

As I look back on my first week here in Malawi, I am very pleased with what we accomplished. The first day here was spent in Lilongwe gathering supplies for our trips. I bought 924 bibles and four cases of raisins and also picked up some personal items (including water). This year I am breaking the trip into two sections. The first three weeks I will be working out of Lilongwe which is the capital city of Malawi. There is a brother here who works for the government and has the funds to help me. He is providing me his home to keep my things and as a base to return to after each trip. He has allowed me to use his car while I am here. Fuel is over \$2.00 a litre which works out to \$8.00 gallon. Although this adds to the expense of the trip, it also offers the opportunity to preach in locations that otherwise I would be unable to reach.

I asked them to find congregations in several different districts so I would have the opportunity to reach out into new areas I have never been. I am hoping that these lessons will lead the preachers to also preach these things. We soon developed a routine. Each day we preach in a new location. So we arise about 6:00 and prepare for the day. We try to leave by 8:00 and often drive over the rutted and bumpy roads for over an hour. After our arrival we begin our classes. The first day we arrived late due to the longer drive. We started about noon. The elders wanted a lesson on "Christian Living." So I took the opportunity to lay the foundation for the day.

I began with Isa 55 and spoke of God's ways and our ways. That often a culture will develop its own ways and customs. Then after many years when confronted with God's ways they will feel they are very strange. I then spoke of polygamy, divorce and other moral issues, comparing them to the words of Jesus that sound so strange in today's culture. We discussed 1 Peter and the vain manner of life handed down from our fathers along with the concept of holiness. Using my toothbrush as an example I describe the fact that something becomes holy when it is ours. A toothbrush is holy to each person. If a child takes that toothbrush and drops it into the toilet it is no longer holy, but defiled. We also spoke of holiness in the context of value. That when growing crops only the fruit is holy, the plant is common with no value and is burned. So it is with humanity. If we make ourselves special for God's use we will be holy in both ways. After making several different moral applications we closed the first session. After about 20 minutes we started the second session. This time I decided to deal with polygamy. I began with Christ being the head of the body and there is only one body. Jesus is also the one husband over the church. Since there is one Lord, one body and one church, the pattern of Jesus being the husband also proves that marriage is between one man and one woman. The example of marriage in the beginning also proves that God made no provision for divorce or polygamy. By making only one woman, Adam had no choice but to remain with her and make things work. While Jesus emphasized the beginning in Mt 19, Paul combined both the beginning and Jesus as one husband in Eph 5 thus creating an ironclad argument against both divorce for any cause and polygamy.

In the third session we spent an hour and a half on the family stressing the need of the husband to serve his wife as Christ served the church. I then reminded them that God's ways can seem strange in a culture that has moved away from them and that the way the husband treats his wife in Malawi is far different than God's ways. The men were very receptive and the women overjoyed. After this session we broke for dinner. But they wanted to come back after and ask more questions. We finished at 9:30 that night. In the morning we arose early to drive to the next village which took about an hour. We followed the same routine as the previous meeting except they wanted a lesson on the difference of the church and the denominations and especially Jehovah Witnesses. We preached until 5:30 and ended the day. The next morning it was another hour to the next village and another long day of teaching. This day followed nearly identically to the previous days.

Our fourth day in Dedza was the Lord's day. We arrived at about 9:30 to find a crowd of over one hundred. They wanted to have three classes/sermons and then the Lord's supper. I taught on Christian living and on worship then ended with a lesson on the family. We finished about 3:30, but during lunch, I was asked many different questions including the head covering and singing during the Lord's supper. We didn't leave until about 6:00.

We then had to drive home in the dark which is always a stressful experience. If a driver breaks down, he does not move onto the shoulder, but stops right in the lane. So at night you never know what might be around the bend. Some truck drivers will drive at night without lights, so passing a slow moving vehicle, even when the road is straight creates great stress as you don't know if a car will be parked in the road or a truck coming without lights. Added to this are the bicyclists who ride in the road and the roadblock that appear without warning. So it was a long hour and a half to arrive back in Malawi. So ended my first week. Thanks for your prayers and the opportunity you have given for me to come to Malawi and help the people here.