

# Zambia APCs June 2024: A Personal Diary

## Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup>

The journey was 22 hours door-to-door, but the flights were without problem and there were no issues with delays or loss of luggage — praise the Lord! I spent most of the time preparing for the first two of my messages on Romans 1:16-17 and Romans 8:1-11. I had lacked time to prepare thoroughly in advance and there was a lot of work to do, especially on the second message. Recent studies in Romans 8 back home from one of our gifted brothers proved very helpful with many penetrating insights – what an encouragement to be spurred on by our young men in training! It was tiring, but the Lord gave strength and by the end of the journey I had outlines for those messages completed. God is good.

On arrival in Lusaka I was picked up by the conference organiser, Mr Gabriel, an older man who was extremely helpful, welcoming and precise. He was an excellent administrator and did a fine job throughout.

I was immediately struck by the temperature. This is Zambia's winter, and being some distance south of the equator, it can get quite cool. Although sunny during the day, it is barely reaching 20 degrees, and at night it is dropping below 10 degrees. Positively cold! I actually shivered in bed, because I was not prepared for it. This is Africa after all! We were staying in some rooms associated with an Anglican Church — they were basic but comfortable. Zambia depends greatly on hydroelectricity for its power, having massive rivers that descend from the mountains, but the lack of rains has caused a problem with this, meaning there are many power outages.



However, it seems evident that Zambia has been blessed with more stability and prosperity than many other African nations, at least from what I can see here in Lusaka. The other members of the team are Joshua Bolaji (minister of Welkom Baptist Church in South Africa and a director of APC), Cary Kimbrell

(minister of a Southern Baptist church in Mississippi) and Malcolm Blake (member of a Reformed Church in Port Shepstone in South Africa, here to run the book shop and do the admin).

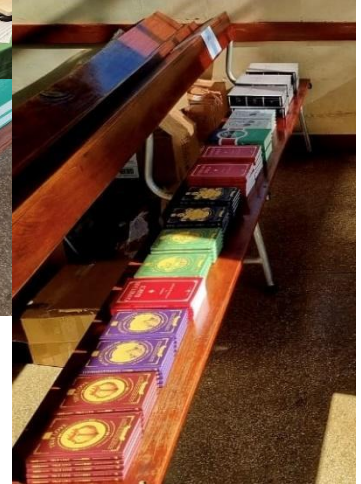
## Thursday 13<sup>th</sup>

The conference was held at one of the Presbyterian churches in the city called Reformed Church In Zambia, Kamwala Congregation. It was a good size of church hall that seated all the 130 delegates quite comfortably. There were five preaching sessions on the first day, and I



gave the first and last of them on God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16-17) and the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1-11). Joshua spoke on sin from Romans 3, and deliverance from sin and wrath from Romans 6, with Cary speaking on justification from the end of Romans 3. The delegates were extremely attentive and responsive throughout, and there was much freedom in the ministry of the word. It was evident quite quickly that these folk were well prepared, thoughtful and eager to hear Christ speak to them.

Then the book stall opened and it was astonishing to see the zeal shown for the books on sale. There were good commentaries, Reformation Heritage books, Day One books, and of course the new titles from Broken Wharfe that I had brought along with me. It was like a herd of cattle dashing to the feeding trough when the provisions had arrived! There was special interest shown in the Broken Wharfe publications, probably because they were all new to the delegates, with all the seventy titles selling out. Christian Basics was especially popular, as they could see its usefulness in laying a strong foundation for those who lack understanding. There were also some Reformation Heritage Bibles available at very reduced prices, and they were snapped up as well. It was very encouraging!



Lunch was wonderful! The ladies had prepared a feast worthy of kings and princes. In addition to the rice, maize meal, chicken and beef, there were tasty beans and greens (tops of sweet potatoes, cabbage, and something else that I did not recognise but was very tasty). They had been up from the early hours of the morning to prepare, and will repeat tomorrow. They were most appreciative of the enthusiastic feedback from the Englishman.

Malcolm had to work extremely hard with the bookstall, along with registrations, badges, preparation of certificates etc. It's his first time on this task, and he found it challenging with so many eager delegates, sometimes disappointed because books had sold out. He is a dear brother and serves with humble zeal.

At the end of the day we were ready for our meal, and feasted well at a steak house - the Zambians love their beef steak! When I got back, there was still a fair bit of work to do on my Romans 12 message, so it was a late finish for me. Sleep was welcome, and I wrapped up a bit warmer this time.

