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The Brazil-Uganda Connection?

I (Bill) recently returned from my second mission trip to Uganda this year. PEF has asked its missionaries to participate in a PEF board member's International School of Evangelism (ISOE) held two to four times a year in Uganda. My first trip was in January, where I received training the first week and spent two weeks putting that training into practice in two different Ugandan provinces.

Dr. Henry Krabbendam and his African Christian Training Institute enjoy training people in what they call an "abundance culture." Uganda, which witnessed revival from 1927 to the 1970's, is incredibly open to the gospel! Even the minority Muslim population will receive you into their homes to listen!

During my last trip my team was going door-to-door when we encountered a well-dressed man in his front yard. We told him that we were Christians wanting to talk to him about his 3 B-I-G PROBLEMS (a hard and deceitful heart, a filthy past record and a poisonous and unholy life). He immediately told us he was a Muslim in an attempt to get rid of us, but I assured him we did not intend to talk about religion, but about his problems and God's 3 B-I-G SOLUTIONS (a new heart, a clean record and a holy life - Ezekiel 36:25-27). He invited us into his home and rounded up his family to listen to the "Christians." I feel we clearly communicated the sufficiency of Christ and the deficiency of Islam during our time there.

To our surprise we discovered our host is a medical doctor and professor at two local universities. Since he was on vacation, we happened to find him at home! Maybe God used us only to plant the seed, but we're praying for good soil and much fruit through this man.

Campus Conquests

The first semester has been both encouraging and discouraging on campus. First, the bad news.

We had nearly 30 students who received some or all of our evangelism training last year, but most didn't transition with us to 2011. We started out this past semester - in March - with only a handful of students, adding a few more after announcing the start-up of 8-32's new Biblical Evangelism module on campus. We're not sure why students have seemingly lost interest in being equipped to reach their peers, but we will be changing our publicity strategy as well as offering our Biblical Worldview module throughout this semester (August 15 to December 16).

The good news is that both Aïda and I have started discipleship groups with those students who continued with us into 2011.

More Good News

Since Easter is Christianity's most important event (And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins. - 1 Cor. 15:17), The 8-32 Movement ran an evangelistic campaign this semester that exposed over one thousand students to the gospel! I (Bill) used my Resurrection Theories banner outside the main student cafeteria, allowing us to explain why the theory of the resurrection makes the most sense and why Jesus had to die in the first place. Of course I was able to easily transition into the gospel, explaining to over 500 students why they truly need Jesus the two weeks leading up to Easter.

Another 500 received a comic book gospel tract clearly showing that "sin is the transgression of God's Law" (1 Jn. 3:4 - KJV), that lawbreakers will be eternally punished in hell and that Jesus' death and resurrection are God's only solution for their dilemma. Most found our tract so compelling that they stopped to read and discuss it with their friends right on the spot! (continued on page 4)
The Brazil-Uganda Connection? (cont.)

Two highlights from my second trip to Uganda - in the Kampala district - involved ministry in a rural village setting.

A Muslim comes to Christ! While waiting for a couple of us to finish getting ready for another day of ministry, South African Michael van Rensburg walked over to the gas station to share his faith. He asked the attendant, “How are you?” When the young man asked him the same thing, Michael responded with “I am doing great in the joy of Jesus!” The gas station attendant shot back, “I am doing great in the joy of Allah!” However, apparently Allah wasn’t satisfying him at all because, after Michael asked him how Allah could forgive sin without the shedding of blood, the guy decided Jesus was God’s only solution to his three problems and courageously called upon Jesus to save him, telling a Muslim friend that he is now a follower of JESUS!

Preaching the Word Michael and I were informed of the Pastor/Leader Conference theme (1 Tim. 2:8) ten minutes before having to preach in the poor village church. After quickly consulting a study bible for 1 Timothy’s context, I began to expound on 2:3-13. What happened next was amazing! I saw cross-references and explanations popping into my head as I waited for my translator to finish each phrase. I had such a sense of satisfaction when I finished for having declared biblical truth that was faithful to the immediate and overall contexts of the passage. “Dr. K.” loves to put his ISOE students into situations that demand total dependence on the Holy Spirit so that we can see our spiritual gifts “popping out”! I love what I saw pop out!

As far as finding out what you’ll be preaching on ten minutes before, definitely “Don’t try this at home!” However, when God says “Preach the Word” and you only have ten minutes to prepare, I’m living proof that you had better PREACH THE WORD… in season and out!

Campus Conquests (cont.)

While reaching the lost we often run into the “already found” too. One girl, Barbara, impressed us with her transparency. She confided in us that, due to her professors, she was beginning to doubt the Bible. Barbara’s plight is, unfortunately, very common among Christians – at least those who call themselves “Christian” - who enter the academic “arena.” This reinforces our desire to develop a biblical worldview in our students so that they can face the challenges in the classroom… and come out on top, for the glory of God!

One time Aïda took Brenda, whom she is training, out to do evangelism on campus. After talking for a while with a girl whom they assumed, based on her answers, was an unbeliever, they were surprised to hear her say, “Of course I believe in God! I’m an evangelical!”

Aïda and Brenda thought: “You could have fooled us!” Oh, how students in this post-modern world need the true, biblical gospel on campus and in, if they have them, their churches!

This is precisely why The 8-32 Movement exists!

8-32’s Goals Until The End of 2011

The pace of the year seems to be increasing. It’s hard to believe it’s already late August! Before you know it we’ll be in December!

That being said, we’d like to take a quantitative look back on what’s happened so far as well as what we hope to see happen by Dec. 31.

THE 8-32 INSTITUTE

The 8-32 Movement wants to equip students, professionals and local churches to both understand and deal with current philosophical, cultural and religious challenges to The Faith. This is why we are currently preparing a new Christian Worldview curriculum (and using what we’ve just prepared on our campuses).

We also want our people and their churches to be as biblical in the area of evangelism as possible. We’ve already held two of four one-day Biblical Evangelism seminars, as well as one of two citywide trainings. Three down, three to go.

REACHING THE LOST

1,335 college students (our goal is 2,000) and 22,865 from the community (goal: 50,000) have been reached with the biblical gospel to date. We are doing this at Fluminense Federal University, Plinio Leite University and in downtown Rio de Janeiro.

DEVELOPING LEADERS

In addition to a handful each of students and professionals in discipleship groups, 8-32 hopes to develop 8-10 trainers/disciplers by 12/31; we’re up to four so far.

MOBILIZING LEADERS

One goal was for 8-32 to host its first International School of Evangelism (ISOE) with Dr. Henry Krabbendam. Our 1st ISOE (7/22-26) surfaced at least two committed evangelists in our church!

So far two university students (e.g., André Orsi) have participated in our Biblical Evangelism seminars and campus modules. We stand amazed at how God has gifted these two guys; of course, we want to mobilize even more by 12/31.

So there you have it. Please use the above goals and YTD results to guide you in your prayers for us! Thanks so much!  🙏

P.S. Amelia & Jessica are doing fine, but please pray for their school situation. Their principal died unexpectedly in July!