May
2018

NEWS BRIEF

Want some *Good News* for a change?

Every so often a story comes across my desk that begs sharing. You won't read about it in the daily paper or see it on the evening news, and it probably didn't even make it to social media with all of its surprises everyday.

However, let me warn you that the story that follows just might cause many of you to jump out of your chair and shout, "Amazing! Praise the Lord!"

Traveling from point A to point B in many African countries can sometimes be a challenge.

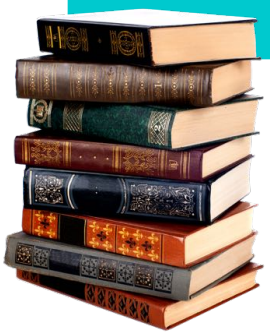
Take Macgeofrey Mwale for example; he is a pastor and GSSM graduate from Malawi. Macgeofrey was asked to speak to a group of pastors and other believers in Mozambique, a very poor country located on the Eastern border of Malawi.

Getting there was another matter. No limos, no trains or any other forms of transportation that a poor pastor could afford. But let Macgeofrey share his adventure as he sought to encourage his brothers and sisters in Mozambique and provide some Bibles for those who had none.

“It was one of those journeys I won’t forget…

While I was traveling seated on top of a truck carrying people, goats, firewood and other merchandise, it started to rain heavily. The rain was so massive that the driver of the truck lost visibility of the road and had to stop the truck. Everyone and everything was deeply soaked. Our books and the merchandise being transported were soaked. My camera and phone, along with other papers and books did get wet and most were declared unusable.

Amazingly, the carton of Bibles never got wet.



A few kilometers ahead, the main bridge had washed away and at this point we were only halfway to my destination. There was no turning back… nowhere to retreat. **We waited for 5 hours for the water to recede in order to cross over to the other side.** When we finally managed to get across to the side which would put us on the road to my destination, a large number of bicycle riders were waiting to transport people desperate for help to get to their homes or other places. Because of the situation, the bicycle taxis were charging excessive prices.

However, one gray-haired old man approached me and promised to give me a lift. After looking at this old man's frail body, I had second thoughts. It would be impossible for him to get me and all of my possessions to my destination. But this man insisted he could do it. Not having any other choices, I reluctantly gave my approval as I climbed aboard with my box of Bibles, papers, and other belongings and prayed for traveling mercies and strength for this optimistic old man. It was now getting dark as we headed down the road towards my destination that was 49 kilometers away (about 25 miles). I thought that this was impossible. It would never work. There were hills ahead to climb. The load on this sturdy, single geared bicycle was heavy. How could we possibly make it?

There were hills ahead to climb.

Incredibly, this frail old man pulled out onto the poorly maintained road full of potholes and other hazards and we moved off into darkness. I was certain we would end up walking, or worse, crashing. Amazingly, this man in his sunset years kept pedaling. **He never stopped for water, food, or even a short break.** It was now past ten at night and soon we would be closing in on midnight. We were climbing up hills that would test any bike rider, even the young ones with no load whatsoever. But this frail old man kept pedaling. **No stops, no rest. No water, just pedaling on into the darkness with no light.**

In disbelief, we arrived at our destination. **Impossible, I thought. Absolutely impossible!** We were tired, hungry, and thirsty but we made it.

When I asked this incredible old man how he was able to pedal his bike and heavy load non-stop for hours, **his reply shocked me."**

"I saw myself being lifted up by men dressed in white and so it was not me cycling, but those men lifted us up and I am amazed too for it has never happened before in my life."

Macgeofrey was able to minister faithfully to those in Mozambique and provide Bibles to those desperate for a copy of God's Word. When he finally returned home he said, "I am back home tired, drained, and deeply inspired… it was worth it all. Mozambique is not an easy country to go to for it is still underdeveloped with no good infrastructure and there are still landmines from the war that are around in unknown places in the countryside. Prayer works miracles."

Indeed, God does the impossible and all we can do is praise Him and be grateful that we can be part of His family as undeserving as we are.

Interestingly, Macgeofrey and his good friend, pastor Banda, are also enrolled in one of GSSM's graduate courses that we are offering entitled, "Paul, A Man of Grace and Grit". Our text is a book written by Charles Swindoll.

As you know, the Apostle Paul went through incredible hardship as he maneuvered his way throughout the known world, proclaiming the Good News while dodging threats of death and unbelievable hardship. Welcome to the missionary equivalent of the Navy Seals and Army Rangers.

But there is still more good news ahead. Read on for another gulp of pure joy as those you are supporting continue to push into the harvest fields of our dangerous and needy world declaring the life-changing message of Jesus Christ and making disciples.

