look at in the observation part of our study of the text such as the type of materials that authors consider, the type of literature utilized in the text, and the atmosphere of the text, we moved into the interpretation phase of our study of the text. We examined four questions that we use to help the Bible student/pastor interpret the details already observed in the text. When this step is employed, certain truths emerge from the text, which form the basic truths that will help to formulate the message or sermon. At this point, the Bible expositor must seek to apply these truths so as to allow these truths to be explained and applied in the context of the people that he will preach this sermon. Then it is time to organize the truths of the text into a sermon, which requires understanding the dominating theme of the passage, the integrating thoughts, and the motivating thrust of the passage. Then we encourage the pastors to take the main points and secondary points and add flesh to the bones. This is done by going back to the passage and adding explanations of each point, illustrations of each point, and applications of each point. This flesh on the bones is the main body of the sermon, and then it only becomes necessary to add an introduction and a conclusion to complete the message. Then I used the analogy of an airplane taking off on the runway to exemplify the introduction and an airplane landing on the runway to symbolize the conclusion. Therefore, I concluded the session by stressing the importance of studying the text, compiling a sermon in written form, and then preaching the message to the people. So we concluded the session with a challenge to study the text before you preach the text. Then Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa came up and highlighted the importance of expository preaching for the pastors with a special emphasis on studying the text and encouraged the pastors to implement these principles in their preaching ministries.

We had a short stand-up break and Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa invited Rev. Scott Girard to come up and teach his fifth session on the book of Romans as an example of how to preach through a book of the Bible. Scott began his session on Romans in Chapter 13. We must submit ourselves to the governing authorities since God permits them to be in power. He is not saying they are good but necessary. To rebel against them is to displease God. The authorities are there to do God's will and to protect the good people and punish the evil doer. We should pay our taxes so they can govern. Then Scott taught Romans Chapter 14. Some Christians are weaker than others. Some are vegetarians, others are not. Paul reminds the Roman Christians that no one should look down on the weaker or sensitive Christian. We should not judge. Some say one day is more holy than another. We shall honor and respect each other. We should be very aware of other Christian's preferences. We do not live by ourselves. Let's stop judging each other. Acting in love means taking into account the other brother's opinions. God's purpose is to get us to see that His Kingdom consists of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit, not just living like everyone else. Everything not from and/or with faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). Then Scott taught Romans Chapter 15. We are not here to please ourselves, but to please our neighbor. Even Jesus did not please Himself. God wants us to have love and teaches us from the past. Paul encourages us to worship and follow Christ together. Paul worked very hard to reach the Gentiles, and his goal was to preach where the Gospel of Christ was not known. Paul is now planning to come to Rome. He sensed the end of his mission. Paul prays and shares his prayer requests for deliverance. Then Scott taught Romans Chapter 16. Finally, Paul sends personal greetings to many people in Rome. He also warns about those who teach false doctrines. Then Scott Girard concluded his teaching on the Book of Romans and closed in a word of prayer. Afterwards, Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa came up and made a few announcements and thanked Scott for his teaching on Romans.

After a short stand-up break, the worship team led us in a song. Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa invited me come up and teach my fifth session on the Principles of Biblical Leadership. I focused the teaching today more on the personal leadership development process in the life of the leader. I reviewed over the definition of leadership that we dealt with earlier in the week and the three dimensions of leadership, and then looked at the first dimension of leadership development, which

deals with the leader himself and how God develops us as leaders. I reviewed over the team-ministry approach that Moses had to learn in Egypt, where God defined the leadership task, designated the leader, and then required the leader to divide the responsibility. I also reviewed over the four characteristics of developing an effective team. Furthermore, I reviewed over teaching the pastors how to develop a leadership time-line of their personal leadership development and their church's leadership developmental history. We also reviewed over developing a mission and vision statement for your ministry. Leadership involves those who: 1) know who they are, 2) know where they are going, and 3) know how to get there.

I then taught my last teaching section on the Principles of Biblical Leadership, in which I preached a message from Ephesians 4:7-16 on the topic of "God's Design for Leadership in the Church." We focused on God's priority of leadership in the Church, whereby He gave spiritual gifts to every believer in Christ and also gifted spiritual leaders to every church. This shows God's priority in having the leaders lead and shows how every believer is to utilize their spiritual gifts in the church. Since these gifts came from Christ in heaven and were given to the measure of Christ's gift on the cross, we are to ensure that every believer fulfills their ministries in the church and in the world, and that every gifted leader fulfills his leadership responsibilities in the church.

Secondly, we looked at God's program for leadership in the church (Eph. 4:12), in which the leadership is to "equip the saints for the work of service." This means that the leadership is to provide a leadership training program for the leaders in the church and an equipping ministry for the saints so that the leadership will be trained and the saints will be mobilized to do the work of ministry, not the pastoral staff itself. The result will be that the church will grow and build itself up since it is functioning correctly.

Then thirdly, we looked at God's purpose for leadership in the Church, which is to bring about the unity of the Church, the maturity of the Church, and fulfill the activity of the Church. If the leadership fulfills their role of building up the leadership and equips the saints to do the ministry, and mobilizes them in the ministry, then the church will accomplish God's purposes in the world since He set the leadership in place to fulfill this purpose in mind. So we must faithfully build up leaders and equip the saints until God raises them up to accomplish His purposes in the church and world for His kingdom. I then completed the session with encouraging the pastors to be the leader God wants them to be, and He will bless them greatly. I challenged the pastors to be the leader God wanted them to be and gave an invitation for the pastors to come forward to commit their lives to the Lord to become the best leader possible for their church, and 179 pastors came forward to deal with some aspect of their leadership development and to dedicate their lives more fully to God. There was a short time of prayer and then I closed in a word of prayer. Then Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa came up and made a few concluding comments and closed out the session, and prepared the people for receiving their lunch by giving a few directives. Then he had a pastor give thanks for the food and dismissed the group for lunch.

We broke for lunch and all the pastors stayed at their seats while the TPI Local Mpsa protocol team came to each pastor and brought them their plate of food so that they could eat it inside the sanctuary at their seats. Meanwhile, the leaders, including Scott Girard and me, also stayed inside the sanctuary in our chairs and I ate some crackers, granola bars, and peanuts which Jennifer, my wife, had put in my bag. We had a great time of relaxing after a full morning of teaching, and some of the pastors came up to us and wanted their picture to be taken with us. The whole lunch process still took a long time, but it was shorter today due to tightening up a few things in the delivery of the lunch to the pastors. Then once everything was completed, everyone went outside for a break and then came back inside the sanctuary after a much shorter lunch break to resume our institute. We had 317 pastors, evangelists, and church leaders for the afternoon session for our fifth day of the TPI Institute.

