



Hunter French <hunter@frenchfamily.org>

TPI Africa Trip Report 3

1 message

J Balmer <jbalmerjr@yahoo.com>

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John and Scott Girard are currently in Bujumbura, Burundi, conducting the 3rd institute of the summer. Please pray for their safety because the terrorist group responsible for the attacks in Uganda are promising more attacks in Uganda AND Burundi. I've been to Bujumbura and know that the hotel and church are both well gated and secure, so that is a comfort, but you just don't know what might happen.

John's journal below continues the first week in Lumakanda, outside Eldoret, Kenya. They gave out 232 certificates and had about 258 attending. Certificates are only given to those who are there for every session the entire week, and once again there was controversy over who deserved to get them. It just shows how important it is to them.

One interesting note is that there were 32 denominations present. As a result of the institute they decided to form the Lumakanda Pastors Fellowship, where they will meet monthly to focus on some of the things that came out of this institute. This will be a first as they previously met within their own denominations, but not interdenominationally. What a blessing to see the unity of believers and to be a part of it.

*Thank you for your prayers!
Jennifer Balmer*

Dear Friends

The next day, [Thursday, July 8th](#), I woke up early in the morning in my Room 407 on the fourth floor at the Cicada Hotel near the city centre of town. I woke up around 4:30 AM and got up and began typing on my email report. Eventually around 6 AM, I took a warm shower with a nozzle overhead and enjoyed a long and refreshing shower in a room with a queen-sized bed, a desk, and a bathroom with a shower curtain covering a portion of the bathroom area so that the water goes onto the floor all around. After the shower, I got dressed and continued typing some more on my email report. At 6:30 AM, I met Paul Swets, and we went downstairs and had breakfast at a table in the restaurant called The Bazaar, right next to the hotel lobby. We ate a good breakfast which consisted of wheat bars of cereal mixed with corn flakes, two fried eggs, ham, sausage, several glasses of Mango Juice, and African Chi (tea). Charles Karuru, the Associate Pastor to Pastor Martin Shikuku, came to the hotel and joined us at the restaurant at the end of our breakfast. Then we went back upstairs to our rooms and finished getting ready for the day. We got started a little sooner today, but I still spent some time working on my email report and getting a few details ready for the day. After a little delay, we brought our small bags downstairs to the lobby and loaded them into Pastor Charles Karuru's SUV Toyota Voltz.

Pastor Charles Karuru drove Paul Swets and me out of Eldoret into the rural area of Kenya about 40 minutes due West on the road that leads eventually to Uganda to a small town called Lumakanda (about 45 kilos or 40 miles from Eldoret, Kenya), which is half way toward the Uganda border, which is a total of two hours drive west of Eldoret. We had to stop by the White House stop along the way and picked up some milk in a yellow carton for the institute. The last portion of the drive was on a dirt road, which can get quite muddy during the rainy season such as right now. The road was a little muddy at first, but Pastor Charles Karuru negotiated the roads quite easily, and we arrived at the Lumakanda Baptist Church in Lumakanda, which is where our venue is this week for the TPI Pastoral Training Institute. Charles made much better time because he has a much faster vehicle for driving, and we arrived a little late around 9:00 AM due to all the details that we had to do before coming this morning.

We are meeting in five white tents that were erected outside the church on the church property because the

TPI Local Committee felt the church building could not handle 300 people, which is the number of pastors attending this week. When we got there, we got news that Paul Swet's suitcase had finally arrived from the flights that he made this past weekend from Memphis, Tennessee to Nairobi, Kenya. Pastor Martin Shikuku was contacted by Nancy at the Virgin Atlantic Office and was told to go to the G4S Office, a security office in Eldoret on the main road in town (Uganda Road), which had already retrieved the missing suitcase at the Eldoret International Airport from the Virgin Atlantic Airlines that sent it there from Nairobi, Kenya, and brought it back to their office. He then went to the G4S Office and picked up the suitcase that Paul Swets had brought with him and packed it in his trunk at no charge. Then he drove to Lumakanda Baptist Church in Lumakanda, and the suitcase is in the trunk of his car. We also asked Pastor Martin to contact the office of our Precision Air Flights from Nairobi, Kenya to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania on Saturday morning to make sure that our flights are confirmed. I then quickly put on my sun block before I started teaching this morning because [I am teaching in the direct sunlight without any covering and it is hot today. We started the TPI Lumakanda Institute around 9:15 AM with 250 pastors, evangelists, and national missionaries for the morning session.](#)