## Friday 14<sup>th</sup>

Today there were four preaching sessions with a Q&A. Cary dealt with chapter 9 (God's sovereignty in salvation), Joshua with chapter 10 (the gospel to all nations), myself with chapter 12 (holiness in the church) and Cary with chapters 13-15 (holiness in all of life). Again, there was much attentiveness. Conversations and questions were thoughtful and encouraging. The Q&A was a special blessing. There were questions about the nation of Israel, man's responsibility (in relation to God's sovereignty), is it possible to lose one's salvation and do we have prophets today? We gave clear answers without softening or equivocating, yet there was much enthusiasm for those answers. At the end of the day we sang a hymn of praise and handed out certificates. It had been a richly blessed time.



The evident blessing upon the work of the gospel in Zambia became even more clear in the conversations at the end of the day. There were interns training at Kabwata Baptist Church (where Conrad Mbewe is the pastor) and at Lusaka Baptist Church (where Ronald Kalifungwa serves). Kabwata has about 500 in attendance each Lord's day and Lusaka Baptist is around 1000. These churches are well established as confessional Baptist churches with decades of ministry and witness. They have sent out many men who are serving faithfully, and the churches they have planted are now planting others too. It is so encouraging. The pictures show some of these interns.



Then there are the lovely ladies, many of them middle-aged, who came to the conference just because they love the word of God and wanted to spend more time hearing it preached.

They are members of the churches in Lusaka and full of zeal for the Lord. One of them, a widow called Martha Banda, was especially sweet and had a lovely smile. She is in her 70s and lost her husband in 1989. She is seeking a penpal in the UK, and I hope to be able to assist her with that!

I had a lovely evening of sweet fellowship with Ronald Kalifungwa, who is the pastor of Lusaka Baptist Church. He is a dear brother that I have known for a number of years, having first met him in Nairobi, where he has taught at the



Trinity Pastors College. We went out to (another) steak house and spent the best part of three hours together. He outlined the history of the church, how it became confessional at the turn of the millennium through the ministry of two English pastors in the church, Michael Eaton and Nigel Lacey. Ronald has been there for over 20 years now and the work is thriving. He is in the process of writing a book about the church, and we discussed together how we would benefit from making that available both across Africa and in the UK. He was delighted when I presented him with a copy of Keith Underhill's book, "Planted by the Providence of God". Praise the Lord for like-minded brothers serving thousands of miles away, labouring for the glory of Christ according to the same Scriptures and the same confession of faith.

## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>

We left at 9:45am to travel to Kitwe (about 225 miles north), and we arrived at our destination 9 hours later! Yes the roads are terrible and the traffic is relentless, with seemingly endless lines of trucks. We did stop for a burger on the way, which was most welcome (see picture), but it really was a long trek. Cary regaled us with many stories along the way and Joshua did a fine job of navigating the roads. The journey showed a country that has a lot of industry and as we passed through Ndola we saw many copper mines – in fact the region is known as the copper belt for that reason. After a pizza, I finally managed to get around to writing up my diary of the trip so far. We are looking forward to ministry and fellowship amongst the Lord's people here tomorrow.



**The delegates in the winter sun**



## Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> morning

Andrew, pastor of Riverside Church in Kitwe, arrived in the morning soon after 9:30am to take Malcolm and myself to the church (Cary and Joshua were attending Faith Baptist Church).



When we arrived it had turned into a gorgeous sunny morning, with a fresh breeze and clear air. The church compound was really beautiful, set in an acre of ground with the main church hall in the centre, Sunday school rooms to one side, the manse on the other and various smaller outbuildings, alongside a large car park and gardens. The grass was lush and the trees looked magnificent. It felt a little bit like paradise, as you can see in the pics. The main building was spacious and

airy, light and bright without being exposed to the sun too much (important for the summer heat). It was a wonderful environment in which to gather for worship.

The service began soon after 10am and we did not finish until after 12pm. One of the deacons led the service, and he did a fine job. It was not quite home-from-home, but very nearly, which is amazing considering this was a Brethren chapel, at least in name.



There was a call to worship, three long Scripture readings, about seven hymns, two prayers, an offering, two pieces from a small singing group and of course the sermon. The singing was most notable, being reverent yet effusive – they gave it all they had and really seemed to mean it. The congregation must have been about 120 with all ages represented. I had a lot of liberty in preaching from Revelation 4 and we were richly blessed as we looked up to heaven and saw the glory of the throne of God. The congregation received the message warmly and



responded with gusto as they sang "We're marching to Zion... the wonderful city of God." Now that WAS home-from-home!



