## Asleep At The Switch

## A Rewarding Trip to Kenya Part 1 of 2

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Scriptures from the KJV

Today I would like to <u>begin</u> to discuss my recent trip to Kenya. (I say begin, because I'm not going to complete this report today) there's too much that needs to be said, and I feel it's too important a subject to try and <u>condense</u> into one message. Besides, I think we need to set a stage first, concerning <u>why</u> we're in E. Africa in the first place.

Now some of what I have to say today about Kenya, may be a bit <u>repetitious</u> for some, especially for those who have been involved in the "Non Profit" that we started a number of years ago called" Kenya Hands of Hope".

But I feel it's important to start from the beginning today, concerning Kenya (at least briefly) so others will <u>better</u> understand, what we have been involved in over there in E. Africa. (Or better put: "What God" has us involved in over there.

(I say *"what God has us involved in"* for a few reasons)

1, there's a <u>calling</u> taking place over there in E. Africa, and callings only come from the Father Himself, He is the only one <u>capable</u> of opening up ones <u>eyes</u>, and opening up ones <u>ears</u> to His truth.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> reason that I say that "God is involved" is because there are <u>fruits</u> involved "Good Fruit" and "<u>Good Fruit</u>" (like <u>All Good things</u>) come from the Father.

So I hope you will see <u>God</u> in the "Directors Chair", as we discuss what <u>He</u> has His church involved in over there in Africa. We're going to be placing some <u>fruit</u> on the table in this report, for <u>observation</u> & <u>inspection</u>.

You know <u>observing fruit</u> can tell a lot, because you get to know <u>for sure</u> if what you are doing, if what you are involved in, is good or bad.

And this <u>basically</u> applies to <u>whatever</u> one may be <u>involved</u> in (no matter what it is.) God doesn't <u>complicate</u> things; on the contrary, he uses <u>simplicity</u> to make things <u>plane</u> & <u>clear</u>, He's <u>Not</u> the author of confusion.

If what you're doing has <u>good</u> <u>fruits</u>, you're on the right track, and going in the right direction. But, if what you are doing is producing <u>bad</u> <u>fruit</u>, then you're on the <u>wrong</u> track, going in the <u>wrong</u> direction, basically <u>wasting</u> your time & efforts, and <u>definitely</u> in need of making some changes.

**Fruits Don't Lie,** and speaking of "fruits", let us never forget, that we are His fruits, His "First Fruits" and <u>responsible</u> for producing "Good Fruits" and plenty of them.

Now these occasional trips to E. Africa are quite necessary, because one has to inspect the fruits over there, to know (for sure) if what our <u>time</u>, <u>efforts</u>, and <u>resources</u> are <u>producing</u> is <u>good</u> or <u>bad</u>...

It's amazing what (Putting you feet down on the ground) can accomplish. You get to see the fruits up close and not only the good fruit, but also if there is any "bad fruit" who's <u>trees</u> need to be <u>dealt</u> with.

Yes, we may also be touching on a little bit of <u>bad</u> <u>fruit</u> also (No choice there) I'm sure we are all aware that Satan's <u>Tares</u> have been <u>allowed</u> or <u>permitted</u> to grow amongst God's <u>Wheat</u>).

Eventually the tares will be removed, but currently in God's church, both the Wheat & the Tares have been growing together.

Now I feel this report that I have concerning Kenya, is very important to bring to the table of the church, because it involves the <u>two</u> <u>commissions</u> of the COG:

1, "TO PREACH THE Gospel to the world" & 2, "To Feed God's Flock".

These two commissions are still in affect, and need to be <u>addressed</u> from time to time. So <u>before</u> we cross the Atlantic Ocean this morning, and head over to Kenya to report on the current conditions there, I want to <u>digress</u> a little bit.

