

INDIGENOUS TRAINING MINISTRIES, INC.

REVC'S NEWS & VIEWS

by
RevC

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TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!

MALAWI, AFRICA: Day 2



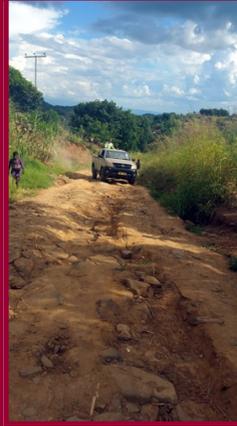
Malawi, Africa, is a beautiful country that is ripe for the harvest! Many people, young and old, have come to faith in Christ in response to the *Jesus* film. Muslims are turning to Jesus as Savior! Believers are growing in their faith as churches have been planted. We have seen strong, Christian leaders raised up through the CTC programs. The "Peanut" Church now has a building where villagers can come to worship, learn, and grow in their faith. Four more churches will soon have buildings in Malawi and Mozambique! We are so thankful for your faithful prayer and financial support! To God be the glory for all He has done in this part of Africa!

Last month, I reported on the first part of my trip to Malawi. Continuing on to day two, Pastor Stephen Tambuli, one of our CTC directors, arrived at my hotel early to tell me that he felt he needed to change the oil in the truck before leaving for Mathiya village. The roads to Pastor Willie's village were a "hardship." He wanted me to be ready to leave two hours later than we had planned. Little did either one of us realize how troublesome that two-hour difference would become on our return leg of the trip.

We began the drive by traveling through some high areas where vast fields of green tea shoots were being harvested. It was like a beautiful green carpet had been laid out as far as one could see, interrupted here and there by dark green trees with big bright yellow blooms. I wanted to stop and take a photo, but we were running late so we didn't. **This was our first mistake!**

To say the roads to the village were a "hardship" was an understatement of monumental proportion. I have never travelled on roads like this one in my 20 years as a full-time missionary! Prior to that, I lead teams into many countries, traveling on roads that were little more than a stretch of dirt where it appeared that a minefield once existed. All those roads pale in comparison to what we were about to face. The next day my body was still feeling the effects of the drive! I had endured nearly five hours of bouncing around inside the cab while climbing and descending the worst "roads" I have ever been on!

It took about two hours to get to our destination once we turned off the highway onto a nice, wide dirt road. We began to climb the first of four or five mountains that we had to traverse to get to Pastor Willie's village. The roads seemed to become worse the closer we got to Mathiya village in the Thyolo district. This photo is of one small area. It is difficult to see from the photo all the areas where the



wind and rain have washed out the road leaving sunbaked trenches behind. We used the four-wheel drive quite often as there were several very steep grades and the back two tires had very little tread which caused them to simply spin in the normal two-wheel drive. We should have bought new tires. **Mistake #2!**

All along the way were villagers walking along the edges of the "roads." Some carried heavy burdens on their heads and others were barefoot (OUCH!). Many of the views into the valleys below were breathtaking. However, when you are praying that you won't be joining those down below at any moment, it takes the enjoyment out of the experience. Stephen was constantly saying how much he appreciated the truck! He told me that it was such a wonderful gift from the Lord and that it would be a great asset to the ministry in these difficult areas. By now, I just wanted to get to the village alive, meet Pastor Willie, take a photo or two, give him the plans for his new church, bless him with some money, and get headed back before dark.

We finally arrived at Mathiya village and had to park the truck and walk past the village pump station where several ladies were taking turns pumping water and filling containers. They would then put the containers on their heads and carry them back to their homes. Just past them, we began the 200-yard climb up a steep hill. On the way, a teenage boy came down the hill, carrying about a ten



to fifteen foot portion of a six-inch diameter tree trunk on his head as if it were nothing! Not far from the top of the hill was a field with a small home on one end and a baobab tree on the

other. In the photo, Pastor Willie and I are standing on the ground where "**New Hope Center**" will soon rest. Pastor Willie has been discipling a small group and holding evangelistic meetings in a tempo-





rary setting. An actual church building will make a tremendous difference!