After the service, we all greeted one another with a hand shake as we lined up outside the building. It is a similar tradition to what I have experienced in rural Kenya. We can't do it ourselves in the UK, partly because of our building location on the main road, and partly because of the weather! As we greeted one another, nobody was in any hurry to rush off. We chatted with a number of folk that you can see in the pictures. One younger girl was called Lubanji, which means GLORY! We had a wonderful conversation about the glory



of the Lord, and the call upon her life to live for that glory of the Lord, especially bearing in mind her own name! I encouraged her to remember this every time her name was spoken. Then there were four older ladies, Miriam, Mavis, Nancy and Annie. Annie was wife to one of the elders and she was very excited by the message. She told me that she felt like standing up and crying out "Hallelujah" to the Lord in heaven as we considered the glory of his eternal

throne. Her face shone with joy as she spoke of these things. How sweet is Christian fellowship, even with those we have never met before from half way across the globe.

In speaking with the pastor, Andrew, it became clear that he had only been at the church for a few weeks. The church had been without a pastor since 2007, and they were delighted to have him. He comes from a Baptist background, and it is evident that the Church is willing to embrace reformation under their new minister. Please pray for him as he settles in and takes up his regular ministry. There is great hope for a church that is so responsive to the preaching of God's word and thrilled to hear the message of the Scriptures proclaimed. What cannot be accomplished in a church that is ready to hear the voice of her master?



### **Sunday 16th afternoon**

We were then treated to a lovely lunch by one of the elders (Chewe), along with Andrew, Malcolm and myself. We had a wonderful time of fellowship, sharing our stories of the Lord's



goodness to us in our lives and discussing many matters of theology and church life. Andrew is coming to ever-more-clear Reformed convictions, out of a Dispensational background, and it was great to be able to share with him many of the things we have been studying in Revelation back home. It was also a rich blessing to hear from Malcolm his own testimony of God's saving grace in his life, through many afflictions – God has done mighty things, and it is marvellous

in our eyes. It was such a happy time of warm Christian fellowship between brothers who had only known one another for a few short hours. Truly the words of the Psalmist were proven true: "Behold how good and pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity."

We also spoke about the impact of the pandemic on church life, and it was clear that the teaching given in the book “Under God, Over The People, The Calling And Accountability Of Civil Government” is as vital here as it is back home. They cancelled their services for a long time, and even now they had still not recommenced their evening service. It was a great blessing to hear that they would be restarting in July. Pray for them as they take this vital step of faithfulness to the Lord.

On the way back to our lodgings, we saw a billboard advertising a meeting where you could encounter Jesus. The wording said: "Rise and be healed. Jesus Encounter. Gospel Crusade. Come expecting miracles, signs and wonders as all manner of diseases are healed." Although these billboards are not as ubiquitous as in Nigeria or even Kenya, it was a reminder of the necessity of what we are doing in the APCs. Pray that the Lord will deliver many from these false teachers and bring them to the true knowledge of the gospel of Christ, which alone is the power to save.



The evening was quiet and restful preparing for the coming week. What a joyful Lord's day it has proven to be – another foretaste of heaven.

### **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>: The Conference**

The Kitwe conference was held at Faith Baptist Church. The building is a good size, probably able to seat 300, set in extensive grounds with plenty of facilities. They have a church school that operates there, as well as offices and other buildings. The grounds themselves are idyllic, with palm trees and mature shrubs, lots of very green grass and a great exterior facade to the main church hall - plain but very attractive.

We followed the same pattern of messages as in Lusaka, as we will do at the remaining conferences, which means that life eases up in terms of preparation time. There were 50 delegates, mostly from a few churches in and around Kitwe. Again, they were very attentive and responsive to the messages, showing widespread support for our approach.

We are very clear and strong in our warnings against Word of Faith, Health & Wealth and Deliverance teachings. Each of these offers a false gospel that insulates the hearers against the true message of salvation in Christ. As these false messages are





contrasted with the true saving power of Christ, there is clear recognition amongst the delegates – many of those "knowing smiles" and "amused nods" that say "you have hit the nail on the head there!" In this regard, it is especially important to have Joshua Bolaji with us, who has "inside

understanding" of these false teachings. He exposes the charlatans with particular force and is very persuasive when he states, "I know because I have seen it from the inside." It reminds me of the perspective of men like Elly Achok and Barnabas Olare in Kenya – they are named "Sons of Thunder" with good reason! They know the dangers and they are bold to give warning.