FIRST, I want to try and <u>strike a nerve</u> if I can, concerning the signs of the times in which we are living, Because I believe we are living at a time when <u>many</u>, yes many in God's church, are <u>complacent</u> – <u>lukewarm</u> – and <u>asleep at the switch</u>, if you will.

You know, it's <u>easy</u> to be asleep at the switch, but it's also quite dangerous, because being asleep at the switch <u>can brew disaster</u>.

I spent a few years on a Navy Destroyer, and we had a sailor <u>asleep</u> at a <u>very important switch</u> one time, while we were deployed out at sea. And his <u>negligence jeopardized</u> the well being of the entire crew.

He was on duty at the time, manning a very important <u>post</u> called "Aft Steering". Now "Aftsteering" <u>function</u> was to take control of steering the ship, in the event that steering failed from the Bridge.

Aft-steering was located in a small compartment, just inside from the Ships Rudder. There's a large wheel there connected <u>directly</u> to the Rudder, and in case of emergency, aft-steering was capable of taking <u>full</u> <u>control</u> of the rudder, and intern, he could control the course (or direction) of the entire ship.

Normally the ships "rudder" is controlled <u>remotely</u> from the "Bridge" where the Helm or wheel is turned at the instruction of the Captain, and through a variety of physical means, oftentimes mechanically with "hydraulics".

But in case of a mal-function (and steering from the Bridge fails) the sailor or man on duty at aft-steering could take over and bring the vessel back on course, and keep it on course by steer it from that large wheel, that's connected directly to the Rudder.

Now even though the sailor on duty had so much <u>power</u> at his <u>disposal</u>, he rarely <u>engaged</u> it, so after time, he would find himself <u>struggling</u> to stay awake (kind of like the 10 Virgins in the parable where they are <u>all slumbering</u> & <u>sleeping</u>.)

One day (at a very crucial time) my ship did <u>loose</u> steering; the mechanical mechanism that connected to <u>Helm</u> to the <u>Rudder</u> had broken down. And the ship not only got off course, but we were about to <u>collide</u> with another ship.

(Allow me to elaborate a little on the situation we were in at the time)

During its heyday, the US had the <u>only</u> Navy Fleet in the entire world that could <u>refuel</u> & take on <u>stores while underway out at sea</u>. US war ships, while moving at around 15 or 20 knots, would pull up <u>alongside</u> another ship (called a tanker)

And they would begin passing many important items across from ship to ship like a large 4" hose for one thing, where fuel could be pumped across from the tanker to refuel our ship.

They would also pass a sound powered telephone across, connecting the ships together with a way to communicate – also a "Boatmen's Chair" where any items (including personnel) could also be passed from ship to ship.

The US Navy took a lot of pride in this. Other countries (even Russia) would float there ships side by side (dead in the water) when they performed this <u>vital</u> operation of taking on fuel & stores, loosing much valuable time.

But U.S. war ships could perform this important task underway, they would even do it two at a time. The Tanker would be in the middle, and there would be a ship pulled up on each side of the tanker, bringing on stores & fuel, at the same time.

Well one day, while alongside the Tanker (with all that equipment connected between our ships) we lost steering, and the course we were on was bringing us closer & closer to a collision with the tanker.

The Captain blew 5 LOUD SHORT BLASTS from the ships horn, which meant that "All Propellers were thrown into reverse and given full power, and "Brace For Collision"!

(In order to try and avoid <u>calamity</u> The Captain needed aft-steering to utilize his power and begin steering the ship directly at the Rudder. But there was a Hugh problem, because aft steering wasn't <u>hearing</u> the Captain.

Even though there was a <u>direct line</u> that had been <u>previously established</u> between the Captain and the <u>man on duty</u>, and even though the Captains was telling the man on duty <u>exactly</u> what he needed to do, he still wasn't hearing the Captain, you see, <u>aft-steering was asleep</u>!

When the man finally woke up, and realized the situation they were in, all he could do then was turn the rudder as <u>fast</u> and as <u>far</u> as he could to avoid a collision. He succeeded at avoiding a direct collision, but not without consequence.