Pastor Peter Mwilitsa greeted the pastors and opened the TPI Lumakanda Institute for the fourth day with a short devotion. Then he introduced me to begin the fourth session on Expository Preaching, which deals with the study of a particular passage of a book, and doing a grammatical analysis of that passage. [I put the cowboy hat on my head that one of the pastors gave me yesterday to help shield the sun from my face, and all the pastors really enjoyed that quite a bit.](#) I reviewed over the definitions of expository preaching and went back over the need to study the text from 2 Timothy 2:15. I also set the context of the first step of studying the text, which is observation. We reviewed over the process of studying the whole book and making a chart of the book. We also reviewed over the process of looking at the details of the text by studying the grammatical specifics of a particular passage such as the one we chose in Ephesians 2:1-10. We used the same two chalk boards from yesterday, which already had the whole passage of Ephesians 2:1-10 copied on it so we could observe the grammatical details of the text. Therefore, we reviewed over the same passage and how to observe adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, relative pronouns, direct and indirect objects, and also reviewed looking at the subjects and the verbs, tenses of the verbs, and voices of the verb. Today, we looked at the prepositions and prepositional phrases. We also looked at the structural markers to detect the structure of the text in order to develop a Biblical outline of the text. We then developed a Biblical outline of the text, which will become the basis of developing a preaching outline of this passage. So we concluded the session with a challenge to study the text before you preach the text. Furthermore, I concluded the session by stressing the importance of studying grammar using the grammar notes in the notebook. Then Pastor Peter Mwilitsa came up and highlighted the importance of expository preaching for the pastors with a special emphasis on studying the text.

After a few preliminary announcements and directives, we took a tea break by going into the main building of Lumakanda Baptist Church and being served African Chi (tea) with small wafers. We had a short break and met at a table inside and talked with some of the key leaders of the TPI Local Committee. Then we went back outside to the tents and resumed the institute. Pastor Peter Mwilitsa, the Local TPI Vice-Chairman, had Paul Swets come up and begin his session on an exposition of Philippians. He came up and reviewed over the book of Philippians and the main theme verse, Phil. 4:4, an overview of the truths of the book so far covered, and an outline of the week. Then Paul began his second message from the passage of Phil. 3:1-21 on "Joy in Straining toward the Goal." This passage brings out Paul's goal and purpose in life. It is seen in three main truths. The first truth is have no confidence in the flesh, wherein lies all obstacles to the Christ-life in us. The second truth is put confidence in Christ alone. The apostle Paul develops this by rehearsing over his past life, his pivotal conversion, his personal testimony, and his passionate purpose – to experience the power of Christ's resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His suffering. The third truth is to press forward toward the goal. This is brought out in Paul's humility – I am not perfect, and in Paul's singleness of purpose – this one thing I do, which involves forgetting what is behind, straining toward what is ahead, and pressing toward the goal to win the prize. Paul Swets then closed out the session by applying this passage to the pastors with actions to take and other verses to think about. We then had a short time of worship led by the singing team and keyboard players.

Pastor Martin Shikuku made a few comments before Pastor Peter Mwilitsa came up and invited me to come up for my fourth session on the Christian Life Convention: The Sanctification of the Believer. I taught this session from inside the tent rather than wearing my cowboy hat when I was preaching. Today we resumed the sequence of teaching on the progress of sanctification by dealing with the topic of the filling of the Spirit. Therefore, we have dealt with 1) Dealing with Sin in the Believer's Life, 2) God's Provision for the Believer, and 3) Surrender to the Lordship of Christ. In dealing with this important topic of the Spirit-filled believer, we