We trust that much good will be done, not only for these men, but for their churches, and others too as they share the message. There was much disappointment that all the Broken Wharfe books had sold, but we were able to assure them that we would seek to make them available next year, DV.



### **Monday 17th to Tuesday 18th: The School**

It was a joy to be near the children. There is a happiness and a joy in them that is so winsome. The level of discipline on display makes the situation in our schools appear really tragic – not that there is any heavy-handedness, just a clear expectation that the children will do what they are told first time, and they do! I spoke to a number of them and they were cheerful, bright, alert children, clearly very happy to be learning and thriving in their school environment. I managed to get a little recording of some singing, and the level of zeal they put into what they were doing was truly wonderful.





I spoke with one of the leaders, and he said that while they are required to cover certain basics of maths, English and science for their national exams, everything else is left to the discretion of the school and they are free to teach whatever they wish from the Scriptures without hindrance. He actually said, "We are still a Christian country in the sense that the President openly states his desire to govern the nation according to the

Bible. There is no hindrance to teaching the Bible to the children." What an opportunity for them, and they are seizing it, and the children are benefitting massively from it.

Thank God that, even as our own nation continues its determined opposition to the gospel and the Bible at every level of national life, but especially in our schools, in Zambia the opposite is the case! Seeing the children and observing their school life reminds me of the heritage we gave to such nations, from which they are benefitting massively, while we ourselves are doing all within our power to undermine and destroy it in our own land. May the Lord have mercy upon us, even as we give thanks for what he is doing in Zambia.



### **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>: The Pastor**

The pastor of Faith Baptist is Chopo Mwanza. He has been a big supporter of APCs in Kitwe for a number of years. We took him out for a meal on the Monday evening and enjoyed a sweet time of fellowship with him, his dear wife, three children and a friend from Kenya studying at the university. He has been in pastoral ministry here for the past 10 years, and works in a team of five elders, very like our situation at Trinity Grace.



As we spoke about church life, pastoral work and all the various challenges faced, it was so clear that the things which unite us are far greater than the things that cause us to differ. For example, we spoke about congregational meetings and my ears pricked up when he said that they don't call them "business meetings" because the emphasis is on the work of the gospel and the needs of the members. This led to a particularly enthusiastic discussion as I

shared our own experience of reformation in that regard at Trinity Grace. I picked up a copy of their order of service from Sunday and again I was struck by the similarities in what we sing, what we read and what we preach. Praise the Lord for such communion.

### **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup>: Angola and Malawi**

There were two young men at the conference that are not originally from Zambia: an Angolan and a Malawian. What a joy and a privilege to meet these two men.

Angola is to the west of Zambia, with Namibia to its south and Congo to the north. It is a former Portuguese colony, so the main language is Portuguese. The brother at the conference was called Joao Domingos, and he is in Kitwe for his studies. He is a confessional Baptist, with a vision to see such a church planted in his home country. He was so thankful to be a part of APCs, and he had also connected with IRBS online, so we had a great deal to talk about! He wants to see more good books made available in Angola, which will mean translating into Portuguese, and it was good to be able to discuss that possibility with him, in partnership with Broken Wharfe. He was full of zeal for the work of the gospel and greatly encouraged to share together in our common convictions. A tremendous blessing.



The Malawian was called Gideon Mpeni. He is in Kitwe teaching at the Central Africa Baptist University here. He is committed to seeing the kingdom of Christ spread across his home country. He visits regularly and is involved in various projects for preaching, evangelism and training. Malawi is to the east of Zambia, with Mozambique further to its east and Tanzania to the north. It is an English-speaking country, so there is no language barrier. He is especially keen about making good books available to form the minds and direct the ministries of the many pastors who lack any formal training.

Both men have contact details and seem keen to remain in touch and see how we can assist them with their vision for the gospel in their own countries. How wonderful is the providence of God in opening up these opportunities for partnership and service.

### **Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>**

We travelled from Kitwe to Solwezi, about a three-hour journey. It was a good road, better than anything we had used so far, and we made steady progress. We arrived to be greeted by the local pastor and conference organiser, Brian Mutale. This was the first APC conference to be

held in the town, and there was some uncertainty about how well it might go. Brian had indicated that there were only 16 registered so far.