After lunch, the worship team led us in a song. Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa invited Scott Girard to

come up and lead his afternoon session on Systematic Theology. He started his teaching session on the doctrine of the Church (Ecclesiology). He first dealt with what is included in the Church. The Greek word ecclesia is made up of two words which mean "to call out" so that the idea involved in the church is a gathering or assembly. It is used in the following senses in the New Testament: (1) an assembly of townspeople, (2) a gathering of the Jewish people in their assembling in the wilderness, (3) a local group of Christians living in a certain place, and (4) a technical meaning in the New Testament of the word which refers to the Church universal to which all believers and only believers belong, the same meaning as the Body of Christ. Then Scott dealt with the local church. The first question is what is the local church? It is an assembly of professing believers in Christ who are baptized and who are organized to do His work. The Reformers said that the true Church is where the Scriptures are correctly taught, the ordinances (sacraments) observed, and where there is discipline. Then we need to look at who are the leaders of the Church. The first group of leaders are the elders or bishops, which are used interchangeably to refer to the role of overseeing the church. The elders ruled the church and guarded the truth. According to the Scriptures, there is not an indication of how many elders were in an assembly. The Scriptures talk more about the qualifications for elders given in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Tit. 1:5-9. The next group of leaders are the deacons, which means servant. The Christian should serve in a local church utilizing their spiritual gifts. The next group are the deaconesses, which may or may not be an office, but there are certain women mentioned, such as Phoebe is called a servant (Ro. 16:2) and certain women are mentioned in 1 Tim. 3:11. The group of leaders called the trustees are not mentioned in the Bible, but many churches have such a board, which are holders of property and titles to the property, and they also responsible for the care of the church.

Scott then dealt with how the church is governed. There are basically five different forms of church government. (1) Hierarchical form of government – Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist; (2) Federal or Connectional Form of Government – Presbyterian, where the elders are called ruling and teaching elders, the latter being pastors, or those who preach or administer the ordinances (1 Tim. 5:17). (3) Congregational – Baptist: arguments for this form of government come from passages that speak of the responsibilities of the entire local church (1 Cor. 1:10, Phil. 1:27). The entire group, not just a select group (session, Board of Leaders) is seen as responsible of the particular local church. There is only one elder in the church, and that is the pastor. The other leaders are the deacons. (4) The National Church – many European countries have this system. (5) No Government – some claim only Jesus Christ is the authority.

Then Scott taught the ordinances of the Local Church . A definition of ordinance is "an outward rite prescribed by Christ to be performed in the Church." Another word is the word sacrament, which is "an outward sign of an invisible grace." The first ordinance is the Lord's Supper. There are three views of the Lord's Supper: The first one is transubstantiation (Roman Catholic view). The second one is consubstantiation (Luther). The third one is memorial (many Baptist and independent churches)[1 Cor. 11:24-25]. The Lord's Supper should do the following: remind one of the life and death of Jesus Christ, announce the basic facts of the Gospel, give one an anticipation of Christ's return, and remind believers of their oneness in the Body of Christ. The second ordinance is baptism. The two questions are: How should it be done (mode) and on whom should it be done (infants or professing believers)? The two views dealing with the mode of baptism are first the nonimmersion view. Arguments for this view include that the Greek word for baptize (baptizo) has a secondary meaning which means "to bring under the influence," and sprinkling might best picture this meaning of the word. If baptism illustrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon someone, then pouring or sprinkling might be the best picture of this process. Immersion might have been highly improbable in instances like those recorded in Acts 2:41 (too many people involved) and Acts 8:38 (too little water). Hebrews 9:10 uses the word baptism to include all kinds of Old Testament rituals, even those involved with sprinkling, and thus the word does not always mean to immerse exclusively. The Greek language has a very clear word that means "to dip." Why is not this word used if immersion is the correct method of baptism. Some of these arguments are circumstantial at best and utilize secondary meanings of the word baptizo. The second mode of baptism is the

immersion view. Immerse is the primary meaning of the Greek word baptizo for baptize. The normal understanding of the prepositions such as “into” and “out of” the water would indicate that immersion was practiced (Ac. 8:38). The baptism practiced on a person who converted to Judaism was a total immersion, though it was self-performed, not by another. This would indicate that Christian baptism followed the same customary mode, though performed by someone else. Immersion best pictures the significance of baptism, which is the death to the old life and resurrection to the new life ( Rom. 6:1-4). Immersion was the universal practice of the Early Church and every instance in the New Testament either demands or permits it (3,000 people could have been baptized in the various pools around Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost). The Greek language has words for pour and sprinkle, but these words are never used of baptism in the New Testament. The arguments clearly stand in support of immersion as the mode utilized in water baptism when it is employed in the New Testament.

The two views dealing with the recipients of water baptism are first that of infant baptism. The arguments in favor of this view involve the analogy between circumcision done on infants, which is the initiatory rite in the Old Covenant, and baptism in the New Testament. The problem is that there are no passages in the New Testament that make this analogy a direct connection between circumcision and baptism. The baptism of entire households would certainly have included infants (Ac. 16:33). The New Testament seems to make promises to households where there is at least one believing parent, therefore, to baptize the infants in such households is quite proper. The second view dealing with the recipients of water baptism is that of believer’s baptism. If baptism is an initiatory rite, it must only be performed on those who have exercised faith in Christ, and are truly members of the Body of Christ. Only natural birth was needed to be a member of Israel , but since the new birth is required to be a member of God’s family, then only those who have consciously exercised faith should be baptized. Household baptisms in the New Testament do not specify the presence of infants. There is no evidence for the practice of infant baptism either by the Jews or Christians in apostolic times. If baptism is the sign of association with Christ and Christianity, then the sign should be used by those who have been so associated with Christ. The only way to associate is by the personal act of faith in Him. Acts 16:32 included both adults and children, but not infants as explicitly stated. Therefore, it is those who are believers by faith in Christ who are to be the recipients of water baptism.

