



Hunter French &lt;hunter@frenchfamily.org&gt;

## TPI Africa Trip Report 4

1 message

J Balmer &lt;jbalmerjr@yahoo.com&gt;

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*John and Scott Girard have finished the week in Bujumbura, Burundi, and leave 2 a.m. Saturday morning for Kinshasa, DRC. John journal below concludes the first week in Eldoret, Kenya, and includes their travel to Tanga, Tanzania, varied Sunday worship services and the first day of the Tanga Institute. The stories of haggling over the bill, long travel, miscommunication with the boxes, large and small worship services, and hitting someone on a bike are so very typical of what we usually experience in Africa. I just had to laugh. So far this trip has been fairly uneventful and the team has been healthy and safe. Keep praying, Jennifer Balmer*

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This begins the fuller missions journal:

The next day, [Saturday, July 10<sup>th</sup>](#), 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. I also packed my bags to get them ready for the trip ahead as we are planning three short flights from Eldoret, Kenya to Nairobi, Kenya, and from there to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, and from there to Tanga, Tanzania. I did not go downstairs to the restaurant called The Bazaar to have breakfast because I had too much to do upstairs in packing my bags and getting ready for the trip. Instead I had two Granola Bars that Jennifer had packed for me and a small chocolate chip bar with water. Pastor Martin Shikuku and his wife Ann also came to our hotel this morning, and Anne brought us our clean clothes, which she did yesterday in the morning. We thanked her so much and then sorted out our clothes and packed them into our suitcase. I also asked Pastor Martin to go downstairs to get two of the ladies down there and bring them up to my room. Paul Swets and I wanted to give our presents of the pocketbooks that the ladies had given to us last night for our wives since we could not pack the pocketbooks in our suitcases lest they be destroyed from being crammed into an already loaded suitcase. So I gave my pocketbook for Jennifer to the Muslim girl at the reception desk that has helped us all week long, and Paul gave his pocketbook to one of the waitresses in the restaurant. The ladies were very happy to receive these nice pocketbooks and they posed for us as we took their pictures. Then I gave my plaque of Kenya to Martin Shikuku so he could have it in his house. Pastor Martin also went downstairs and sorted out our bills for the hotel and came up and told us how much to pay. He had talked to the manager about canceling the first day of our bill since we both arrived later than expected and did not sleep in the hotel that first night, but the manager instead decided to charge us for the full seven nights and instead cancel all our food bills for the week. That was a nice gesture and we appreciated this help. Pastor Martin told us that he decided to do this since this was our first visit here to Eldoret, Kenya. So we paid Martin our hotel accommodations and the costs for gas and other expenses for the week. Then we finished getting ready for the day and finished packing our bags for the trip. After awhile, some of the guys working at the Cicada Hotel downstairs came up and helped us get our bags downstairs to leave for the day, and then loaded them into the trunk of Pastor Martin Shikuku's four-door sedan Toyota Sprinter. We got everything loaded up in his car, said goodbye to our friends at the Cicada Hotel, and drove off to the airport at around 7:30 AM, a little late.

Pastor Martin and his wife Anne drove Paul Swets and me to the Eldoret International Airport, which is about 30 minutes away by car. When we arrived there, we went straight into the airport and said our goodbyes to Pastor Martin and Anne Shikuku, and thanked them for all that they did for us this week. Then Paul and I went to the Jet Link Express ticket counter and checked in our bags for the flight that Pastor Martin had bought for us several weeks ago. We went through a small security checkpoint into the gate area of the airport. We waited there for the flight to take off and talked with two Korean passengers who were traveling with us. Then we eventually boarded the Jet Link Express Flight JO 354 at 9:20 AM in a small twin-propeller jet. I sat on the window and Paul sat on the aisle next to me behind the wing. We had a rather short flight where they served us some juice and water and a pack of peanuts. We had a very smooth flight and landed at Jomo Kenyatta Airport in Nairobi, Kenya around 10:30 AM. We walked off the plane onto the tarmac of the airport, went over to the baggage area and collected our bags. Then we went over to the Precision Air ticket counter and checked in our bags for the next flight. We then went through a security checkpoint and Passport Control and into the main terminal, where we found our next gate for our flight to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, and also found some chairs to park our bags for awhile. Both Paul and I took short strolls through the terminal until it was time for our next flight. We checked into our flight at Gate 9 and went through a small security checkpoint and went into a holding area to wait for our flight. We eventually boarded our Precision Air Flight PW 717 at 12:45 PM in a larger jet, leaving Nairobi, Kenya for a short one-hour-and-fifteen-minute trip to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. We again had a very smooth flight where I sat on the window and Paul Swets sat on the aisle and he talked with a guy across the aisle most of the flight. We had a small brunch meal, which consisted of a chicken salad sandwich and a roll and juice and water. We arrived at Dar Es Salaam International Airport at 2 PM. We deboarded the plane and walked