must first differentiate between the baptism of the Spirit and the filling of the Spirit. According to 1 Cor. 12:13, the baptism of the Spirit has to do with placing all believers into the Body of Christ and thus bringing all believers the essence of their salvation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Every believer has been baptized by the Spirit according to this verse and it is a past tense verb and refers to a past experience not a present tense command to seek by the believer. On the other hand, the filling of the Spirit is a present tense command for all believers to seek in a continual process, and is not necessarily experienced by all believers. The believer who is filled by the Spirit and is given time will grow to maturity, whereas the believer that is not Spirit-filled will live out of the flesh and will not grow to maturity. The passage that is the foundation of the doctrine of the Spirit-filled life is Ephesians 5:18, which says, "Be filled with the Spirit." The filling of the Spirit is contrasted to a drunken man who is under the control of alcohol, whereas the Spirit-filled man is one who is under the control of the Spirit. Therefore, the issue of the Spirit-filling has to do with the control of the believer by the Holy Spirit or a yielding or surrendering of his life to God or specifically to Christ, and what Christ controls, the Spirit fills, and thus, the believer is consecrated or separated unto God's service as a result. This is a present tense passive voice verb, which means we must daily surrender the control of our lives to Christ's control and thus be filled with the Spirit as a result. I then challenged the pastors to surrender their lives to Christ and be filled with the Spirit and thus be empowered by God to live the Christian life, and invited them to come forward to solidify this decision in their hearts. Once again, most all of the 250 pastors, evangelists, and church leaders came forward and knelt down on their knees on the grass and began praying to the Lord for about 10 to 15 minutes. It was quite a sight to see these pastors surrendering their lives completely to Christ. After spending time in personal prayer, I led them in a corporate time of surrendering our lives to Christ and sensing His sweet presence in that place. Then the worship leaders led the whole group in singing and thanking God for working in our lives. It was truly a great time of breakthrough in this fourth meeting of our Christian Life Convention. Afterwards, Pastor Peter Mwilitsa came up and make a few announcements and dismissed the group for lunch after a pastor led in prayer.

We broke for lunch and all the pastors got into a queue and went around the back of the sanctuary to pick up their meal to eat it inside the sanctuary. Meanwhile, the leaders, including Paul and me, went inside the sanctuary to a table, where the ladies brought our meal to us. We ate rice and meat, sauce, and a green vegetable and African Chi (tea) and water. We had a great time of enjoying fellowship around the table and eating a good African meal together. Then we went back outside to resume our institute. We had 242 pastors, evangelists, and church leaders for the afternoon session for our fourth day of the TPI Institute.

After lunch, we went again to the tents outside the sanctuary and the worship team led us in a song. Then Pastor Peter Mwilitsa invited Paul Swets to come up and lead his afternoon session on "The Art of Leading Successfully." Paul began by reviewing over the overview of the outline of study for these five afternoon sessions on Leadership. Then he proceeded to deal with his fourth session on "What results do we want from our leadership?" Paul looked at the results of each area of the Church in the Scriptures to see how those results could help us evaluate our church ministries today. The first area is what results related to worship. He then enumerated the following results as seen in different Scripture verses in the Bible: joyful praise, sincere prayer, confession of sin, assurance of forgiveness, preaching of the Word, communion, and blessing. The second area is what results related to making disciples. He then enumerated the following results: Bible study, personal prayer, and service. The third area is what results related to fellowship. He then enumerated the following results: fellowship meals, sharing one another's burdens, and encouraging one another. The fourth area is what results related to caring ministry. He then enumerated the following results: divorce recovery, peace mediation, visiting the sick, counseling those in grief, and funeral services. The fifth area is what results related to evangelism. He then enumerated the following results: lifestyle evangelism and community questionnaire, which involves using diagnostic questions, a gospel presentation, and a prayer to receive Christ as Savior. Paul then concluded this session on leadership influence in pastoral ministry with a challenge to make some practical applications for their church ministries today.

There was a short time of worship as the team of singers led the group in a couple of songs. Then Pastor Peter Mwilitsa invited me to come and teach the last session on the overview of the Old Testament. We then reviewed over the book of Genesis and did all the signs of the first part of the Walk Thru seminar. We also reviewed over the rest of the Pentateuch by doing the signs of all the major people, places, and events. I then taught through the conquest period with Joshua conquering the land and settling it and the period of the Judges, Ruth, Samuel, and the United Kingdom era with Saul, David, and Solomon. Then we reviewed over the signs of the whole Pentateuch and the Conquest Period, Judges, and United Kingdom Era. We therefore concluded the fourth day of the institute after a great day with these pastors and church leaders. Then Pastor Peter Mwilitsa came and closed out the fourth day of the institute with some comments and concluding

remarks and necessary directives for tomorrow. Then Pastor Martin Shikuku also made some concluding remarks to prepare the pastors for tomorrow and to encourage them to tell other pastors that needed to attend the institute as well. He had one of the pastors close in a word of prayer and dismissed the institute for the fourth day.