The next area that Scott taught is the purpose of the Church. What does Christ expect of His Church? The local church should always show love for the Lord (Rev. 2:4). The local church should minister to its own members so that they can encourage one another to love and good works (Heb. 10:24). The Church is the agency for carrying out the Great Commission. The Gospel should be preached in the services of the local church so that if unbelievers come, they will hear the Gospel, but the Church should also take the Gospel to the far ends of the earth. (1 Cor. 14:24). The Church is to care for its own who are in need such as widows, orphans, and the poor (Jas. 1:27, 2 Cor. 8-9). The Church is do good in this world (Gal. 6:10). The basic purpose of the local church is to produce mature and holy Christians. The next area Scott taught is the Universal Church , which refers to a spiritual organism of which Christ is the Head and believers from the time of Pentecost until the Second Coming of Christ are members. It is Christ’s Church (Matt. 16:18). In His resurrection and ascension He became Head over the body, His Church (Eph. 1:20-23). He gave the Church gifts (Eph 4:8-11) and is preparing her to be His bride without spot and blemish (Eph. 5:26-27). Protestantism does not believe that the Church was built upon Peter, but upon His confession that Christ is the rock (1 Pet. 2:4-8). Then Scott gave some illustrations of the universal Church. Christ is the Shepherd and we are the sheep (John 10). Christ is the vine and we are the branches (John 15). Christ is the cornerstone and we are the stones in the building (Eph. 2:19-21). Christ is the High Priest and we are a kingdom of priests (1 Pet. 2). Christ is the Head and we are members of His Body (1 Cor. 12). As the head, He directs and as members, we serve each other. Christ is the last Adam and we are the new creation (1 Cor. 15:45). Christ is the Bridegroom and we are His bride (Eph. 25-33). Christ is the heir and we are the joint heirs (Heb. 1:2, Rom. 8:17). This means that we will share in all the glories which shall be His when the world finally acknowledges

Him. He is the first fruits and we are the harvest (1 Cor. 15:23). He is the Master and we are His servants (Col. 4:1, 1 Cor. 7:22).

Then Scott dealt with when did the Church begin. Reformed/Covenant theology believes that the Church began in the Old Testament either with Adam or Abraham, and it continues to the present day. Some say it began with John the Baptist since he was the first to baptize other people (Jewish baptism was self-administered). Another view is that the Church began on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. This last viewpoint is the best option to explain the beginning of the Church. The Lord spoke of the Church being future in Matt. 16:18. This is interpreted to mean that the Church did not exist in the Old Testament. The resurrection and ascension of Christ are necessary to the functioning of the Church. It is built on the resurrection (Eph. 1: 19-20). The giving of gifts is required for its operation, and the giving of gifts is dependent upon Christ's ascension (Eph. 4:7-12). Jesus declared that the baptizing work of the Holy was still future before His ascension (Acts 1:5). On the Day of Pentecost it first occurred (this is not recorded in Acts 2, but in Acts 11:15-16). Spirit baptism places one into the Body of Christ according to 1 Cor. 12:13, and since this is the only way, and it took place first on the Day of Pentecost. This is why this viewpoint that the beginning of the Church began on the Day of Pentecost is the best view since it represents all the Biblical data and the arguments above. Then Scott dealt with when will the Church be completed. It will be completed when Christ comes again at His second coming at the end of the ages. The last section on the Future (Eschatology) was not taught this week because there was not enough time, but the pastors at least have the notes. Then Scott Girard concluded his session and Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa came up and made a few concluding remarks.

After another short break, we were led in a worship song by the worship team. Then Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa invited me to come up and teach the last session on the overview of the Old Testament on the section dealing with the Divided Kingdom to the end of the Old Testament Era. We then reviewed over the book of Genesis and the rest of the Pentateuch by doing the signs of all the major people, places, and events. We also reviewed over the Conquest Period, the Period of the Judges, and the United Kingdom under Saul, David, and Solomon. Then I taught through the Divided Kingdom where Israel was divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. The northern kingdom of Israel lapsed into further decay since there were no righteous kings in the land, whereas, Judah had some righteous kings (8) but Judah also ended up in decay. Few of the people of either kingdom listened to the 17 prophets that God sent into the land. As a result, God used Assyria to wipe out Israel, Babylonia to destroy and capture Judah, taking them into exile for seventy years, and Persia to bring Judah back to their land. God used several key people to bring Judah back to the land (Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah) and Esther to protect the exiles in Babylonia. There was one more 400-year period of silence where God did not speak until the time of the New Testament and Jesus Christ was presented to the world. We therefore reviewed over all of the signs of the Old Testament and ended up with the last sign of Christ with an eruption of praise to God. There was about a thirty minute time of spontaneous praise to God for the whole week, which included many people dancing and singing with several people accompanying on the bongo drums, and pastors coming to the front stage area singing and expressing their thanks to God for a long extended time. There was one guy who came and polished Scott Girard's and my shoes during this time of celebration, and quite a few people surrounded me and even tried to lift me, but I did not want to see that happen since I was not sure where that would go. It was, however, a great way to end our institute as over 300 pastors, evangelists, and missionaries expressed their thanks to God in a true African style of spontaneous worship. Rev. Nepa told me later that it could have gone on for a lot longer time had he not stopped it to end our institute and move forward in the Celebration Service. We therefore concluded the final day of the institute after a great day with these pastors and church leaders.

Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa came and closed out the fifth day of the institute with some comments and concluding remarks. He also closed out the institute with some appropriate remarks and had a pastor close in a word of prayer. Right after the teaching was completed, we broke immediately and

went outside of the sanctuary, and had our group picture taken under the banner of the institute in front of the sanctuary. There was a whole group of pastors standing many people deep, but we got our pictures taken of the whole group. Then we went back inside the sanctuary to resume the Celebration Service.

We immediately began our Celebration Service to give out the certificates and bring our institute to a conclusion. Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa, the TPI Democratic Republic of Congo National Director, began the service by recognizing all of the TPI Mpsa, Kinshasa Local Committee, which included eight people. The whole group of pastors gave thanks for this group of leaders for all the work that they did to make this institute a success. We also recognized the group of about ten to twelve ladies who cooked the meals for us outside a home in close proximity to the church all week long. The pastors really appreciated these ladies. Then Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa invited me to come up and recognize others who had an impact in the success of the week. I publicly thanked Jennifer Balmer, my wife, who worked very hard to put the notebooks together along with a church in the United States, Gunnings Baptist Church in Blountville, Tennessee, who worked hard to produce these notebooks for the pastors. Jennifer also printed out the certificates for the pastors. I then pointed out all of the churches and individuals who gave to make this institute possible for the pastors to attend this week. I showed the twenty-four churches on the inside of the notebook cover, who were responsible for helping with this financial need. I encouraged the pastors to pray for these churches that the Lord would continue to bless their ministries. The pastors responded with a round of applause. I also thanked the local Mpsa, Kinshasa TPI Committee and Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa and his team. Then the local Mpsa, Kinshasa team under the direction of some of the ladies, gave both Scott Girard and me a wooden hand-carved staff for me, which they gave me as a reference to my Moses-like vision to train pastors in Africa, and a wooden artifact of an African chief for Scott, and then two hand-woven bags and two castanets for each of us. We thanked the ladies on behalf of the whole group for these nice gifts and held up our African-made items for all to see, and everyone applauded with their appreciation to see us with their African gifts to take back with us. Furthermore, I also presented Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa with a book on The Life and Teachings of Paul in appreciation for what he has done all week to put on this institute. Lastly, I gave Rev. Benjamin Undugu a scarf for his wife that my mother made by hand, and a book by John Piper that was given to him by Rev. Scott Girard, and he was very appreciative of it. I announced that anyone who needed to stay in touch with TPI needed to get in touch with Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa and Rev. Benjamin Undugu for any concerns or updates about TPI in Kinshasa, and we want people to be in touch with them, not contact us directly. Then they both gave their contact information so the pastors could keep in touch with them. I also thanked Pastor Scott Girard for his teaching and sacrifice to come here to offer his ministry to these pastors.