on the tarmac into the main terminal of the airport and went through Passport Control and then went into the Baggage Claim area and collected our bags. Then we exited the airport and we were met by Pastor Manasse Martin at the collection area as we exited the customs area of the airport.

When we arrived at Dar Es Salaam International Airport, we asked Pastor Manasse whether he received the three TPI Tanzania notebook boxes from the Bus terminal that had come from Eldoret, Kenya to Dar Es Salaam, and should have arrived today. He said that he checked on it but did not have word that they had arrived yet. He would check on it again today. Then Pastor Manasse loaded up our bags into his small four-door sedan and we drove out of the Dar Es Salaam International Airport over to the domestic airport, about five minutes away. We went over to the Dar Aviation Services Ticket office, where Paul Swets and I bought our Charter Flight tickets from Dar Es Salaam to Tanga, Tanzania, which is about a 45-minute flight north on the northeast coast of Tanzania. We each paid \$395 for our tickets and then went over to the airport and put our bags through a screening security checkpoint, and put the bags on a cart and rolled them into the gate area of the airport. Then the pilot of the plane came up to us and introduced himself and told us that another practice pilot was flying with us to get some experience observing the pilot fly the plane. We then pushed our cart out of the gate onto the tarmac of the airport over to a five-seat small one propeller plane. It immediately reminded me of the small MAF plane that I flew in the jungles of Chiapas, Mexico during the summer of 1979. The pilot, Mathias Clemence, was a very congenial Muslim man, who proceeded to load both Paul Swets and my bags into the back two seats of the plane. We were the only passengers on the flight so we watched as the pilot went through making sure everything was good, including putting my black suitcase into the hold area right in the underneath compartment of the plane. Then both Paul and I took the two seats right behind the pilot and his novice mentoree flight student, Boko Mwinyi, a young Middle Eastern woman trying to become a pilot herself one day, who had the jumpseat next to the pilot right in front of me. The pilot also got us a bag of bottled water for the flight and gave it to us. This was a small dinky yellow plane, and the pilot started the engine and the one propeller began immediately. We sat for a few minutes on the tarmac while Mathias explained a few directives to his young 23-year old student, Boko, who was taking in everything with great enthusiasm. Then we taxied over to the runway, and the pilot flew the plane with a very smooth takeoff into the air to right under the cloud level, and we had a very smooth flight. It was such a small plane that I thought that we might have some turbulence that could cause the plane to move all over the place, but since we were flying so low below the clouds, it was a very peaceful flight with almost no fluctuations at all. We could see everything all around us, so it was a very enjoyable flight since we flew right along the coast of the Indian Ocean and saw some magnificent sights and took many pictures. We also had some bottled water and talked with the pilot at times and his assistant trainee, Boko Mwinyi, who informed us of some of what we were looking at along the way. After awhile, we flew into Tanga right into a beautiful coastal region, and the pilot landed the plane very smoothly on a one-strip runway and taxied the plane over to the tarmac.