After the institute was over, we said our goodbyes to the pastors as many of them got onto their bicycles, motorbikes, or walked on foot back to their homes. So Paul Swets and I brought our small bags and loaded them into Pastor Charles Karuru's SUV Toyota Voltz, and he drove us back to the city centre of Eldoret, where we came to the Cicada Hotel, our home for the week. Then Matthew Limo helped us with our bags up to our rooms and I went to my Room 407 on the fourth floor. [Paul Swets suitcase was brought up to his room from Martin Shikuku's car, and he finally had his suitcase for the first time since he left with it from Memphis , Tennessee six days ago. Paul has been wearing the same outfit for the last six days, and he is very happy to finally have his suitcase again so he can get some other clothes.](#) This is one of the difficulties of coming to Africa when your suitcase or boxes do not show up with you on your flight. I have experienced this many times, and it is no fun. It took the Virgin Atlantic Airlines three days to get the three TPI notebook boxes to us and four days to get Paul Swet's suitcase to us. [Praise God that we now have everything sorted out with Paul Swet's debacle in his flights to Kenya just one day before we fly from here to Tanzania . It would have been an even bigger mess if we had to leave here without either the boxes or Paul's suitcase, but thank God, we do not have to do that.](#) We also found out at this time that both Paul Swet's and my flights on Saturday afternoon with Precision Airlines from Nairobi , Kenya to Dar Es Salaam , Tanzania have been confirmed, and everything is ready. We met with Pastor Martin Shikuku briefly about a few things regarding the institute and made a few adjustments, and then we said goodbye to him as he left to go home. When I got to my room, I applied the After Sun medicine to my face and it felt good to get some medicinal aloe on my face, which had a cooling effect on my face, but it left a white residue on it as well. Then Paul Swets and I went down to the restaurant called The Bazaar, where we had our dinner meal for the night. We had a good meal which consisted of rice and chicken, vegetables, tomato soup, Mango juice, and Coke Light (Diet Coke). We had a good day and talked a little about our fourth day at the institute. Then we went back up to our rooms and stayed in for the night. I spent some time typing on my Email Report for awhile and then went to bed after a great fourth day at the TPI Lumakanda Institute near Eldoret , Kenya .

The next day, [Friday, July 9th](#), I woke up early in the morning in my Room 407 on the fourth floor at the Cicada Hotel near the city centre of town. I woke up around 4:30 AM and got up and began typing on my email report. Eventually around 6 AM, I took a warm shower. After the shower, I got dressed and continued typing some more on my email report. At 6:30 AM, I met Paul Swets, and we went downstairs and had breakfast at a table in the restaurant called The Bazaar, right next to the hotel lobby. We ate a good breakfast which consisted of wheat bars of cereal mixed with corn flakes, two boiled eggs, ham, sausage, several glasses of Mango Juice, and African Chi (tea). Pastor Martin Shikuku and his wife Ann Shikuku also came to our hotel this morning and joined us for breakfast. They had the same meal with us and we enjoyed a wonderful last breakfast together. Charles Karuru, the Associate Pastor to Pastor Martin Shikuku, came to the hotel and joined us at the restaurant at the end of our breakfast. Then we went back upstairs to our rooms and finished getting ready for the day. We got started a little sooner today, but I still spent some time working on my email report and getting a few details ready for the day. Paul Swets and I came downstairs with our small bags to leave for the day, but we did not see Pastor Charles Karuru in his vehicle, so we went to the row of desktop computers in the lobby and spent the time going to our email accounts on the internet. After a long delay, Charles came to the lobby and said that he had been in his SUV the whole time waiting for us, but we did not see him, so we brought our small bags from the lobby and loaded them into Pastor Charles Karuru's SUV Toyota Voltz.

Pastor Charles Karuru drove us to Lumakanda. Once again we stopped by the White House along the way to pick up some milk for the institute. We arrived a little later around 9:30 AM due to our missed connection this morning. I quickly put on my sun block, and [we started the TPI Lumakanda Institute around 9:45 AM with 258 pastors, evangelists, and national missionaries for the morning session.](#)