After all the preliminary matters, we began the commissioning service. I challenged the pastors to stand and present themselves to the Lord and preach the Word of God, lead the Church of God, and reach the world for God. I read Ephesians 3:14-21 to reflect Paul's prayer for these pastors. Then I asked Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa to come and pray for these pastors as they presented themselves to the Lord and we commissioned them in their ministries to the Lord. Once this process was completed, [we began the certificate ceremony, where we handed out 247 certificates to each of the pastors, evangelists, and national missionaries.](#) We called out the names of about 15 of the pastors to come forward to receive their certificates in the front of the sanctuary. The rest of them would receive their certificates outside the sanctuary when Rev. Benjamin Undugu called each of their names to come and receive their certificates. As the certificate presentation process was completed inside the sanctuary with the 15 certificates handed out to some of the key pastors, we closed out the 2010 Mpsa, Kinshasa TPI Institute, and dismissed the group. As soon as the group was dismissed, we all went outside the sanctuary where the rest of the people were given their certificates. Meanwhile, the TPI Mpsa, Kinshasa protocol team collected Scott Girard's and my small bags and took them out to the Mitsubishi Shogun SUV and loaded them into the vehicle.

At that time, there were some pastors who received their certificates before we left, however, who

came up to Scott and me and wanted their pictures taken, and they also shook hands with us and thanked us for the week of teaching. We also talked afterwards with a few of the pastors while this process was going on, and they left with their notebook and certificate in hand very happy men indeed. We said our good-byes to the pastors and took some more pictures, and talked with some of the pastors afterwards, but we left before the certificates were handed out completely to the pastors because our driver wanted to get us on the road back to our hotel since it was starting to get dark and the traffic was building up in town on a Friday night. Therefore, we loaded up in our vehicle and drove away as many of the pastors were still receiving their certificates from Rev. Benjamin Undugu and his Registration Committee, and then after receiving them, walked on foot back to their homes.

After the institute was over, Kimana Ndeko B. J., our driver for the rest of the week, drove us in his Mitsubishi Shogun SUV, down the dirt road away from Bible Faith Church in the Mpsasa I village area, down a hilly terrain that was easy to maneuver since it had hard sand and rock upon which to drive the initial portion of the trip. We drove down some narrow dirt roads until we came to the main part of the town where there were many shops and businesses along a long dirt road that had some deep sand. We did not get stuck in the deep sand right in the middle of the small town on a wide sandy road because we have a newer vehicle. The vehicle had a four-wheel drive, which made it easier to drive in the deep sand. We then made several more turns and drove past all the shops and businesses in town. We kept driving until we got to the last turn to go out of the village down the treacherous last road where we always seem to get stuck in the sand. This time we drove down that road without any problems at all and made it out of the village without getting stuck in the sand. We exited the village and got back onto the main paved road that leads straight into the main center of the city. We drove past the N'Djili International Airport back towards the city of Kinshasa, seeing countless numbers of people congregated along the side of the road. We stopped to let out our two translators and Nehemiah Dennis at their appropriate stops along the way. We also hit some traffic along the way, but Kimana Ndeko B. J. drove us around much of the traffic by making some short cuts across some sand to cut back into the lane of traffic much further down, and finally made it to the main statue of the first prime minister of the Congo and the tall needle-like spire that looms over the city as a monument and fixture of the city. Then we turned back towards the Lemba Estate and made our way to the turnoff down another dirt road, and we eventually arrived about forty minutes later at the Imperium Hotel on Salongo Blvd., a dirt road in the Lemba Estate in Kinshasa. We had another good and safe drive back to the hotel today, and we were thankful to have a driver with a better vehicle now because we had no problems at all with the new vehicle getting to and back from the Mpsasa village in the deep sand.

When we arrived back at the Imperium Hotel, our home here in Kinshasa, the hotel staff helped us get our small bags into our rooms. Then Nepa Wa Msambelwa and Didier Nbimba, the TPI Kinshasa Treasurer, came to my Room # 103, and we went over the TPI Mpsasa Budget for the week. We verified the budget and signed the forms to state that all funds were accounted for and spent during the week. Then Nepa Wa Msambelwa released Didier Nbimba so he could go back home, and we went over a few things that needed to be done here at the hotel in preparation for our leaving tomorrow morning on my flight to Nairobi, Kenya, and Scott Girard's international flight back to the United States. Then Scott Girard, Pastor Nepa, and I gave thanks to the Lord for a good final day and good week at the Mpsasa, Kinshasa TPI Institute. After everything was done, we invited Rev. Nepa to join us for dinner as Scott Girard and I would be going down to the restaurant on the second floor here in the Imperium Hotel. After Scott and I sorted through a few things in our rooms, we all went down to the restaurant on the second floor and had our dinner around 8 PM. Scott and I and Nepa Wa Msambelwa were served by Charlene and Nasha, and we had a great time for our last meal with Pastor Nepa. We ordered our meals and it took some time for them to bring them to us. I had spaghetti bolognese, tomato soup and bread, a salad, grapes, and coke and water. We had a relaxing meal enjoying our company and talking about the great week we had at the Mpsasa, Kinshasa TPI Institute. Then we finished getting the bill sorted out, signed them over to our rooms, said goodbye to Pastor Nepa Wa Msambelwa, and Scott and I went to our rooms for the rest of the

