



# THE ENCOURAGER

Help for Sunday School Teachers – Dedicated to those who bring the Word of Life to Children Everywhere

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## TEACHING TEACHERS

The Sunday School Teacher's conferences came about because a fellow worker, Tom Robertson, had been given an abridged set of posters based on the New Tribes Mission, Firm Foundations set of posters. This set was divided into 40 picture posters, with an English lesson written on the reverse.

One of the impressions that people have when they come to Zambia is the amount of kids there are. 50% of Zambia's population is children under 13. How can they be reached? How can the Sunday School teachers be taught? If we just give out these sets of posters to Sunday School teachers will anyone benefit?

Since many people in the area cannot easily read or speak English, will they be useful? What is the best way to give them out? Do I have time?

These were some of the questions going through our minds as we considered what we were to do. Tom and I felt that the most profitable way to make use of the posters would be to gather together Sunday School teachers from many different assemblies, and teach them the lessons ourselves.



After a time of prayer, we approached the elders of a nearby assembly and they agreed that we could use the building and they would supply the cooks. We determined that we would meet once a month to teach four or five lessons to the teachers that gathered from the 15 area assemblies. One lesson for each Sunday of the month. Who would meet? Would people be interested?

From the very beginning, on that first Saturday in January 2008, there were 13 assemblies and 34 Sunday Schools represented! That meant in total, the teachers were teaching over 2000 students! The Lord had answered our prayers in a much bigger and grander way than we ever imagined!

The first Saturday of the first six months, the same ones came again and again - walking and riding bicycles, some from as far as 30 kms away. They were serious! Breakfast (rice) and lunch (nshima mush, leaves and dried fish) were served. And then there was the tremendous privilege to teach the Sunday School teachers, who in turn were committing the Word to young people in their home areas. Many of the Sunday School teachers had little background in the Bible. "Aren't you going to tell us about when 'Joseph' killed the man and buried him in the sand?", was one question asked.

## TEACHING TEACHERS (Continued)

The purpose of the lessons was not only to go through the various stories from Creation to Christ, but to show how the foundation for the Gospel was being laid right from the book of Genesis. We were not just giving them four or five Sunday School lessons to teach. We were teaching them the gospel and also giving pointers on how to instruct the children. Sunday School teachers, some of them elders in the assembly, were encouraged to not only carry the message to the children, but also share the good things they were learning with the assembly as they met together. Many teachers commented on the usefulness of the posters in keeping the attention of their students.

The Sunday School teacher's conferences concluded the first Saturday in February, 2009, 14 months after they had commenced. There had been a few breaks during the cold season months when there are several conferences. The program of 40 lessons had been completed. As we visit assemblies, we often see the cardboard folder and the pictures still being used.

After finishing the lessons, there was a desire by those who were attending to continue in some way. We have continued in monthly teaching meetings, systematically teaching chapter by chapter through the Books of Galatians and Romans. More than only Sunday School teachers are coming to these monthly meetings. The Lord gives the needed help to prepare and teach His Word. May He receive the glory in it all!



Contributed by:

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Mark and his wife Pam have been at Sakeji for 7 years, and have three children in the school there, Caleb 13, Shoshanna 10, and Naomi 7. Pam continues as Nurse at the School as well.*