As our ship <u>rapidly</u> moved away from the tanker, all the hoses, cables, phones, chairs & whatever else we had connected between the two ships, began <u>stretching</u> beyond their limits, to where <u>everything</u> snapped, with <u>oil, phones</u>, <u>cables</u> & <u>chair</u> flying everywhere.

All that disaster, due to <u>one</u> man becoming <u>complacent</u>, <u>negligent</u>, <u>and asleep at the switch</u>. Could you imagine the state a ship would be in, if the entire crew were complacent, negligent, and sleeping, especially when they all have an important post to maintain?

Brethren, we cannot <u>afford</u> to be <u>complacent</u>, <u>negligent</u>, or even <u>lukewarm</u>, because we have too High a calling, and too much at stake. We need to be <u>circumspect</u>.

We need to keep that <u>direct line</u> of communication (that was <u>previously established</u> between us <u>individually</u> and our <u>Captain</u>) <u>open</u> & <u>working</u> at all times, because we need to be <u>hearing</u> His voice, and <u>following</u> His Word.

(And He tells us: His yoke is easy, and His burden is light!)

(Now getting back to the two commissions of the church.)

In Mathew 28 (not turning) after Christ had risen from the dead, He began to appear unto many (showing that he was <u>alive</u> & <u>well</u>). But you know, some <u>doubted</u>, including some of His <u>disciples</u> at first.

But after He had shown them His hands (and His side where He had been pierced) they <u>believed</u>, and He said unto them: "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*"

Then He instructed His <u>disciples</u> to do the following – He set a <u>course</u> for them to <u>follow</u> (And this course is still in effect for us today, and still needs to be maintained.

Go ye therefore, and <u>teach</u> all nations, <u>baptizing</u> them, and <u>teaching</u> them to observe <u>all</u> things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you <u>always</u>, <u>even unto</u> <u>the end of the age</u>."

The NIV says: "All <u>authority</u> in heaven and on <u>earth</u> has been given to me. Therefore go and make <u>disciples</u> of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to <u>obey everything</u> I have commanded you, and surely, I am with you always, even to the <u>very end</u> of the age."

Brethren, we haven't <u>reached</u> the *very end of the age* yet, we're still in the <u>going</u>, <u>baptizing</u> & <u>teaching stage</u> of the operation. (Do we realize that?)

In Mark 16:14 we read that account stated this way: "Afterward He appeared to the <u>eleven</u> as they sat at meat and <u>upbraided</u> them with their <u>unbelief</u> and <u>hardness of</u> <u>heart</u>, because they <u>believed</u> <u>not</u> them which had seen Him after He was risen." (He <u>upbraided</u> them – found fault with them - rebuked them, because they <u>believed</u> not that He was alive & well.)

Brethren, I ask, do we <u>believe</u> that He is alive & well? Do we <u>believe</u> that His <u>instruction</u> to preach the Gospel to the world is still <u>valid</u> for us today?

Verse 15 says: "Go Ye into <u>all</u> the world, and preach the Gospel unto <u>every</u> creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth <u>not</u>, shall be damned."

Mark goes on to say in verse 19: "So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they (His disciples that is) went forth, and preached <u>everywhere</u>, the Lord <u>working</u> with them, and <u>confirming</u> the <u>Word</u> with signs follow."

Now we know that "commission" has <u>not</u> been totally fulfilled yet, for a number of reasons. For one, in another place He states: "*this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in <u>all the world</u> for a witness unto <u>all</u> nations; and <u>then</u> shall the end come."* 

And in another place He tells His disciples: "You shall <u>not</u> have gone over the Cities of Israel, <u>till the Son of man be come</u>."

In another place He says: "Blessed is that servant, whom His <u>Lord</u> when He <u>cometh</u>, shall find so <u>doing</u>."