evening. We had tried to go downstairs to the internet café, but it was already closed for the evening. I needed to see if Pastor Zachary Wanjohi, our TPI Kenya National Director, was planning to meet me at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya tomorrow afternoon when I arrive there, but I could not get on the internet to find out whether he or Martin Shikuku had contacted me about it. Therefore, I went upstairs to my room and spent some time typing some more on my Email Report on the laptop computer at my desk, which is a small board, which protrudes from the wall with a chain and some small hinges to keep it in place. I also downloaded some cards on my Jobo Spectator and charged some batteries to prepare for my trip tomorrow to Nairobi, Kenya and on to Harare, Zimbabwe. I had a chocolate chip breakfast bar for dessert and worked through the evening until I got too tired to type any longer. Finally, I spent some time getting my things sorted out for packing for the trip tomorrow morning as I fly from Kinshasa, DRC to Nairobi, Kenya, and then travel the next day from Nairobi to Harare, Zimbabwe for our fifth TPI Institute this summer. I spent a little time packing my bags getting them ready for the trip tomorrow morning. Then I went to bed around 2 AM after a great final day and good week at the Mpsa, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo TPI Institute.

The next day, [Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup>](#), I woke up early in my Room # 103 at the Imperium Hotel in the Lemba Estate in Kinshasa, DRC. I spent some typing on my Email Report at the laptop computer at my desk. I also spent some time getting my things sorted out in order to pack for the trip this morning as I fly from Kinshasa, DRC to Nairobi, Kenya, and then travel tomorrow from Nairobi to Harare, Zimbabwe, for our fifth TPI Institute this summer. I spent some time packing my bags getting them ready for the trip this morning at around 8:30 AM. At around 6 AM, I took a hot shower in the adjoining bathroom, which has an overhead nozzle in a shower stall but no curtain, so the water goes all over the floor. The water is heated from a water heater in the bathroom, and it was a nice hot shower. Then I got dressed and ready for the day and I met Scott Girard for breakfast at the restaurant on the second floor. We had an omelet, two pieces of toast, African Chai (tea), and water. Then we went back to our rooms and finished getting ready for the day. I also finished getting packed for the day so I would be ready to leave as soon as we get all things done so we can leave as soon as we possibly can since the African process at the N'Djili International Airport here in Kinshasa, DRC, is quite extensive and the worst African airport to get out of the country. I have missed several flights here in Kinshasa, and it is always difficult just to get a flight out of here because they make it such a difficult process.

After awhile, Rev. Nepa Wa Msambelwa and Rev. Benjamin Undugu arrived at the Imperium Hotel around 8:00 AM to help us sort out a few things before we left on our trip to the airport. I went downstairs to see if I could get into the internet café, but once again, it was closed so I could not find out if Zachary Wanjohi or someone else was meeting me at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya this afternoon when I arrive there. I also tried to settle our bill when Pastor Nepa helped me to meet with one of the receptionists at the desk and also the manager of the Imperium Hotel in order to come to terms with what we owed them. It took a very long process, but eventually Scott Girard and I paid our bills for the hotel and settled our accounts for the accommodation and restaurant. Then we went back upstairs and completed our final packing and getting all of our bags ready to be taken downstairs for the trip to the airport. Then Kimana Ndeko B. J. drove his vehicle, a Mitsubishi Shogun SUV, over to the hotel, and prepared for our final drive of the week to the airport. The hotel staff took all of our large and small bags downstairs and helped us pack them in the vehicle that was parked in front of the hotel on the dirt road.

Scott Girard and I got into the vehicle with Pastor Nepa and Pastor Benjamin, and Kimana Ndeko B. J., our driver for the last part of the week, drove us in his Mitsubishi Shogun SUV down the dirt road away from the hotel. We stopped first at a telephone airtime shop just down the road from our hotel to buy a card to put air time in Pastor Nepa's cell phone so we could make a call to Pastor Martin Shikuku in Eldoret, Kenya, in order to find out if someone is coming to pick me up at the airport in Nairobi, Kenya. Secondly, we stopped at the gas station right down the road to get some

gas and also to buy some more air time on Nepa's cell phone in order to make the telephone call to Kenya . This process did not take up much time and many came by to see us as we took pictures of everybody. Then we got back into the vehicle and continued driving through paved streets into the city of Kinshasa , which was packed with people along the route. Along the way, Pastor Benjamin placed a call to Pastor Martin Shikuku in Eldoret , Kenya , who was in Tanzania at the time, and confirmed that Pastor Zachary Wanjohi would be at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi , Kenya , to pick me up when I arrived there later this afternoon. I also briefly talked with him, but could not hear him very well. Eventually, Kimana Ndeko B. J. drove us through the city of Kinshasa past the main statue of the first prime minister of the Congo and the tall needle-like spire that looms over the city as a monument and fixture of the city until we got to the N'Djili International Airport on the main road in the city.

When we got to the airport, our driver, Kimana Ndeko B. J., paid the airport fee for us to enter the airport, and then he drove us over to park the vehicle in the parking lot. Then we got all our bags out of the vehicle, and we all took both Scott Girard's and my bags over to enter the main yellow airport terminal building. We had some help as one guy convinced Pastor Nepa that he could help us through the difficult process inside the airport. There were several others who tried to carry our bags but Nepa and Benjamin were able to hold them off and just employ the one guy to help us. We stopped and paid the \$50 US dollar airport fee to fly out of this airport, and then went inside the airport terminal. There were no radar machines working in the security area of the airport so they hand-checked our bags when we entered the main terminal building. I thought to myself that this process of hand-checking our bags is about as secure as having inmates checking for drugs on the inside of a prison. Scott and I each paid about \$20 US dollars to employ the attendant who came in with us to help us on the inside to sort through all the process of getting our bags checked into our flights. This is one of the most difficult airports to fly out of in Africa because of all the difficult processes and chaos and total confusion that one encounters here due to the sheer mass of people going through at the same time and the absolute nonsense that you have to go through to just get on the plane. Then I went over to the Kenya Airways Check-in Ticket Counter with my attendant and began the process of checking in my bags with the additional help of Pastor Nepa Wa Msambelwa. I left Scott Girard over near where he would later check in at the Ethiopian Airlines ticket area. It took a very long time to make it to the main ticket counter since there was a long queue (line) of people waiting to get their bags checked into the flight. [When I finally made it to the Kenya Airways ticket counter, the airlines agent told me that I was not listed on this flight, but I proceeded to tell her that we had confirmed my ticket on this flight two days ago, and everything was fine. Then I went through a rather tedious process at the ticket counter where the Kenya Airways ticket agent refused to put me on this flight because she told me that I did not have the right flight code number for the flight on my e-ticket. I have missed several flights in this airport before, and I was in no mood to miss this flight today, so I stood firm that I have a ticket for this flight, and they need to figure out what the problem is, and correct it, and get me on the flight. I stood there for over an hour, and after much consternation and hassle, they finally confirmed my ticket and gave me a boarding pass. I came very close to being off-listed for the flight due to their negligence in messing up my ticket. I also was in trouble of missing the flight completely since it was so late now due to this process taking so long, and I was the last one put on the flight. So I quickly went over to fill out my paper work and Nepa and the attendant also helped me get a stamp on my ticket so I could go through Passport Control. I finally said goodbye to Pastors Nepa and Benjamin and waved over to Scott Girard in the distance, thanking them for all they did to make this a successful week in Mpsa, Kinshasa . Then I went through the main security checkpoint and got my Health card checked and my Passport stamped and went through one last security checkpoint before entering into the waiting room for my flight to arrive at the gate area. \[It turns out that the flight arrived one hour late so I was not in danger of missing my flight after all, which was a blessing from God that the plane was late or I would have missed the flight since it was now past the time for me to board the plane, but it was so good to make it past all the hoopla and confusion, which is so typical of this airport. After awhile, Scott Girard came into the waiting room after he too went through the process of getting his boarding pass, although he did not have the same problems that I\]\(#\)](#)

