

Saturday, 22 November 2008

Hi there

The last four months has been amazing and challenging. I'm writing this letter to thank you for your help in making what has become the "Life!" initiative happen. The vision of "Life!" is to see the rural areas of Africa transformed through the power and practice of the Christian Gospel. Key to this vision are the activities of Christian Discipleship, Supporting Projects that enable God given leaders the space and time to lead and village based Practical Community projects that seek to show and demonstrate the love of God to everyone. We believe one village at a time, that rural Africa can be changed and won for Jesus. Most importantly, it can be done by those in the villages.

Just so I name what you have done, thanks for trusting us. Thanks for spending the time with Alan discussing and thank you for the work you have done with Rooted in Jesus. It truly is excellent. I look forward to working more with you in the future and we really must meet sometime. I'll be in touch about that.

I wrote an entry in my blog ([www.jonpaulwitt.com](http://www.jonpaulwitt.com)) a few days ago, and I tried to list all that has been achieved in the last four months. I wanted to list it here, because you were very much a part of the work. All of this work was carried out in an area around 100 square kilometres to the west of Chingola in Zambia. You can see some other reports of the mission on [www.dignityonline.org.uk](http://www.dignityonline.org.uk)

- We have learned what is needed to take the gospel forward in rural Africa, and we believe we see how to do it. Our resolve to do so has strengthened.
- Befriended, worked and ministered with a team of 5 rural pastors. In August, we spoke to over 2000 villagers about prayer and showed the Jesus film in 8 locations.
- Developed and carried out a conference called 'Loving the Lost' which aimed to excite, inspire and recruit missionaries to the cause of rural African mission. Over 33 Churches attended the conference.
- We examined and built a relationship with an outfit called ReSource who publish an excellent course for rural discipleship called Rooted in Jesus. We are using this as part of the Life! Initiative.
- We initiated 4 Life! groups in 4 villages as an initial trial. This after some weeks was successful.
- We formed a team with a joint vision and shared values across two continents to take forward the cause of Christ in an area. This team comprises the same 5 pastors we worked with earlier on. They are slowly being joined by others.

- We have found a way to support our colleagues in the mission God has called them to through growing cabbages and rearing chickens. More than this, we believe this will give them the freedom to grow the ministry themselves, giving them and the ministry an opportunity to escape from poverty. The team is accountable to one another and we hope this provides a model for future accountability in Africa.
- We have laid the foundations of a wider communal project to support the expansion of the ministry.
- We developed and held a Life! conference in association with Rooted in Jesus, where villagers from a further 11 villages and some slums were invited. We trained, extolled, prayed, strategised and schemed, to see the expansion of the Kingdom of God.
- We made friends in many new places, giving us opportunities to take the work further in the future.
- We have made tentative plans to follow up in January and run a second Life! conference later in 2009, to enable the villagers to practically assist in their villages.
- We have proved that we can set up, enact and take down a short/medium term incursion and have seen practically that this is a viable way for us to work, with real long term change.
- We have seen that it is possible to have many teams pioneering the work. We have tentative plans to expand the work significantly in the second half of 2009.

Well there you go. It's a big list! In some way, God has used a gift of yours to contribute to the above. Feel proud of being associated with what God is doing. I know that I do.

I hope and pray that our relationship will continue over the coming months and well even years and together we will see a significant dent in what is a very real darkness for many people in rural Africa.

Please pray for us as we go forward, and if you would like to be involved in any way, drop me an email or give me call. It will be great to speak to you.

God Bless

Jon