When we disembarked from the plane, we had a couple of pictures taken with the pilot in front of his plane, and then walked across the tarmac to a small terminal. Our bags were carried into a visitors reception area of the airport, and there we were met by Rev. Ayubu Mgweno, our Assistant Tanzania National Director, Pastor Thomas Tarimo, Bishop Stephen Mwayahila, and Bishop Jotham Mwakimage, who are some of the pastors of the local Tanga TPI Committee. We visited for a few minutes in the reception room on some nice couches, and both Paul and I freshened up in the one bathroom, which had no running water. Then we all loaded up our bags into two cars, and Paul and I rode in Thomas Tarimo's four-door sedan along with Bishop Mgweno. We drove from the small Tanga domestic airport down a long road into the city, and saw the beautiful coast along the Indian Ocean, and eventually made our way to the very nice and rustic Panori Hotel overlooking the Indian Ocean from a block away. It is a very peaceful place with a rustic thatched roof décor and several buildings in the back. This is where Butch McCarthy and I stayed in July 2008 when we did the 2008 TPI Tanga Institute. I got the same room that I had in 2008, Room 14, which is on the second floor overlooking the Indian Ocean, across a small dirt street behind a very nice rich house on the waterfront. Some of the staff helped us to get our bags into our rooms, and then the whole team that came to meet us at the airport went over to the main restaurant, an open area with a thatched roof, and we all had African Chi (tea). It was great to visit with each other again and hear of how things are going in preparation for the Tanga TPI Institute. While we were there, Pastor Mgweno called Manasse Martin and found that he did not yet have the TPI Tanzania notebook boxes. He found out that he went to the Akamba Bus office and they wanted some serial number off the receipt to retrieve the boxes, so we called Pastor Martin Shikuku in Eldoret, Kenya, and he told me that I had the receipt among the receipts that he gave me. So I went and retrieved the receipt and found out that Pastor Manasse was going to the wrong bus terminal office. We told him to go to the Kampala Coach Bus office in Dar Es Salaam, and he should find the boxes there. So Pastor Manasse went over to that office and was told that he could pick up the boxes tomorrow because they would be able to retrieve them from their other office. After the Chi break and a good time of fellowship, Pastor Ayubu Mgweno went with me up to my room, and we went over the Tanga, Tanzania budget. I gave him the remaining balance that his budget called for so he could take the money and begin paying for all the expenses that needed to be taken care of before the institute starts on Monday. Then he and the team left Paul and me here at the Panori Hotel so we could rest up a little while after the three flights from Eldoret, Kenya to Tanga, Tanzania.

After a little rest in our rooms and getting things sorted out and unpacked somewhat, Paul Swets and I walked over to the open thatched roof restaurant to have our dinner meal since we really have not eaten much all day long. I had tomato soup, spaghetti bolognese, and Coke Light (Diet Coke). We had a great time reflecting over the very eventful day and how the Lord has brought us here for a second institute since our first one two years ago. After a very leisurely meal outside at a table overlooking a very picturesque garden-like back area complete with monkeys climbing the trees, we walked back to our rooms and settled in for the night. I watched a little of the third-place World Cup Game where Germany beat Uruguay 1-0, typed on my Email Report at my desk for a long while, and sorted through a few of my things like recharging camera batteries and downloading my cards on my Jobo Spectator. Finally, I called it a night and went to bed after a long day of traveling from Eldoret, Kenya to Tanga, Tanzania on three short flights, but we are safely here at the Panori Hotel, which is a

very peaceful rustic resort-like place to begin our second TPI Tanga, Tanzania Institute this next week.

The next day, [Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>](#), I woke up early in the morning in my Room 14 at the Panori Hotel, and did some typing on my Email Report and looked over my message to preach this morning in two different churches. I tried to take a shower in my bathroom, but there was no hot water, so I asked for the maintenance guy to come and help me to see if we can get some hot water. After looking and working at it and checking his other tanks, we got some hot water. I thanked him and then took a nice hot shower with an overhead nozzle in a small shower stall with a shower curtain around it. I was glad to have a hot shower and a refreshing one at that. Then I got dressed for the day and went down with Paul Swets to the inside restaurant near the lobby of the hotel. I met several of my good friends from 2008, and they served us a nice breakfast, which consisted of two fried eggs, a sausage hot dog, two pieces of white toast, some Mango fruit and a banana, a glass of pineapple juice, and African Chi (tea). We had a great breakfast meal talking with our hosts, and preparing for the upcoming day. At the end of our meal, Bishop Ayubu Mgweno came to pick us up along with Thomas Tarimo. We went quickly back to our rooms and finished getting ready and then brought our small bags back downstairs to load them in the trunk of Thomas Tarimo's four-door sedan.