encountered, and he sat next to me until my plane showed up about 30 to 45 minutes later.

Then I said goodbye to Scott and went through another bag search security checkpoint, where they went through my small bags by hand, and then walked over to the plane on the tarmac. I then acknowledged that my black suitcase and wooden staff were sitting in a row of bags to be put on the plane, which were part of the checked luggage, and also gave my receipt to the ticket agents for my \$50 Airport fee, and then boarded the flight at the back of the plane. I boarded Kenya Airways Flight KQ 550, leaving N'Djili International Airport in Kinshasa , DRC one hour late at about 12:30 PM and arriving at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi , Kenya at about 6 PM. I sat on the window seat next to Moses Njenga Kamau from Nairobi , Kenya . He was an IT Computer Services technician, working for a computer company called Quintica, who was doing business by calling on one of his clients – Zain Network in Kinshasa , DRC. Next to Moses on the aisle was Dr. Raymond Cambele Musamba, who is the Medicine Director of the National Program of Immunization for the Ministry of Public Health for the Democratic Republic of Congo. He was going to a Public Health Conference in Johannesburg , South Africa for the week. We had a great time talking with each other, which made the stress and difficulties of boarding the flight a distant memory of the past. We also had a small snack lunch, which consisted of a beef and cheese sandwich, an assortment of fruits, a parfait dessert, and drinks and hot tea.

We landed an hour late and deboarded the plane, and walked on the tarmac up to the walking bridge to the second floor of the main terminal, and walked across it into the main hall of the terminal. I proceeded through Passport Control and got my passport stamped, and went through the Baggage Claim area, not picking up my bags because they were checked all the way through to Harare , Zimbabwe for my flight tomorrow morning. I then exited the Green Zone area of customs and came into the Arrival Hall downstairs in the airport, but I did not see anyone that was supposed to come and pick me up at the airport. I checked a second time just to make sure, but Zachary Wanjohi, our TPI Kenya National Director, or Samuel Karemeri, the manager of the Rusam Villa Guest House, or even Martin Shikuku, our TPI Local Coordinator for the Rift Valley Region in Eldoret, Kenya, was not there to pick me up like he had told me would be the case.

Therefore, after a few minutes of searching and waiting, I went over to the Kenya Airports Authority Office at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport , and talked with the receptionist there to see if she had a telephone number for the Rusam Villa Guest House, which we finally located in the phone book. Then a travel agent from Marble Travel, Julius Mutune, came up to me and helped me to call the number, but there was no answer. Another gentlemen came up and tried to get a number for Samuel Karemeri, but he too was unsuccessful. Finally, Julius called Martin Shikuku for me, and after several attempts, Julius was able to connect me to Martin on the phone, who put me in touch with Zachary Wanjohi. Martin was somewhere in Tanzania at the time, but Zachary was in Nairobi, and after several more attempts, we finally got through to Zachary on the phone, and he told me to go to the restaurant there in the Arrivals Hall and wait for him to come to meet me there. I then paid Julius for the air time on his phone and thanked him for helping me to get in touch with Zachary Wanjohi, and then went over to the restaurant and sat at a table there. After about a 30 minute wait there at the restaurant table, Zachary Wanjohi came up and met me at the Kenya Airport Arrival Hall downstairs where I was located, and we greeted each other and spent a few minutes catching up on things. It was great to finally be connected with my host TPI Kenya National Director after a couple hours of trying to locate him in the airport. Pastor Zachary has helped us to put on three TPI Institutes and a one-day seminar in Kenya and Rwanda over the past six years. He was also involved in helping to meet with Martin Shikuku concerning the TPI Lumakanda Institute near Eldoret , Kenya , that we did at the beginning of this month, July 5-9, 2010. He was also aware that I was coming through Nairobi , Kenya , but did not know when I was coming or did not have the specific details of my flight arrangements, and so did not know of my arrival until I called him from the airport. I had told him of our call to Martin Shikuku this morning in Kinshasa, DRC and of the previous emails that I had sent both to Zachary and Martin, but he did not get them and did not get a call from Martin about coming to pick me up at the airport today. This just goes to show that cross-

cultural communication can sometimes be difficult when several parties are involved in the process. The main point now is not what went wrong in the miscommunication, but to focus now on getting everything sorted out for the trip ahead and my stay overnight at the Rusam Villa Guest House. Zachary had told Samuel Karemeri, the manager, about getting a reservation for me at the Rusam Villa Guest House since he had heard about me spending a night in Nairobi from Martin a couple weeks ago, but he did not know the day when I would be coming to town. He therefore called Samuel Karemeri over there as soon as he heard from me tonight on the phone, and was able to get a room there for me at the last minute.

After talking with Zachary Wanjohi for a little bit and waiting while he talked with his daughter on the phone, we got my small bags on the cart and took them outside of the airport to the parking lot, and unloaded my bags into the taxi that Zachary had brought to the airport to pick me up there. Then the taxi driver drove Zachary and me out of the airport to go over to the Rusam Villa Guest House. On the way, Zachary Wanjohi and I spent some time talking about the TPI Lumakanda Institute near Eldoret , Kenya , and how he had very little feedback about what took place, and did not meet up with Martin Shikuku as had been originally planned before the institute took place. I filled him in on many of the details and told him how the Lord had blessed the institute greatly, and that 258 pastors attended the institute and 232 of those pastors received a certificate at the end of the week.