Now some feel that the calling (which comes directly from the Father Himself) has ended and that He is no longer calling people.

But I <u>know</u> that He <u>is</u> still calling, because I have seen <u>firsthand</u> numerous accounts of it in Kenya/Tanzania and hope to elaborate some of those accounts as we move on. (Baptisms have been frequent there.)

Now the second <u>commission</u> of the church is to "*Feed the Flock*." In 1 Peter chapter 5, the apostle Peter <u>exhorts</u> the elders in the church to "*Feed the flock of God which is among you*."

Brethren, I bring these commissions up, because <u>sometimes</u> I think we <u>excuse</u> these <u>responsibilities</u>, thinking they are addressed to the <u>large</u> incorporated churches of God and not to <u>anyone</u> <u>individually</u>.

But let us remember that when Christ addressed His church, He wasn't speaking to the masses (and He wasn't speaking to any <u>Large Incorporated</u> group of people) He was speaking <u>directly</u> to His "little flock" He was speaking <u>directly</u> to His disciples, He was speaking directly to <u>us</u>.

And what He told <u>us</u> is quite <u>plane</u>, quite <u>clear</u>, and quite <u>simple</u>. He told us <u>not</u> to involving ourselves with the cares of this world, <u>not</u> to <u>strive</u> to <u>gain</u> or <u>seek</u> to attain what to <u>eat</u> or what to <u>drink</u>, or what to <u>put on</u> for all those things the nations of the world seek after.

And most importantly (because he had 20/20 <u>foresight</u> and knew what the conditions would be at the end of the age) He tells <u>us</u>, the ones living now, when <u>complacency</u>, <u>slumbering</u>, and <u>sleeping</u>, <u>abounds</u>: "To Anoint our eyes with eyesalve that we might see."

Brethren, let us remember, we are the <u>salt</u> of the earth and the <u>light</u> of the world."

He told us to: "Let our <u>light</u> shine before men that they may see <u>our</u> good <u>works</u> and glorify our Father which is in Heaven."

He also told us that: "If our <u>salt</u> looses it <u>saltiness</u>, it is good for <u>nothing</u>, <u>we</u> are good for <u>nothing</u>, but to be cast out.

Brethren, <u>Saltiness</u> & <u>Shining Lights</u> are a <u>Requirement</u> for a <u>Disciple</u> of Jesus Christ.

Doing Good Works & Producing Good Fruits are a Requirement for a Disciple of Jesus Christ.

Being Awake, and <u>Manning</u> the Rudder to maintain the course that our Lord <u>has set</u> for us (to preach the Gospel to the world & feed His Flock) is a <u>requirement</u> for a <u>Disciple</u> of Jesus Christ.

And our Heavenly Father takes these commissions that He has given us, very seriously, the question is: do we?

I'd like to turn to the book of Luke now (chapter 10) and examine a <u>change</u> that was <u>made</u>, concerning the preaching of the Gospel to the world.

Yes, Christ made a <u>change</u> concerning the preaching of the Gospel to the world, it's addressed by Luke, and it has to do with <u>resources</u>, and where they need to come from.

(I want to briefly address this change, and then we're going to cross the big lake of the Atlantic Ocean, and visit our brethren in Kenya to see the current conditions there.)

In Luke 10:1-4 we read that Christ sent out 70 of His disciples in a very particular way, **two by two** and instructed them **not** to carry a <u>purse</u>, nor <u>scrip</u>t, nor <u>shoes</u>.

Luke 10:1 "After these things the Lord appointed other 70 also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, wither He Himself would come." (Preparing the way)

(Dropping down to verse 4)

4, (this is the verse I want to focus on, notice what He instructed them?) "carry neither purse, nor script, nor shoes, and salute no man by the way.

(Now the disciples followed His instructions, and everything went well, even the demons were subject to them.)