Bishop Stephen Mwayahila had already picked up Paul Swets by the time I got down to the parking lot to take him to Tanzania Assemblies of God Kamaezi Church (TAG) located in Kambezi, a section of Tanga in the city. The pastor, Bishop Jotham Mwakimage, had Paul come up and preach in a very large church of about two thousand in attendance, and he preached on Philippians 4:1-23. After this church service, Bishop Stephen Mwayahila took Paul in his car to another church, Elim Pentecost Tanzania Revival Church, located in the center of town in the Tanga city district. The pastor, Nestory Ngwega, met him there and he preached the same message in a small classroom with about 25 to 30 people present at the service. So Paul got to preach in two quite extreme preaching situations. Then Bishop Stephen Mwayahila took Paul into town to a restaurant right near the last church, and they ate lunch there before coming back to the Panori Hotel.

Meanwhile, Thomas Tarimo loaded up my bags into his four-door sedan and took Bishop Ayubu Mgweno and me first to the Tanzania Pentecostal Church (KLPT), located in the Majani Mapawa region of Tanga. We got there ten minutes late because Rev. Mgweno had just told us when he arrived that we needed to be there by 8 AM, and we were both still eating breakfast. By the time we arrived there, someone else was preaching in English at the church, and I was met by the pastor, Rev. George Nywage and his wife, Rev. Christine Nywage. They led me over to the pulpit chairs at the side of the church, and I was told to bring a greeting in a few minutes after the preaching was done. The preacher took only 20 minutes for his preaching time, so Rev. George Nywage invited me to come up and preach a short message from the Word of God in English. I greeted the people and then spoke on Heb. 7:25 by first developing the context of the verse, showing how Jesus established a better hope, a better priesthood, and a better covenant. Then I preached on five aspects of our salvation in Christ from Heb. 7:25. We see first the power of our salvation, "He is able to save." Then secondly, we looked at the scope of our salvation, "He is able to save completely or to the uttermost." Third, we looked at the destiny of our salvation, "those who draw near to God." The purpose of our salvation is to draw us near to God. Fourth, we looked at the exclusivity of our salvation, "through Him." Christ is the only way to God and to be saved. Fifthly, the security of our salvation is seen by "since He always lives to make intercession for them." The fact that Christ is always praying for us shows that Christ will accomplish the salvation for us personally, and this brings security to our salvation. I reviewed over the main points of our salvation, and then gave an invitation for any that needed to trust Christ as their Savior, but there were none who responded to the invitation. I therefore, closed in a word of prayer. After the service was over, we all went outside of the church and greeted everyone in the church. I met a retired German missionary with his whole family of a wife and three kids. Then the pastor, Rev. George Nywage and his wife, Rev. Christine Nywage invited Rev. Mgweno and me to go back to his office area, and we had a cup of African Chi (tea), while the second service began in Swahili for the local people. Then we went outside the church and one of the ladies of the church, Sarah, loaded us into her SUV Land Cruiser and drove us over to our next church in town.

We went to Kisosora Baptist Church in the Kisosora Sokoni area of Tanga city, which is pastored by Rev. Samuel Kamoge. It is a small one-room church building with an adjoining parsonage, where the pastor and his wife and two kids live in a small three-room flat. We were dropped off by Sarah and we got there real early since Sunday School was still going on and so we met the pastor and talked with him briefly and then went inside the church sanctuary, which seats maybe 150 to 200 at full capacity. While the Sunday School lesson was being conducted in Swahili, I spent the time looking over my notes for my message. Then the service started in the sanctuary and the worship team led in several songs of worship. There was also a group of kids who marched into the church and sang and each of them gave a short testimony. Then Pastor Samuel Kamoge introduced me to come up and preach my message to the church, while he translated for me into Swahili. I preached a message on "God's Provision of Salvation" from an Old Testament passage in Num. 21:4-9 that dealt with the deliverance of the Israelites from the fiery serpents in the wilderness with the erection of the bronze serpent on a pole. I read the passage and also read Ex. 16:1-12, which talks about the institution of God's provision of the daily manna and quail, which God gave to them due to their complaints to Moses. I taught the first point of our passage in Num. 21:4-5, which is the people's complaint against God that they have no food or water and the food that they are eating is "a miserable food." This complaint reveals their sin against God since they were complaining about God's provision of the manna and the quail, which God provided for them each day. Then I dealt with the second point concerning the Lord's judgment in bringing upon the people fiery serpents to bite the people and everyone who was bitten died as a result (Num. 21:6). God always brings judgment on man's sin and this points to the ultimate judgement of God at the Great White Throne Judgement in Rev. 20. Then I taught the third point, which is the People's Confession of their sin to God (Num. 21:7). This leads to the fourth point of God's provision of salvation with the command to Moses to erect a bronze serpent on a pole and everyone who looks at the bronze serpent shall live (Num. 21:8-9). As the pole with the bronze serpent was lifted up in the Jewish camp, every Jew bitten by a serpent who looked at the bronze serpent lived and was delivered from the curse of God's judgement for their sins. I then went to the New