Then we came to the Nyayo Stadium area where the Old Donholm Estate, House No. 128, was built into what is now the Rusam Villa Guest House. It is near one of the worst slum areas here in Nairobi , but you would never know it to be in this place. This is one of my favorite places to stay in Africa , and I have stayed here many times for a few days of rest and relaxation after weeks of hard work in stressful living conditions. It is such a comfortable place that is shielded from the outside world and is very quiet with a great staff, comfortable rooms, good food, and nice hot showers. Pastor Zachary helped me sort out a few details in the hotel and we also set up that his taxi driver would come to pick me up tomorrow morning at 5 AM to take me to the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport for my flight tomorrow from Nairobi , Kenya to Harare , Zimbabwe . Then I bid my goodbye to Pastor Zachary and thanked him for helping me to sort out these details for my trip and getting me back on course again, and I promised to contact Pastor Martin Shikuku and get the two of them re-connected again.

I was left there at the Rusam Villa Guest House, where I checked into the same room, 216, on the second floor that I occupied here the last time I was here a couple of years ago. Lamek Ochieng', the attendant helped me get my small bags into my room, and I went there for a short time to sort out my things and get settled into the room. After awhile, I came back to the new restaurant, and had my dinner in a very dark room since there was only one light in the room on the other side. Salome Nduta Kan'gethe, who has helped serve me here many times before, and had previously checked me into my room earlier in the evening when I arrived here, also served me my dinner at the restaurant. I had rice and beef casserole with vegetables, chicken soup and rolls, and tea and a Coke. I had a very relaxing meal talking a little with Salome about things here at the Rusam Villa Guest House since my last visit here. After dinner, I went over to the front desk again to pay my lodging fee and my dinner bill since I would be checking out tomorrow morning at around 5 AM. I gave Salome a \$50 dollar US bill, which paid everything off with a little change leftover. Then I went back to my room # 216 and settled into my room for the rest of the night. I typed some on my Email Report on my laptop computer, while sitting on one of the two twin beds and using the night table as a desk. Then I also charged some batteries and downloaded a card in my Jobo Spectator. After awhile, I got pretty tired and went to bed real late after 1 AM for a very short night's sleep. I was thankful to be in this place, but I would prefer to be here for a couple of days with nothing planned so I could get the full benefit from this beautiful haven that was once a beautiful estate located on a quiet street near one of the biggest slums here in Nairobi, Kenya.

The next day, [Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup>](#), I woke up very early at 4 AM in my Room # 216 at the Rusam

Villa Guest House when Lamek Ochieng', the attendant came and knocked on my door to wake me up. I quickly took a nice hot shower with a nozzle overhead just like in America in a big bathroom with no shower curtain. Then I quickly got dressed for the day and got my bags packed up for my trip early this morning to the airport. When I was ready, I went downstairs to the new restaurant for my breakfast, and Salome Nduta Kan'gethe had prepared two fried eggs, a sausage, toasted bread, a pineapple juice, and tea. It was a great breakfast, but I had to eat it pretty fast. Then I went back to my room and quickly finished getting ready for the day. After a few minutes, the taxi driver came and got my small bags from my room and took them downstairs to load them into the taxi. I said goodbye to my friends at the Rusam Villa Guest House, and the driver drove me in his taxi back into town until we reached the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport . He left me off at the International terminal where the Kenya Airways flights took off, bid me goodbye, and I got into a long queue (line), where I slowly made my way into the airport. After a long wait, I finally made it to the Kenya Airways ticket counter, and got my boarding pass for the flight. Then I proceeded through Passport Control and got my passport stamped, and went through a security checkpoint right into the international wing of the airport. I waited until it was time to check-in to the gate, and went to the agents at the gate and gave them my boarding pass, and went through another security checkpoint, and waited at the gate until it was time to board the plane.

After a little while, I boarded a full plane on Kenya Airways Flight KQ 714, leaving Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi , Kenya at 7:20 AM, and arriving at Harare International Airport in Harare , Zimbabwe at 9:10 AM. I sat on the window seat with a young nineteen year-old Chinese boy, Xin Zheng, from Jiang Xi, China right next to me in the middle seat. He was going to visit relatives in Zimbabwe for the first time for two weeks. There was a African woman named Kathleen from Nairobi , Kenya next to him on the aisle, who was coming to Harare for business for the next week. We had a good flight with a breakfast, which consisted of a concoction of a scrambled-eggs benedict, a sausage, potatoes, a croissant roll, assorted fruit, a fruit yogurt, orange juice, and tea. We had a pretty uneventful flight and even saw the two peaks of Mount Kilimanjaro in northern Tanzania poking out of the clouds from the sky and several other mountain ranges. We arrived on time and landed at Harare International Airport with very few people congregated in the airport. I deboarded the plane and walked on the tarmac over to the immigration wing of the airport. Then I went through Passport Control and bought a Zimbabwe visa for \$20 US dollars since this was the only visa that I did not have because PVS International did not have time to get it before I left one month ago. I had no problems getting the visa and the Immigration officer stamped it for me, and then I went downstairs to the Baggage Claim area and got a cart and immediately got my black suitcase without any delays. I took my cart through customs and exited out of the international area of the airport into the Arrivals Hall around 9:30 AM. [When I rolled my cart out of the Green Zone into the area where everyone was waiting for passengers, I did not see Joseph William there to pick me up at the airport. I waited for a little while longer and went back over the line to make sure that I did not miss anything, and then I rolled my cart outside the airport to wait there for Joseph to come meet me there. This is now the second straight time that I was not met by my national host leader due to a miscommunication issue. I was not worried though because I knew that our national leaders would eventually come to the airport and meet us.](#)

[When I went outside the airport, I met a pastor, Emmanuel Muperekedzwa, from Chimoio , Mozambique , who met me in line at the Kenya Airways queue \(line\) at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi , Kenya , and flew with me on the same flight to Harare International Airport in Harare , Zimbabwe . He wanted to hear about our TPI ministry and what we were doing here in Harare , and then he invited us to come to Mozambique , a very poor country east of here and north of South Africa , and conduct a similar institute for pastors there. He offered to help us put it on and gave me his personal information to get in touch with him. I thanked him and thought about how great is the need for these pastors to get this pastoral training in all of these African countries.](#)

When I still did not see any sign of Joseph William, I went back inside the Arrival Hall of the Harare