Pastor Julius Olindo greeted the pastors and opened the TPI Lumakanda Institute for the fifth day with a short devotion. Then he introduced me to begin the fifth session on Expository Preaching, which deals with the study of a particular passage of a book, and developing an expository message from this passage. I reviewed over the definitions of expository preaching and went back over the need to study the text from 2 Timothy 2:15. I also set the context of the first step of studying the text, which is observation. We reviewed over the process of studying the whole book and making a chart of the book. We also reviewed over the process of

looking at the details of the text by studying the grammatical specifics of a particular passage such as the one we chose in Ephesians 2:1-10. We looked at the two chalk boards, which already had the whole passage of Ephesians 2:1-10 copied on it so we could observe the grammatical details of the text. Therefore, I reviewed over the structural markers of the passage to be able to observe the structure of the passage. I gave them a short presentation of the different clauses to look for in the text. We took this information and combined with the grammatical details of the parts of speech to develop a Biblical outline of the Ephesians 2:1-10 passage. We divided the passage into three sections such as Our Past Life before Christ (vs. 1-3), What God did in Christ (vs. 4-7), and Our Present Life in Christ (vs. 8-10). Then we divided each of these major divisions of the passage into smaller divisions within each major division.

After looking at some of the other factors to look at in the observation part of our study of the text such as the type of materials that authors consider, the type of literature utilized in the text, and the atmosphere of the text, we moved into the interpretation phase of our study of the text. We examined four questions that we use to help the Bible student/pastor interpret the details already observed in the text. When this step is employed, certain truths emerge from the text, which form the basic truths that will formulate the message or sermon. At this point, the Bible expositor must seek to apply these truths so as to allow these truths to be explained and applied in the context of the people that he will preach this sermon. Then it is time to organize the truths of the text into a sermon, which requires understanding the dominating theme of the passage, the integrating thoughts, and the motivating thrust of the passage. Then we encourage the pastors to take the main points and secondary points and add flesh to the bones. This is done by going back to the passage and adding explanations of each point, illustrations of each point, and applications of each point. This flesh on the bones is the main body of the sermon, and then it only becomes necessary to add an introduction and a conclusion to complete the message. Then I used the analogy of an airplane taking off on the runway to exemplify the introduction and an airplane landing on the runway to symbolize the conclusion. **Therefore, I concluded the session by stressing the importance of studying the text, compiling a sermon in written form, and then preaching the message to the people. So we concluded the session with a challenge to study the text before you preach the text.** Then Pastor Julius Olindo came up and highlighted the importance of expository preaching for the pastors with a special emphasis on studying the text.

After a few preliminary announcements and directives, we took a tea break by going into the main building of Lumakanda Baptist Church and being served African Chi (tea) with small wafers. We had a short break and met at a table inside and talked with some of the key leaders of the TPI Local Committee. Then we went back outside to the tents and resumed the institute. Pastor Julius Olindo, the Local TPI Chairman, had Paul Swets come up and begin his session on an exposition of Philippians. He came up and reviewed over the book of Philippians and the main theme verse, Phil. 4:4, an overview of the truths of the book so far covered, and an outline of the week. Then Paul began his final message from the passage of Phil. 4:1-23 on "Joy in the Presence of God." This passage deals with standing firm in our faith in the midst of difficulties in our lives. The key question is: What difference does the presence of God make in our lives, especially when we encounter difficulties or trials? The apostle Paul seeks to challenge the believers to stand firm in four areas in their lives. First, he challenges them to stand firm in seeking peace with one another (4:2-3). Second, he challenges them to stand firm in their joy (4:4-7). The believers are to know that God is near, anxiety is forbidden, prayer is prescribed, and peace is promised. Third, he challenges them to stand firm in the way they think (4:8-9). The believers are to think about things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. The key is that one's thinking leads to one's practice. Fourth, he challenges them to stand firm in their contentment in Christ (4:10-23). The apostle thanks the Philippians for their gifts, reminds them that he has learned to be content in all circumstances, testifies that he can do anything through Christ's strength, and promises that God will meet all their needs according to His riches in Christ. Paul Swets then went over some verses to memorize and some other verses outside Philippians that speak to some of the issues raised in this book. He then closed out the session by applying this passage to the pastors with actions to take and other verses to think about. We then had a short time of worship led by the singing team and keyboard players.

Pastor Martin Shikuku made a few comments before Pastor Julius Olindo came up and invited me to come up for my fifth session on the Christian Life Convention: The Sanctification of the Believer. I taught this session from inside the tent rather than wearing my cowboy hat when I was preaching. I took a few minutes to talk about a problem that arose from quite a few pastors that got Paul Swets' email due to Paul giving it to one pastor and then he gave it out to many other pastors. I asked any of those pastors who received this email not to use it because we have established national leaders of TPI in Kenya, and we do not want the pastors to contact us when we have local leaders here in Kenya. Otherwise, pastors would bypass our local leaders and come straight to us, and thus, we have violated our leadership that we have established by having the

pastors come straight to us. So we asked the pastors to please not use Paul Swets' email if they have it, but to contact our local TPI leaders, which we will give their emails later today.