Testament passage in John 3:14-21, where Jesus says that "as Moses lifted up the (bronze) serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up (on a cross)" [John 3:14]. As God provided a bronze serpent on a pole to save the Israelites from their sins, He provided our Lord Jesus to be lifted up on another pole, the Roman cross, to save all mankind from their sins "that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life" (John 3:15). I went to a third passage in Hebrews 12:2 that brings out that Jesus is "the author and perfecter of our faith." I then gave an invitation to anyone who needed to trust Jesus as their Savior to come up and receive God's provision of salvation. There were two people that accepted Christ as their Savior, Fred Shauri, a 14 year old boy and Denis Samweli, a 23 year old young man. I prayed with these two guys and assured them of their salvation based on their looking to Jesus in faith just like the Jews looked in faith to the bronze serpent and lived. Then we closed in a song of worship and a few announcements were made and the service was closed and the people eventually left the church.

After the church service, Pastor Ayubu Mgweno and I went around to the back of the church and entered to parsonage of the pastor, and Samuel (32 years old) and Christina Kamoge (28 years old) had us in their home to cook a nice lunch meal for us. We also met their two kids, John Godding (4 years old) and GodLove (2 and a half years old). We had a nice lunch, which consisted of rice and fish, greens, potatoes, oranges, and two carbonated drinks. We ate a relaxing meal around their table in the same living area where the couches were located. Another woman in the church helped Christina put on the dinner, and it was truly a delicious meal. After the meal, Samuel led us to go over to Rev. John Kupaza's home, which is right across a dirt road from the parsonage. We went into the home of this older preacher, who is 74 years old, and also met his wife. We visited for a few minutes since Rev. Ayubu Mgweno knew this man and is also turning 74 sometime later this year. After a short visit, Rev. Mgweno hired a taxi and he drove Rev. Mgweno and me back to the Panori Hotel. Paul Swets had already returned back to his room approximately 30 minutes prior to us, and was in his room taking a rest. I said goodbye to Rev. Mgweno and went to my room to settle down for the day. I spent some time typing on my email report and downloading cards on the Jobo Spectator and charging my camera batteries.

Later in the evening, Paul Swets and I went to the thatched roof open area restaurant that opened up to a beautiful garden-like foliage, and had our dinner. We ate rice and pepper steak, vegetables, tomato soup, and Coke Light (Diet Coke). We shared about our time preaching in the churches and Paul shared about the huge difference between the two churches. His first church had two thousand people in a big sanctuary and his second church met in a small classroom of a school and just had about 30 people there. He mentioned that there was some kind of healing service that took place in the second service. After dinner, we went over to the main building where there were several people already congregated to watch the World Cup Final Match between Spain and the Netherlands. Paul has a Dutch ancestry so he stayed in the room to pull for the Dutch to win the World Cup. I went back to my Room #14 and watched the World Cup game on my own TV in a little fuzzy reception, but it was nice to watch it nonetheless. I also worked on my Email Report and worked in my room until the very end of the match when Spain scored a goal and won the World Cup for the first time 1-0. I liked Spain because that is where Jennifer and I had our honeymoon about 15 and a half years ago, and the place still brings pleasant memories of our time together there. It also made me miss Jennifer since Spain is where we began our marriage in the southern coast of Spain overlooking the Mediterranean in a villa near Fuengirola, Spain. I continued typing and watching the World Cup festivities until late in the early morning, and then finally went to bed after a great day in Tanga, Tanzania, where I got to preach in two churches and see two people saved.