But as Christ's ministry on earth was coming to an end, He made a <u>drastic change</u> to how He would send out His disciples to preach the Gospel, to the world. He made this change as He sat and ate that last meal with them on the night in which He was betrayed. (Let's read it in Luke 22 starting in verse 35.)

(I feel it is important to <u>note</u> this change, because it <u>involves</u> all those who consider themselves to be Disciples of Christ <u>today</u>, and how the preaching of the Gospel to the world in these "end times" would be <u>funded</u>.

Luke 22:35 When I sent you out <u>without purse</u>, and without <u>scrip</u>, and without <u>shoes</u> (emphasis mine) lack ye anything? And they said, <u>nothing</u>.

<u>Then say He unto them (And this includes us today 2013)</u> But Now <u>he that hath a purse</u>, <u>let</u> <u>him take it</u>, and likewise, <u>scrip</u>. And he that hath no <u>sword</u>, let him sell his garment and buy one.

Now that word "sword" here <u>understandably</u> can be a bit <u>confusing</u> to some. Yes, there might be some <u>controversy</u> over the meaning of <u>the</u> "<u>sword</u>" Christ was referring to here.

(Even though there shouldn't be, because we know [beyond any doubt] that His instruction were <u>consistent</u> concerning the use of <u>any</u> "physical" swords [or any physical assaults for that matter] – That they were to be <u>put away</u>, <u>held back</u>, <u>not used</u>, until His Kingdom <u>is</u> of this world.)

But there should be absolutely <u>no</u> confusion or misunderstanding concerning His instructions to "<u>Let him that hath a **purse** take it</u>" and let him who hath a <u>script</u> take it."

The Greek word translated "purse" here is the same Greek word used back in Luke 10:4 where He instructed the 70 to carry <u>no</u> "<u>purse</u>". This Greek word represents a pouch (for money) Back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel, and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u> to preach the Gospel (and back then they needed to carry <u>no money</u>).

Same when He originally sent the 12 out two by two, they also were instructed <u>not</u> to take any <u>money</u> or <u>food</u> for there journey. (you can find that account in Mark 6.)

But now He <u>instructs</u> His disciples to do things <u>differently</u>. He tells them (us) <u>if</u> they have a <u>purse</u>, they need to take it, and a <u>script</u>.

The preaching of the Gospel to the world was going to be different now, <u>funds</u> were going to be <u>necessary</u>.

And we begin to see the reason why, in Christ's very next words:

Luke 22:37 "For I say unto you, that this that is written must be accomplished in me, <u>And He was **reckoned** among the **transgressors**: for the things concerning me have an end."</u>

Remember, He said if they call me Beelzebub, how much more them of His household. (And again, remember He's always addressing his words to His flock, his 'little flock" His disciples, His true disciples, the ones who are <u>now</u> going to be <u>hated</u> & <u>persecuted</u>.

Christ's disciples were going to have a <u>rough</u> road ahead of them in preaching the Gospel to the world. It was not going to be such a smooth commission, like it was <u>before</u> His crucifixion & death.

Now, they were going to have <u>many</u> enemies (even within the quote-unquote "churches" of God) times were now going to be rough & tough for those who would be <u>sent</u> to preach the Gospel. (We can read about this "rough road" and need for money & food in 1 Corinthians 4:11)

(Let's turn there please, as we begin now to cross the Atlantic and begin to have a look at the condition in Kenya.)

Let's pick it up in 1 Corinthians 11:10 where the Apostle Paul speaks of their condition:

1 Corinthians 11:10 "We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ, we are <u>week</u>, but you are strong, you are honorable, but we are <u>despised</u>.

11, <u>Even unto this present hour we both **hunger**, and **thirst**, and are **naked**, and are <u>**buffeted**</u> (meaning punched or struck) and have <u>**no**</u> dwelling place;</u>

(Just like Christ, no place to lay their head) and labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it.