Today we resumed the sequence of teaching on the progress of sanctification by dealing with the topic of Christian service. Therefore, we have dealt with 1) Dealing with Sin in the Believer's Life, 2) God's Provision for the Believer, 3) Surrender to the Lordship of Christ, and 4) Filling of the Spirit. Once we have completed the first four sessions of living the sanctified life, we have believers that have dealt with sin, trusted Christ for the victory, surrendered to the Lordship of Christ, and filled with the Spirit. Thus, each believer is now ready to serve the Lord as a sanctified believer. Therefore, on the last day, we focus on Christian service. It is only then that we can follow the Lord in Christian service to go wherever God leads us to go to serve Him in preaching the gospel. I then went to one of the Great Commission passages and showed how Jesus challenged His disciples to "go and make disciples" and serve the Lord in His mission to reach the world for Christ. We went to Matt. 28:18-20 where the task of making disciples for Christ involves: 1) going to the nations (people groups), 2) baptizing believers, and 3) teaching believers to obey the Word of God. I dealt with this Great Commission passage to challenge the pastors to respond to Christ's call to all believers to get involved in His mission to the world. I also went to some of the other Great Commission passages, and finally to John 20:21, where Jesus said to His disciples, "As the Father sent Me, I also send you." [I spent some time to look at how God sent Christ to this world, and that this is the basis for our being sent by Christ into the world to preach the gospel. Like Isaiah, I challenged the pastors to respond to the Lord with the statement, "Here am I, send me." Then I invited anyone to come forward to submit their lives to the Lord in responding to our Lord's call to take the gospel to the nations of the world. Once again, most all of the 250 pastors, evangelists, and church leaders came forward and kneeled down on their knees on the grass and began praying to the Lord for about 10 to 15 minutes. It was quite a sight to see these pastors surrendering their lives completely to Christ to the global outreach to take the gospel to the world. After spending time in personal prayer, I led them in a corporate time of surrendering our lives to Christ to go wherever He leads in taking the gospel to the world in worldwide missions, and sensing His sweet presence in that place. Then the worship leaders led the whole group in singing and thanking God for working in our lives. It was truly a great time of breakthrough in this fifth meeting of our Christian Life Convention. Afterwards, Pastor Julius Olindo came up and make a few announcements and dismissed the group for lunch after a pastor led in prayer.](#)

We broke for lunch and all the pastors got into a queue and went around the back of the sanctuary to pick up their meal to eat it inside the sanctuary. Meanwhile, the leaders, including Paul and me, went inside the sanctuary to a table, where the ladies brought our meal to us. We ate rice and meat, sauce, and a green vegetable and African Chi (tea) and water. We had a great time of enjoying fellowship around the table and eating a good African meal together. Then we went back outside to resume our institute. [We had 258 pastors, evangelists, and church leaders for the afternoon session for our fifth day of the TPI Institute.](#)

After lunch, we went again to the tents outside the sanctuary and the worship team led us in a song. Then Pastor Julius Olindo invited Paul Swets to come up and lead his afternoon session on "The Art of Leading Successfully." Paul began by reviewing over the overview of the outline of study for these five afternoon sessions on Leadership. Then he proceeded to deal with his fifth session on "What is Our Plan for Leading Successfully?" He dealt in this last session on seeking counsel in making plans, committing our plans to the Lord, trusting God to direct our steps, and seeking to improve our plan by making adjustments along the way. Many leaders do not evaluate their plans as they go along in their ministries, they just react to each situation and suffer the consequences. Paul recommended four questions to ask to help in this evaluation step to better improve your leadership. First, ask yourself what has not worked in the past and what do you need to abandon? Second, ask yourself what has worked and what do you need to strengthen? Third, ask yourself what new directions in your ministry would stir your emotions? Fourth, ask yourself what are some of the risks to take and what risks do you need to avoid? Then Paul moved to the main focus of his teaching today, which is to get the pastors to state in writing their leadership plan. He challenged them to write out their vision, which is what they want their church to look like five years from now. Second, he challenged them to write out their mission, which are the specific elements that makeup the main focus and nature of their ministries. Lastly, he challenged them to write out their goals, which are 3 to 5 aims for their church to fulfill the mission of the church and accomplish their vision as well. Paul then concluded this session on leadership influence in pastoral ministry with a challenge to make some practical applications for their church ministries today.