The next day, [Monday, July 12<sup>th</sup>](#), I woke up early in the morning in my Room 14 at the Panori Hotel, and did some typing on my Email Report and looked over one of my sessions on Biblical Hermeneutics. This is the first day of our Tanga Institute in Tanga, Tanzania. We are seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time in the United States. I took a nice hot shower in my adjoining bathroom with an overhead nozzle in a small shower stall with a shower curtain around it. I was glad to have a hot shower and a refreshing one at that. Then I got dressed for the day and went down with Paul Swets to the inside restaurant near the lobby of the hotel. I met several of my good friends again from 2008, and they served us a nice breakfast, which consisted of two fried eggs, a sausage hot dog, two pieces of white toast, some Mango fruit and a banana, a glass of pineapple juice, and African Chi (tea). We had a great breakfast meal talking with our hosts, and preparing for the upcoming day. At the end of our meal, Bishop Ayubu Mgweno came to pick us up along with Thomas Tarimo. We went quickly back to our rooms and finished getting ready and then brought our small bags back downstairs to load them in the trunk of Thomas Tarimo's four-door sedan.

Pastor Thomas Tarimo drove Bishop Ayubu Mgweno, Paul Swets, and me in Thomas' car over to the venue where we would conduct the institute for the week, the Tanu Hall, which belongs to the CCM Party in the Legislative Branch of the government, located in the city center, about a fifteen minute drive from our hotel. On the way to the venue, Thomas made a right turn in town onto another street, and a young man on a motorcycle came flying around a blind turn and looked to hit us head on, but somehow, he managed to veer off to the right of us and he hit our car in the back right door. When I saw him coming right at us, I thought that this kid will die if we hit him, but somehow he maneuvered his cycle over to our right and bounced off our right back panel of Thomas' wife's car. We immediately stopped the car to check on him and the kid was up on his feet again and seemed not to be hurt at all. His bike was a little damaged but not near what I thought might be the case. Thomas talked to the young man and asked him to meet us over at the venue so we could sort out this mess. Meanwhile, quite a crowd gathered to take in the festivities of the situation right in the middle of the road. I know the Devil would have liked to see this young man killed so that it would have caused us to probably delay our institute and brought great discouragement to all of us, but the Lord preserved his life and made it a very minor incident. When we finally got to the venue just a few minutes drive from that place, the young man drove his cycle over to the venue and briefly met with Thomas Tarimo about the incident. Thomas ended up paying the kid about 1,000 Tanzanian Schillings, which is not a lot of money, but he did it to try to settle the incident and give the kid a chance to fix his bike and not try to pursue this situation any longer. I went over to the young man and told him that he could have been killed this morning. I

also told him that he needs to slow down on that cycle, or he may not live until he turns 25 years old.

When we walked back over to the main hall, there were many pastors already there, and they were worshipping the Lord in song, being led by a worship leader. [We have 71 pastors, evangelists, and national missionaries attending the institute in the morning session on this first day.](#) The number of pastors is low this week because there are two other pastoral conferences that are competing for the pastors here in Tanga to attend this same week here in Tanzania. There is a major Pentecostal Pastors meeting in Dodema, Tanzania, where they are expecting 3,000 pastors from all over the country to come from Monday to Friday. There is also another prayer summit here in Tanga for pastors in this area. We started late today at 10 AM due to getting the pastors through the registration process and starting all the things needed to be in place for the week, but this week will go smoothly because the Dar Es Salaam team has been up here in Tanga for three weeks getting things prepared and the main team of Rev. Ayubu Mgweno and Rev. Manasse Martain and others have done three institutes in Dar Es Salaam prior to this one, and another one in Tanga two years ago. [Yesterday, Pastor Manasse Martain went to the Kampala Coach Bus office in Dar Es Salaam after church, and he collected the three TPI Tanzania notebook boxes without any problems since he now knew the right place to go and they had already transported the boxes to the office from the collection area. Then he drove them in his small four-door car through the night and arrived with them early this morning. I told him that I knew he was tired, but it was good to have him and the boxes here to begin our institute.](#) After a few songs of worship and some remarks by Bishop Jotham Mwakimage, the Assistant Coordinator of the TPI Institute this week in Tanga, Bishop Ayubu Mgweno, the Assistant National Director of TPI in Tanzania got up and gave an introduction of TPI to the pastors. Then he introduced me to the pastors and I came and started the first session. I spent a few minutes tracing the history of TPI in Africa and letting the pastors know that this was now the eighth TPI institute offered in Tanzania (Kigoma, Nyragusu, Lugufu, three in Dar Es Salaam, and now two in Tanga). I also took some time to introduce the TPI philosophy and share the three pillars of our TPI training program, which is preaching the Word of God, leading the Church of God, and reaching the world for God. I also introduced Pastor Paul Swets from Memphis, Tennessee, who will be joining me this week as a Pastoral Trainer to preach through the book of Philippians and teach a series on Leadership Development. I will also teach Biblical Hermeneutics, Evangelism and Missions, and do an overview of the New Testament. Then I shared with the pastors what the week would involve and explained the significance of the training for their ministries.