Stephen and I were anxious to start back because we could see dark clouds moving in our direction. We were concerned that it

was going to get dark much faster once the sun got below the mountain peaks. We did not get far before the drops of water that began to appear on the windshield of the truck quickly became a rainstorm! This was not a good situation considering how bad those back tires were and that much of the mountain road was made of soil akin to **“red Georgia clay.”** Once it got wet, the ground would be like ice. We were sitting at the bottom of a very steep grade, watching the water pour down toward us, when a young boy came to the driver side window and offered to help us get up the grade. He said he and his friends had done this for others and would use stones to keep the truck from sliding back down. I told Stephen if he chose to go for it, I would be standing at the top of the hill, waiting and praying! I got out and saw it was just as bad as I had thought: slippery, muddy, and all four tires caked with mud. Stephen started going up slowly using the four-wheel drive as the group of seven young men pushed for all they were worth. They got about three quarters of the way up when the backend began to move toward the ditch and the truck froze! The men and I re-positioned the truck, four of us on each side to help push it away from the ditch. It had to be a God thing as we made it to the top! The men then told us there were other areas ahead where we would need them. They would come along, for a fee naturally! We were more than willing to pay.

Although the rain stopped and the sun came out, the road-way was still very treacherous. The men rode in the back of the truck for quite a distance, their weight over the back two balding tires making all the difference in getting over the next two climbs. After a time, we paid each of the men their asking price of 1000 Kwacha each or \$1.39! We then continued very slowly until we were faced with another dangerous grade. Another group of men offered their services and piled in the back. Their weight was what we needed.



Before they left, we paid them, too, and I took their photo.

We soon came to an area where a big truck was stuck in the mud with another one waiting to come our way. After several men pushed and helped dig the big truck through, the second truck also got stuck. We decided to go above the “road”



where the trucks were having trouble and did manage to get through. A small miracle! We joined a caravan of three similar sized vehicles as the headlights on our truck were so bad that even

on bright we could barely see the road in front of us. **Not getting new headlamps, mistake #3!** Much of the rest of the way was downhill. Even though our backend was at times out of our control moving side to side, God kept us!

Once back on the main road, Stephen stopped and changed the four-wheel drive to what he thought was neutral. Arriving in Blantyre, we were feeling relieved when suddenly the truck jerked to a complete stop directly across from a Muslim mosque on a two-lane one-way street. Smoke came billowing from under the hood. I soon discovered what appeared in the dark to be a trail of oil on the road behind the truck. I began to direct traffic around the vehicle until Stephen could figure out what to do. Then a divine appointment took place. A young mechanic came by, stopping to see what the matter was. He quickly diagnosed the situation, saying that the four-wheel drive had not been disengaged as we thought. **Mistake #4!** Towing the truck would cost a small fortune so he offered to fix it so we could drive it home. Once the truck was repaired, we asked the mechanic what we owed him. He charged us 7000 for himself and 3000 for the other man who helped him (10,000 Kwacha = **\$13.90**). **PTL!!** On our way back to my hotel room, Stephen and I remarked what a miracle it was that the young mechanic had come by and was willing to help us and not take advantage of the situation. Stephen is going to ask the young man, Nelson, to be our mechanic for the truck. Both Stephen and I were exhausted, dirty, and hungry from not eating all day. In spite of that, we realized that God had been with us and seen us through to a good end! We gave thanks for God’s faithfulness even when we made mistake after mistake. God is always looking out for His children even when we mess up again and again.

Thank you to all of you who helped with the truck. It now has new rear tires, new headlamps and taillights, and has been repaired and repainted, ready for the next adventure! Please know you are always in my prayers and that your faithful support is what keeps us moving forward. I continue to release God’s blessings on all who pray and partner with us!



Our greatest project need now is student support. \$600 trains a pastor. Your prayers and giving count! Blessings!! **TOGETHER WE’RE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!**

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