(They were not living in mansions, with expensive cars & expensive clothes. On the contrary, they had <u>no silver</u> & they had <u>no Gold</u>. There life wasn't "plush" their life was "Rough".

Now I've seen these conditions first hand over in Kenya, I remember when two of our brethren had traveled to Tanzania, to tend to a small congregation there, and on there way back, they not only walked (Trekked on foot that is) for two days because they had no funds for transportation, but had only a bag of potato chips for food that they nibbled on along the way.

I can remember the first time I traveled to Tanzania to visit the brethren there. We carried some meat with us because the brethren in Tanzania hadn't eaten any meat in some time. I think most (if not all living there) are both malnourished & undernourished.

(But before I get into the <u>harsh</u> conditions that our brethren in E. Africa are <u>enduring</u> let me go just one more place first. I have some "<u>food for thought</u>" that I also want to put on the table today. It concerns <u>us</u>, <u>our impoverished brethren</u>, and the <u>preaching of the Gospel</u>.

(And it has to do with Faith versus dead faith.)

(Luke 12 please)

Now don't get me wrong here, I'm not telling <u>anyone</u> to sell there house & there possessions & liquidate their assets. (That's <u>not</u> man's department to command or instruct in the first place, that's God's department). (And He <u>communicates</u> to His "little flock" <u>directly</u> through His spirit, <u>no middle man needed</u> (If we are awake, that is, and hearing Him.)

I'm only trying to drive the point home about how Christ wants us to take our "purse" if we have on, and use it for <u>His</u> purpose, in these "end times" in which we are living.

Now chapter 12 of Luke is where Christ tells His disciples to: "Beware of covetousness (which means wrongly desirous of wealth or possessions) and He tells them to: "Take <u>no</u> thought for your life or what you shall eat, or what you shall put on, But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"

Then, after He tells them all that, He then says this:

Luke 12:32 "Fear not, "little flock", for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. <u>Sell that ye have, and give alms</u>; provide yourselves <u>bags</u> which wax not old, a treasure in heaven that faileth not, for where your treasure is, <u>there</u> will your heart be also. So let your <u>loins</u> be girded about, and your <u>lights burning</u>."

("Sell that ye have and give <u>alms</u>" that word "**alms**" has to do with <u>compassion</u> – compassion that is <u>exercised</u> towards the poor.)

("*Provide yourselves* <u>bags</u> - <u>bags</u> which wax not old." That word translated <u>bags</u> is that same Greek word translated "purse" that we've been reading about, representing a "pouch" or a "purse" <u>used for carrying money</u>.)

My point is that He is not <u>only</u> instructing us here, to take <u>no thought</u> for our life, <u>no thought</u> for what we shall eat, or what we shall put on. And He's not <u>only</u> instructing us here to: "seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

But He's also telling us here, <u>HOW</u> to have "Living Faith" Yes He's also telling us here, <u>HOW</u> to <u>engage</u> our "FAITH" Brethren.

## (*Remember: "FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD"*!)

Brethren, "*Taking no <u>thought</u> for our life*" and "Taking no <u>thought</u> for what we shall eat or what we shall put on" IS NOT WORKS. But selling some of our stuff, using <u>our own resources</u> to preach the Gospel & help the poor, THAT'S WORKS.

(The Greek word translated "thought" means not to be "anxious" in our minds, it's about not worrying.)

But when it comes to having "Faith" there needs to be "works" <u>involved</u>. It's not just a matter of "<u>thinking</u>" it's a matter of "<u>doing</u>"

The Greek word translated "works" means: <u>an act</u> – <u>deed</u>, <u>doing</u>.

Webster's defines "works" as: exertion or effort directed to produce or accomplish something.

Taking no <u>thought</u> for our life, not <u>worrying</u> about what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or what we shall put on, that doesn't <u>engage</u> our FITH brethren, that doesn't produce <u>anything</u>, but only <u>enhances</u> our being "**Asleep At The Switch**" We need to <u>wake up</u>, <u>take action</u>, and <u>activate</u> our <u>Rudder</u> with <u>Works</u>!