Then I started the first session on Biblical Hermeneutics. My interpreter for the morning is Rev. Samuel Kamoge. We spent some time exposing some incorrect models of preaching as well as establishing the need to study the text of God's Word before they preach the text of God's Word. I went through some key passages like 2 Timothy 2:15 to show the need for the pastors to study the text. Then I began my first session on the series, "Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics," which is a follow-up course to Expository Preaching. This is the third time that I have taught this course since I just wrote the materials for this course last year. I started by going to two passages to illustrate the need for Biblical interpretation (Acts 8:31, Neh. 8:8), and then dealt with four reasons why Biblical interpretation is important. I also went over the three steps of studying the Bible, which is observation, interpretation, and application. Then I went to a passage in Matt. 24:13 to show how it is important to correctly interpret the Scriptures lest one takes a verse out of context and misinterpret the text. I then dealt somewhat with the meaning of hermeneutics and showed how this important step fits into the overall aspect of studying the text before we preach the text. It was a good beginning because I told them that this will be an intense week of study for them and to come prepared for a full week of study. Then I closed out the session with a review of what we discussed and I handed the microphone over to Bishop Ayubu Mgweno, who made a few concluding remarks.

Then we broke for our morning tea break and had chai and pastries outside the hall under a canopy. I spent some time talking with several pastors about how much they appreciated the opportunity to get this training. Then we went back inside the Tanu Hall to resume the institute. There was some singing led by the worship leaders. Then Bishop Mgweno had me come up to introduce Pastor Paul Swets to come up and teach his first session of the day on an exposition of Philippians. He came up and introduced the book of Philippians and the main theme verse, Phil. 4:4, gave a little background of the apostle Paul, an overview of the truths of the book, and an outline of the week. Then Paul began his first message on "Joy in Partnership" from Phil. 1:1-11. He began by preparing people's heart for the preaching of this passage. He then focused on three main points of this passage. The first is an introduction to Paul as a servant leader, who is writing to saints in Philippi, and then giving a common greeting. Then he mentions Paul's prayer (vs. 3-5) and why he thanks God for the Philippians. Finally, he mentions what Paul prays for: love, knowledge, discernment, purity, and fruits of righteousness in their lives (vs. 6-11). Paul then closed out the session by applying this passage to the pastors with actions to take and other verses to think about. Bishop Ayubu Mgweno came up and made a few concluding remarks and then we broke for lunch.

We all went outside the hall and everyone got into the African queue (long lines) to receive the meal, which was rice and beef, vegetables, and water. We brought our plates back into the hall and sat at the main speaker's table to eat our meal. After lunch we had some good fellowship with the pastors as some of them came up to us to discuss different things, and then we went back inside the hall to resume the institute. [We had 71 pastors, evangelists, and church leaders for the afternoon session for our first day of the TPI Institute.](#)

Then Manasse Martin made a few comments and Bishop Ayubu Mgweno came up and welcomed me to come up and begin the afternoon session on Evangelism and Missions. I preached a message on "The Lord of the Harvest – The Model of Christ in Evangelism" from Matt. 9:35-38. We looked at the need for every church to be actively involved in the Great Commission by taking the Gospel to the world of our local outreach and beyond. We will be held accountable for seven things when we get to heaven: money, time, natural talents, spiritual gifts, opportunities, the gospel message, and the Word of God. In order to fulfill the gospel mandate to take the gospel message to our world, we must look at the ministry of Christ and how He modeled evangelism. The method of Christ in evangelism reveals that Christ went