There was a short time of worship as the team of singers led the group in a couple of songs. Then Pastor Julius Olindo invited me to come and teach the last session on the overview of the Old Testament. We then reviewed over the book of Genesis and did all the signs of the first part of the Walk Thru seminar. We also

reviewed over the rest of the Pentateuch by doing the signs of all the major people, places, and events. We therefore reviewed over the Pentateuch, the Conquest Period, the Period of the Judges, and the United Kingdom under Saul, David, and Solomon. Then I taught through the Divided Kingdom where Israel was divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah . The northern kingdom of Israel lapsed into further decay since there were no righteous kings in the land, whereas, Judah had some righteous kings (8) but Judah also ended up in decay. Few of the people of either kingdom listened to the 17 prophets that God sent into the land. As a result, God used Assyria to wipe out Israel , Babylonia to destroy and capture Judah , taking them into exile for seventy years, and Persia to bring Judah back to their land. God used several key people to bring Judah back to the land (Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah) and Esther to protect the exiles in Babylonia . There was one more 400-year period of silence where God did not speak until the time of the New Testament and Jesus Christ was presented to the world. We therefore reviewed over all of the signs of the Old Testament and ended up with the last sign of Christ with an eruption of praise to God. We therefore concluded the final day of the institute after a great day with these pastors and church leaders.

Pastor Julius Olindo came and closed out the fifth day of the institute with some comments and concluding remarks. Then Pastor Martin Shikuku closed out the institute with some appropriate remarks and had a pastor close in a word of prayer. [Right after the teaching was completed, there was a torrential downpour that was heavy at first, but continued steady with less force right through our Celebration Service. We broke immediately and went outside the tents in the pouring rain and had our pictures taken under the banner for the institute. There was a whole group of pastors standing in the rain and we all got soaked, but we got our pictures taken of the whole group. Then we went back to the tents to resume the Celebration Service as the rain continued to come down pretty hard at first.](#)

We immediately began our Celebration Service to give out the certificates and bring our institute to a conclusion. Pastor Martin Shikuku, the TPI Area Coordinator for the Rift Valley Area, and Pastor Julius Olindo, the local Lumakanda TPI coordinator began the service by recognizing all of the TPI Lumakanda Local Committee, which included several people. The whole group of pastors gave thanks for this group of leaders for all the work that they did to make this institute a success. [Then Pastor Olindo read off the 32 different denominations of churches represented at our TPI Lumakanda Institute, and each of the pastors or people represented by the denomination stood when their names were read. He also announced the formation of the Lumakanda Pastors Fellowship, which has been formed as a result of this institute. This is the first time that all of these denominations have been able to come together collectively like this, and they determined to meet together regularly from now on once a month to focus on some of the things that came out of this institute. Previously, most of the pastors would meet within their own denominations, but not in an interdenominational meeting like the one we just had this week in our Lumakanda TPI Institute.](#)

Then Pastor Martin Shikuku invited me to come up and recognize others who had an impact in the success of the week. I publicly thanked Jennifer Balmer, my wife, who worked very hard to put the notebook together along with a handful of staff in the United States who worked hard to produce these notebooks for the pastors. Jennifer also made the certificates for the pastors. [I then pointed out all of the churches and individuals who gave to make this institute possible for the pastors to attend this week. I showed the twenty-four churches on the inside of the notebook cover, who were responsible for helping with this financial need. I encouraged the pastors to pray for these churches that the Lord would continue to bless their ministries. The pastors responded with a round of applause.](#) I also thanked the local Lumakanda TPI Committee and Pastor Julius Olindo and his team. The local Lumakanda team under the direction of some of the ladies, gave both Paul Swets and me an African shirt a plaque of Kenya , and two gifts for our wives, a nice pocketbook and another wrapped gift to give them. We thanked the ladies on behalf of the whole group for these nice gifts and put on our African shirts, and everyone applauded their appreciation to see us in their African apparel. Furthermore, I also presented Pastor Martin Shikuku with a book on The Life and Letters of Paul in appreciation for what he has done all week to put on this institute. I also gave Pastor Julius Olindo a book by Charles Swindoll in appreciation for his leadership. Lastly, I gave Anne Shikuku, Pastor Martin's wife, a scarf that my mother made by hand and she was very appreciative of it as she put a really nice blue scarf around her neck. I announced that anyone who needed to stay in touch with TPI needed to get in touch with both Pastor Martin Shikuku and Pastor Julius Olindo for Lumakanda since Martin is our key leader in the Rift Valley Area and Julius is his assistant and leader in this area, and we want people to be in touch with them, not contact us directly. Then they gave their contact information so the pastors could keep in touch with them. I also thanked Pastor Paul Swets for his teaching and sacrifice to come here to offer his ministry to these pastors.