(Okay, finally crossing the Big Lake now) (This is the part that may be a bit <u>repetitious</u> for some, but its <u>information</u> that's needed to better understand our involvement in Kenya.)

My first trip to Kenya was back in 2005, I heard rumors that there were members of the COG who were in dire need of help, that there was <u>drought</u>, <u>famine</u> and <u>pestilence</u> <u>plaguing</u> our brethren.

Little did I know back then, that I was getting involved in a work that God had not only already begun on that continent, but was about to <u>accelerate</u> it in numerous ways.

God had His <u>calling</u> going out to the Africans; a calling that I believe is the last. He tells us that "The Last shall be first & The First last" Well, no people on the face of the earth have been more "last" more "downtrodden" then the Africans.

You know Africa is quite a unique Continent. In the mid 1990s thirty-one out of Africa's fiftythree countries, were suffering civil war or serious civil disturbances, like the recent riots in Kenya.

Hundreds of thousands of people died, <u>but not from bullets</u>, but from <u>hunger</u>, <u>bad water</u> and <u>disease</u>. Even Kenyan's today, continues to suffer from those three killers.

But amid Africa's wars and man-made famines and plagues, they are a people who continue getting on with life, rising gloriously above conditions that would <u>break</u> most of us.

Upon my first visit, I found the conditions of our brethren to be <u>far worse</u> than what was rumored. I found Brethren who were true members of the household of God and very <u>rich in faith</u>, but quite poor in material wealth----- <u>many were struggling for mere existence</u>.

Most of our brethren are hard working peasant farmers. When it rains their crops grow and they eat. But when it doesn't rain the crops don't grow and they don't eat. That was the order of the day during most of my visits --- drought!

Some areas (especially in Eastern Kenya) had gone without rain for almost 5 years. Some of our brethren were going a day a week (in some instances, two days) a week without eating.

I also found our Brethren a much <u>neglected</u> people. Considering that most were former members of the WWCOG (some even go as far back as the Radio COG) they were still lacking in some of the most basic and important items, like bibles and mosquito nets.

Our Kenyan Brethren have a <u>strong</u> thirst for the "Word of God", but a scarcity of bibles. Many families are fortunate if they have one complete bible.

I also found that each family had members suffering from many of the diseases spread by the mosquito, like malaria (including many of the children.) Most of our Brethren had no mosquito nets because they couldn't afford the \$4.00 cost.)

You rarely visit a family there, who doesn't have someone suffering from some these illnesses.

I also found another problem among many of our brethren in Kenya, a "Hugh" problem, and one that has been <u>plaguing</u> the COG <u>all around the world</u>.

Many of the brethren were <u>confused</u> about <u>whom</u> they need to pledge their <u>allegiance</u> to.

You see, all the big groups are there in Kenya, and many of those big groups are <u>confusing</u> the brethren by <u>competing</u> for <u>control</u> over them. Many of the big group's <u>pressure</u> the brethren to be part of <u>their</u> particular "<u>man-made</u>" group. (Some even preach that ones <u>salvation</u> depends on it)

So our work was cut out for us to begin <u>turning the tide</u>. Our Brethren in Kenya were <u>truly</u> in need of help, both <u>physically</u> and <u>spiritually</u>. It was time to help them acquire some physical things like <u>food</u> (for those living in famine areas) and <u>bibles</u> and <u>mosquito nets</u> for the <u>majority</u> of the rest.

And, it was also time to begin putting an <u>end</u> to the <u>confusion</u> that was <u>plaguing</u> them from the <u>many false leaders</u>: by pointing them to God and teaching them that He (God) is the one (the only one) that we <u>all</u> need to be pledging our allegiance to.

Upon returning to the USA, I began to try and make as many of the COG brethren, from around the world, aware of the condition of our Brethren in that 3rd world country.