International Airport , and went over to the drink fountain area, where there were some tables. I sat at a table and pulled out my laptop computer and decided to kill some time by typing my Email Report on my laptop computer at a table there at the fountain area. I used a plug in the wall and spent a couple of hours typing on my Email Report there in the airport. Around 12 PM, I noticed a crowd of people congregating around the exit area of the Arrival Hall, which indicated that a flight was arriving soon. It was a South African flight coming from Johannesburg , South Africa . So I packed up my bags and pushed my cart over to the waiting area to see if Bobby Ferguson, my pastoral trainer colleague, might be on this flight. While I was waiting with the group of people for the passengers to arrive, Joseph William and his brother, Dickson William, came up to me and greeted me, wondering when my plane had arrived at the airport. I told him that I arrived here at the airport at 9:30 AM, but Jennifer had told Joseph William that I was arriving here at 12:35 PM, which is what one of the schedules had said was the published arrival time of my flight. Instead, my flight arrived here earlier than what was originally thought by our TPI Zimbabwe National Director, Joseph William. I told Joseph not to worry about my early arrival because I was able to work on my Email Report in the intervening time before he got here. Secondly, we still had to wait for Bobby Ferguson to arrive here anyway, so it was not really a problem. Joseph did, however, tell me that there were several churches that wanted me to preach this morning, so I did miss some preaching opportunities in local churches in the area, but there was not much we could do about that given the situation that we had at this point. Joseph had preached in one of those churches since I was not available at the time. Then we decided to thank God that the Lord has brought us together even though our arrival times were two different times, and we missed some preaching appointments as a result. Once again, these are things can happen when miscommunication takes place, especially in cross cultural situations.

After we waited for all the passengers to arrive on the South African flight, and Bobby Ferguson was not one of the passengers there, I said to Joseph, "Maybe we need to see if there is an internet cafe here at the airport so I can look at Bobby's itinerary in my email to check to see which flight he is flying today." So while we left Dickson William at the exit area of the Arrival Hall to see if another flight might arrive, Joseph William and I went to look for an internet café. We finally found one called CST Internet Café on the other end of the airport terminal, and I got on the desktop computer to check my email account for 30 minutes. I found out that Bobby Ferguson is flying on a British Air Flight from Johannesburg , South Africa to Harare , Zimbabwe that is supposed to land any minute now. He had left on Friday night, July 30<sup>th</sup> from Atlanta , Georgia at 9:15 PM and flown all night, arriving in London , England at 10:15 AM on Saturday, July 31<sup>st</sup>. Then he had an eleven-hour layover in London Heathrow International Airport , and then flew from there at 9:15 PM to Johannesburg , South Africa , arriving there at 9:05 AM on Sunday (today), August 1<sup>st</sup>. Then he had a three-hour layover at O.R. Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg , and then flew from there at 12:15 PM to Harare , Zimbabwe , arriving here at 1:55 PM. When he came out of the customs area with his bags and boxes, we were still in the internet café, but Dickson William met him and properly identified him and brought him toward us.

We had just finished our time at the CST Internet Café and had paid the lady \$1 US dollar, and were on our way back to the exit area of the Arrival Hall when we met up with Bobby Ferguson and Dickson William pushing his cart with his bags and boxes of TPI notebooks toward us. We greeted Bobby and it was great to see him here in Harare , Zimbabwe . All of the boxes of TPI notebooks were accounted for, and Bobby arrived in tact with all his bags as well. He had one real long layover in London , England , and two really long flights and one short flight to get here. We were all thankful that the whole team had arrived and everyone was here and all the bags and boxes of notebooks were accounted for so we can now begin our fifth TPI Institute in Harare , Zimbabwe .

So we took a couple of pictures of the whole team, and then rolled our carts out to the taxi in the parking lot, and loaded all the bags and TPI notebook boxes in the car. Then the taxi driver drove all of us away from the Harare International Airport into the main city of Harare , which is about 30

minutes away. We drove right into the main city centre of town on the main avenue in the city. We drove over to our hotel, Quality International Hotel, which is on the corner of Nelson Mandela Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street in the Central City District of Harare, Zimbabwe. As soon as we got there, the hotel staff checked Bobby Ferguson and me into our rooms. I checked into Room #616 and Bobby checked into Room # 615, right across the hall from me on the sixth floor, which is the top floor of the hotel. We also paid for our rooms, which were \$70 US dollars a night, and included a breakfast meal each day. Then the hotel staff helped Bobby and me get our big bags and small bags up to our rooms, while they put the two packs of three boxes each of the TPI notebooks downstairs in a locker to get out tomorrow for the institute. Then we thanked the Lord for our safe arrival and asked the Lord's blessing on the upcoming week at the Harare, Zimbabwe TPI Pastoral Training Institute here in the centre of town. Then we bade our goodbyes to the national team of Joseph and Dickson William, while Bobby and I settled into our rooms there at the hotel.

After a little while, Bobby Ferguson and I went downstairs to the main restaurant to have our dinner meal. We ordered steak and rice, vegetables, chicken soup, bread, orange juice concentrate, tea, and vanilla ice cream for dessert. It was a very relaxing meal and we talked about Bobby's full trip here to Zimbabwe and my first four institutes in Africa for the past month, including some of the challenges that we have already had as well as some of the difficulties encountered so far. Then we paid our bills and went back upstairs to our rooms for the evening. I spent the rest of the night typing my Email Report on the laptop computer at the desk in my Room # 616. There was not much light in my room, but it was adequate. I also downloaded some cards and charged some batteries for my camera. I ate a granola bar and did some more typing on my Email Report and watched some English TV on one of the channels. I finally got pretty tired and went to bed around 12 midnight after a very long two days of traveling from Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo to Nairobi, Kenya on the first day and then from there to Harare, Zimbabwe today. It is great to have both of the teaching team safely here with all of our bags and notebooks here as well. We trust the Lord will give us a good week here at the Harare TPI Pastoral Training Institute!

I thank the Lord for His faithfulness to give us a great TPI Institute in Kinshasa , DRC, which is the fourth of six week-long institutes in Central/East/Southern Africa. He also got us safely from Kinshasa , DRC to Harare , Zimbabwe to begin our fifth TPI Institute. God has kept us safely here in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, where it is always a challenge to hold institutes in this country due to the presence of wars and much chaos and the sheer numbers of people living here. Please continue to pray for the many pastors that we trained that they would be able to implement the training in their ministries for the six institutes we did in six countries.

Yours for Christ's mission,

John Balmer, Jr.