After all the preliminary matters, we began the commissioning service. I challenged the pastors to stand and present themselves to the Lord. I read Ephesians 3:14-21 to reflect Paul's prayer for these pastors. Then I asked Pastor Martin Shikuku to come and pray for these pastors as they presented themselves to the Lord and we commissioned them in their ministries to the Lord. [Once this process was completed, we began the certificate ceremony, where we handed out 225 certificates to each of the pastors, evangelists, and national missionaries. We called out the names of about 35 pastors to come forward to receive their certificates in front of the tents since there was a shortage of time.](#) Then we exited the tents and went over to the Lumakanda Baptist Church, and several of the local committee called out the rest of the names of the pastors who were to receive their certificates, and they each came forward to receive their certificates and have their moment of recognition. Then there was a group of about 7 pastors and another two or more pastors who said that they attended the institute all week, but did not receive their certificates. So we began a very tedious process to get the Registration Chairman to validate the attendance records for each of these pastors, and there were a few more there who it was apparent that they had not been there for the whole week and were trying to get a certificate as well. Pastor Martin Shikuku was working with the Registrar to sort this all out, but since it was causing much confusion and it was now quite dark, we decided to let Martin come back to Lumakanda next Friday and sort it all out when he found out the right information and could check each of the pastors attendance records carefully. So we decided to postpone the finalization of the certificates until we had more information. (The following Friday afternoon I called Pastor Martin Shikuku from Tanga, Tanzania, and Martin confirmed that there were in fact 7 more new certificates written and handed out to the pastors that did not get them last week. [Therefore, there is a total of 232 certificates given to the pastors at the Lumakanda TPI Institute.](#) Martin confirmed that the other two did get their certificates and any other claims were not correct and did not qualify for a certificate. Martin also said that he would burn any extra certificates now that the total number has been correctly given out to the pastors and all problems have been resolved). [I thanked him for his leadership displayed in this situation.](#)

Then more pictures were taken, and many pastors also shook hands with me and thanked me for the week of teaching. Then we talked afterwards with many of the pastors, and they left with their notebook and certificate in hand very happy men indeed. As this certificate presentation process was completed, we closed out the 2010 Lumakanda Institute, and dismissed the group. We then all went outside, and we said our good-byes to the pastors and took some more pictures, and talked with many of the pastors afterwards, and waited until most of them went on their way home.

After the Lumakanda Institute was over, we said our goodbyes to some of the remaining pastors as many of them got onto their bicycles, motorbikes, or walked on foot back to their homes. Paul Swets and I brought our small bags and loaded them into Pastor Charles Karuru's SUV Toyota Voltz, and he drove us back to the Cicada Hotel in Eldoret. Matthew Limo helped us with our bags up to our rooms and I went to my Room 407 on the fourth floor. We met with Pastor Martin Shikuku briefly about a few things regarding the institute and made a few adjustments, and then we said goodbye to him as he left to go home. When I got to my room, I applied the After Sun medicine to my face and it felt good to get some medicinal aloe on my face, which had a cooling effect on my face, but it left a white residue on it as well. Then Paul Swets and I went down to the restaurant called The Bazaar, where we had our dinner meal for the night. We had a good meal which consisted of rice and pepper steak, vegetables, tomato soup, Mango juice, and Coke Light (Diet Coke). We had a good day and talked a little about our fifth day at the institute. Then we went back up to our rooms and stayed in for the night. I spent some time typing on my Email Report for awhile and then went to bed after a great week at the TPI Lumakanda Institute near Eldoret, Kenya.

[We thank God for all He has done so far in our first institute in Lumakanda, Kenya. We appreciate all your prayers and the gifts we have received to put on these six training institutes in East/Central/Southern Africa. Please continue to pray and for those who would still like to give, we still have needs to train these pastors throughout the summer.](#)

Yours for Christ's mission,

John Balmer, Jr.