How they desperately needed our help; but to my surprise (to my shock actually) my plea for help was falling on deaf ears. The (quote unquote) "leaders" of the majority of the churches of God, here in the US would not pay attention to anything that I had to say, because I wasn't part of their "group" I wasn't under there thumb, I wasn't pledging my allegiance to them.

So very few members of the Body of Christ even got to know our impoverished brethrens conditions, because it was almost <u>impossible</u> to get past the Hierarchical church "leaders" due to their tight grip on God's brethren.

So we began a non-profit, called: Kenya Hands of Hope. We felt that if our brethren in the church couldn't be reached to help assist there impoverished brethren; we would try to reach out to the world for help.

Well, help from the world never surfaced, but as time went on, slowly but surely, little by little, God began connecting <u>true</u> brethren with us. Those with a Heart of Flesh and full of Compassion, and the help began trickling in to not only aid our impoverished brethren, but also to move the preaching of the Gospel forward, and in a country that is all ears, and <u>extremely thirsty</u> for Truth.

Starting KHOH turned out to be a real blessing. God worked it out that the funds that come in have accomplished a lot. It's just been amazing how much God can do with so little.

The majority of the brethren who have been working together with us, and supporting, are poor themselves. We had one man who was retired, and quite advanced in years, and living on SS, who was very dedicated in helping our impoverished brethren.

He was even living out of the back of his pickup truck for a while, during the time he was sending funds to Kenya. He even came out of retirement, and took on a hard laborious job (that literally almost killed him) in order to better help the brethren over there.

I can tell you many stories, how those who have been working together with us are poor themselves, but have a heart of gold when it comes to helping those who are in need.

Yes, they have the character of God, and that "pure religion, which is undefiled before God, because they <u>have been</u> visiting the fatherless & widows in their affliction, by assisting them.

Now God's hand has been very busy in E. Africa, paving the way for the Gospel to spread in that part of the world, and in many ways. (I want to mention some here.

1, He has been literally paving the way, He had China pave all the main roads. When I first visited in 2005, the <u>few</u> roads that had been paved at one time (many years prior) were <u>treacherous</u> to say the least. They hadn't been maintained since the British pulled out in the 60ies.

Traveling around from one area to another, not only took a long time, but was extremely difficult & dangerous. It was common to see an overturned vehicle (from traveling too fast on roads where pot holes prevailed) but a rarity to <u>ever</u> see a toe-truck or an ambulance. (I don't think they have any over there.)

But now China has moved in and paved the major roads. There interest is to move there goods around quickly to be sold, but it has also enabled to Gospel to move around quickly.

Another thing that has helped the Gospel to move forward, is cell phone companies began a service of transferring money, so we can move funds around quickly and efficiently.

And God <u>Himself</u> has raised up overseers in many areas (we don't go around choosing who <u>we feel</u> would be good to work with) (We stopped playing church a long time ago, knowing that God places people where He pleases.)

But we do have to enable His overseers with funds, and being able to transfer money so quickly & easily is a real blessing from God.

(All these things that I'm mentioning are new to Kenya, and assisting greatly in pushing the Gospel & assist brethren in need, like the many widows & orphans.

Even Busses now carry packages (like UPS does here in the States) so we can transfer literature etc. quite easily) (And not only around Kenya, we have also utilized the services of these buses to send literature into Uganda & Rwanda.)

Now each and every time I have traveled there, the trips were very successful, including this last trip with Charles Post. Charles is a man that sometimes comes across rough & tough. But let me tell you, that man has a heart of Gold, and he's filled with compassion.

Charles (like a number of others from around the world connected to KHOH, have helped our brethren in that impoverished country **tremendously**, and our working together, has the Gospel continuing to moving across E. Africa.)

Now I'm going to end here for today, I'll get into the details of my recent trip soon. For now, I like to hear the comments on what I've placed on the table so far.