to every city and small town to preach the gospel message. This involved a three-step process: (1) teaching the Word of God, (2) preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, and (3) healing every disease and sickness. Evangelizing the lost involves instruction or teaching the gospel message and also proclaiming the gospel message, which demands a verdict. Thirdly, we must reflect Jesus' priority of healing. Even though we cannot heal like Jesus did, we can learn from Jesus to seek to meet people's physical needs in order to reach their spiritual needs in Christ. The sensitivity of Christ shows us that Christ observed the plight of His people as lost and "sheep without a shepherd." Christ also felt compassion for them, and this burden for lost people motivated Christ to reach out to people with the loving care of teaching, preaching, and healing people with the gospel message. The challenge of Christ involves three principles: (1) A plentiful harvest – more unbelievers than we think that the Lord wants to bring into the kingdom of God, (2) Few Workers – there are not many people to help harvest the unbelievers, and (3) Little Prayer – ask the Lord in prayer to send more workers into the Lord's harvest fields. The Lord wants more workers and wants to use the church to bring more people into the Kingdom of God, but we must pray for more workers and go to the harvest field where unbelievers dwell, and be available to the Lord's opportunities to share the gospel. Then the Lord can harvest more unbelievers, build up the church, and expand His kingdom around the world. Then Bishop Ayubu Mgweno came up and concluded this session and made a few concluding remarks.

After a short break, the worship team led us in a song. Then Rev. Ayubu Mgweno invited Paul Swets to come up and lead his afternoon session on "The Art of Leading Successfully." Paul began by giving an overview of the outline of study for these five afternoon sessions on Leadership. Then he proceeded to deal with his first session on "What is our mission?" Paul dealt with God's calling, a definition of leadership, and five essential questions we need to ask in determining our mission. He then defined what is meant by mission and looked at some characteristics of mission in the Scriptures. He asked what is the pastor's mission in life, and how they are doing in fulfilling their mission. He asked them to identify any Biblical characters that they identify with concerning their mission in life. Paul concluded his session by asking what unique opportunities they face in their mission and what changes they need to make to fulfill their mission. Then Rev. Mgweno came up and made a few concluding remarks.

After another short break, we were led in a worship song by the worship team. Rev. Mgweno then invited me to come up and teach the last session on the Walk Thru the New Testament on the section dealing with the 400 Silent Years between the Old and New Testaments. I reviewed the end of the Old Testament Survey, which we did back in 2008 at the Tanga, Tanzania Institute, and then began teaching on the inter-testamental period, going over the three main national powers in control of the land of Israel before the dawn of the New Testament, which are Greece, Israel, and Rome. We also looked at the key political groups, which form the back-drop of the New Testament context, which involve the Sanhedrin, Scribes, Sadducees, Pharisees, Publicans, and Zealots. We then reviewed over the whole teaching of the 400 Silent Years between the Old and New Testaments, and concluded our first day of teaching at about 5:30 PM since we have had a full day of teaching at the Tanga TPI Institute. Then Manasse Martin came up and reviewed over some of what we covered today and explained the significance of these training sessions for their ministries. He challenged them to come out early tomorrow morning at 8 AM and then gave the mike over to Rev. Ayubu Mgweno to make a few concluding announcements before closing out the institute for the day, dismissing the pastors to go home, and having a closing word of prayer by one of the pastors.

After greeting many of the pastors and gathering our bags together, we loaded up everything in Pastor Thomas Tarimo's car, and drove back through the city of Tanga, past the gorgeous views of the Indian Ocean until we reached the Panori Hotel, and went back to our rooms. We thanked the Lord for a great first day at the TPI Institute in Tanga and said goodbye to our host team of Bishop Mgweno and Thomas Tarimo as Paul Swets and I settled in for the evening. After sorting out a few details and resting for a few minutes, the two of us went down to the open area thatched roof restaurant and had our dinner meal together. Paul and I ordered pepper steak and rice and fries with some tomato soup and a Coke Light (Diet Coke). We waited for about 45 minutes for the staff to cook our dinner and had a nice meal together. Then we went back up to our rooms and I typed on my email report for awhile, had a breakfast bar for desert, downloaded some of my cards and charged my camera battery, and went to bed about 1 AM after a good first day of our institute here in Tanga, Tanzania.

I thank the Lord for His faithfulness to get us all safely to and from our destinations. Please continue to pray for all our logistics and the financing of these institutes because we are trusting the Lord to cover the expenses for all of these pastors in six institutes in six countries.

Yours for Christ's mission,

John Balmer, Jr.