BREAKING NEWS

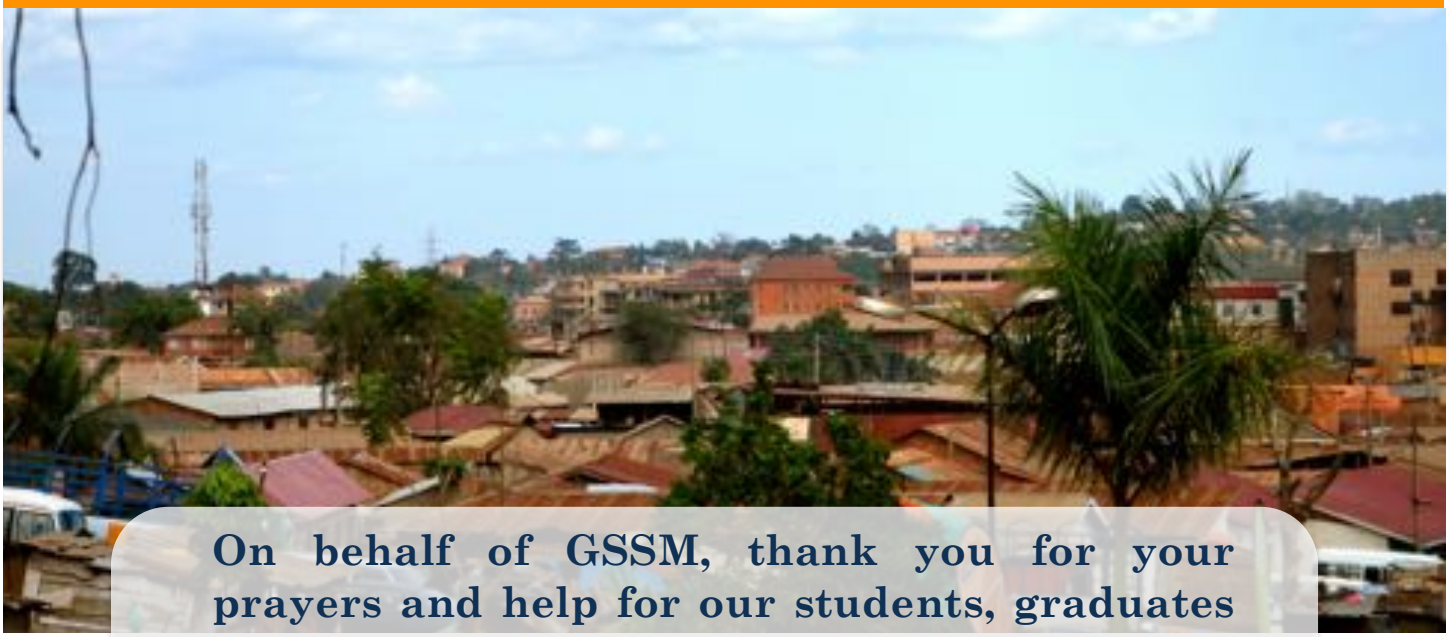
Just prior to going to press, GSSM was pleased to learn that Sequoi Phipps has accepted an invitation to become the newest member of the GSSM Administrative team in Virginia.

Sequoi comes to GSSM with a wealth of experience and will be a tremendous help to Executive Director, Alyssa Mahone, as Sequoi takes on the task of directing and overseeing the fast-paced growth of social media.

She will also be helping with numerous other aspects of GSSM's growing programs which will include working with Dave Carr who recently agreed to help develop creative sustainability programs that will assist GSSM graduates fund their sports ministry programs that are being initiated in different parts of Africa and beyond.

Dave Carr was one of Russ Carr's (no relation) early soccer players at Westmont College and now resides in Vermont. Dave is semi-retired and currently serves as a volunteer instructor for GSSM. Dave and his wife, Barby, have been great supporters of GSSM along with their church, Middletown Springs Community Church.

And so we welcome Sequoi. Please pray for this dedicated young woman as she raises her support and in the meantime will be traveling to Africa to fulfill an earlier commitment to lead a small team of missionaries to South Africa and Swaziland.



On behalf of GSSM, thank you for your prayers and help for our students, graduates and many others who have been entrusted in our care as we equip them to "go and make disciples". We deeply appreciate your much-needed support as God leads and enables you.

Blessings,

Russ Carr, President & Alyssa Mahone Carr, Executive Director

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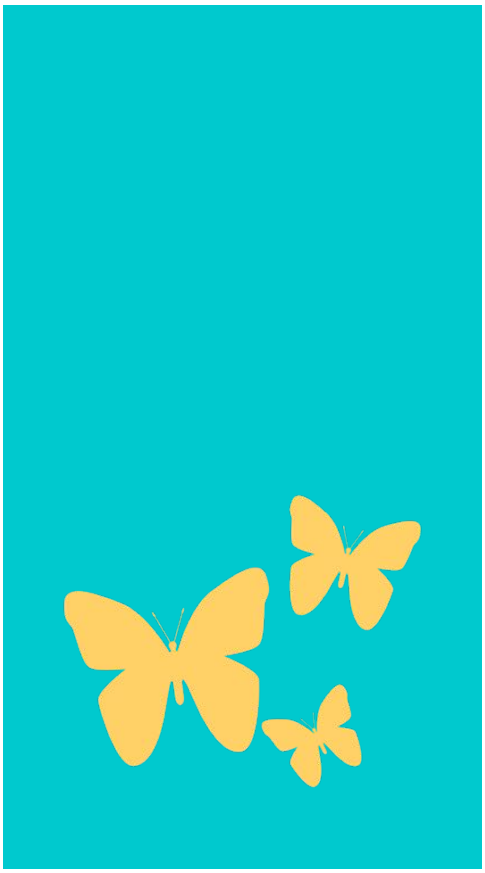
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