When we arrived at Brian's house, his wife had prepared a lovely meal for us. You can see her in the pic, next to Brian in the yellow shirt, with a friend from the church to her right.

Over lunch, Brian shared the story of how he came to the Reformed faith, out of the Word of Faith movement. It was so interesting and encouraging that I asked him to write it down for me, and you can read his testimony as an appendix to this diary.

Following his change of perspective, Brian has been working with local pastors to encourage them to study their Bibles more carefully and consider what might need to change in their approach. Many of them are Pentecostal, and as he was sharing about their practices, we began to wonder if they would be willing to receive our ministry at all! Brian told us he was the only Reformed minister in Solwezi, so you can imagine how we began to feel.

After lunch we went to meet the men and see the venue. It was a massive building, half-finished, containing more amplification equipment than a rock venue! There were probably 400 chairs in the hall, and later we were assured they were all filled for two back-to-back services on Sundays in this provincial town.



The five men who met us were very well dressed (a good indicator of "prosperity"), and later we discovered there was at least one apostle and a bishop amongst their number.



Joshua did not seem fazed by this, but Cary and I were rather concerned. How would our ministry be received? We could see the signs and posters in



the hall, promising great things, and we wondered how "great" they would consider our offerings to be! With only 16 registered to come, it felt like a challenge. Despite Brian's assurances that more would come, we weren't confident.

We found a suitable "lodge" to stay (a bit like a motel), had a good meal and got a good night's rest. What would the morning have in store for us?

## Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 21<sup>st</sup>: Overview

William Cowper said in his incomparable poetic brilliance: "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform; he plants his footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm. Deep in



unfathomable mines of never-failing skill, he treasures up his bright designs and works his sovereign will. You fearful saints, fresh courage take; the clouds you so much dread are big with mercy, and shall break in blessings on your head." Cowper summarised our experience at this conference in these wonderful words, as we were "blown away" by the blessings God showered down upon us.

The first day began inauspiciously, with few present at the start time of 9am, and even the organisers still to arrive. Only Brian was present, and he did look a little concerned. However, we got on with setting everything up, with Malcolm now definitely into his stride, taking control of his space for the registrations and book sales. Soon after 9am, I began with the first session on Romans 1:16-17, the gospel is the dynamite of God unto salvation. I was surprised by the liberty granted, which was experienced throughout the conference by all the speakers in all the



messages. By the end of that first message, there were the best part of 40 present, and the level of engagement was incredibly encouraging.

By the end of the conference there were 58 delegates registered, the entire stock of 242 books had been sold and there was tremendous interest shown in all that we presented. To say that Brian was encouraged would be something of an understatement!

It's not that we toned the messages down or changed the content. Yes, we took more time to explain different perspectives and we were careful not to cause unnecessary offence, but the messages were the same, and at times



they were punchy! Yet each message was heard with respectful interest and it was clear that the delegates were tracking with us, even at points where the theology would have been either new or strange or both.



What a joy to see so many Pentecostal church leaders filling their arms with good books (commentaries, church history, doctrine, even Puritan literature) and eagerly listening to biblical preaching, perhaps for the first time in their experience. We got more "amens" in those meetings than we might get in a month of Sundays back home!

As Joshua put it, this is what APCs are for. Yes there is a great value in confirming and encouraging and feeding those already convinced of the Reformed faith and its wonderful doctrines of salvation and grace and sovereignty, but to bring these things to those who have never heard them before, that is a truly precious thing. Brian explained that it's not as though they are against Calvinism or Reformed doctrine – they are just completely ignorant of it – they know nothing other than what they have been taught.

Praise God for such rich and precious fruit from these two days of conference.



### Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 21<sup>st</sup>: The Delegates

Have you ever received a business card from an apostle? What about a prophet? How about receiving both, in the same day? That was my experience at the Solwezi conference, yet even after two days of thoroughly biblical and confessional teaching, there was so much warmth.

And we had been really clear! Joshua in particular did a fine job in the Q&A answering the question about signs and wonders and deliverance from curses today – he was warm and humble, yet pulled no punches, especially on the issue of "generational curses", which seems to be a big issue (the unbiblical idea that children can be cursed because of their parents' sins). In my final message on Romans 12, I even covered the regulative principle of worship and gave warnings from the example of Nadab / Abihu and Uzza, yet they did not walk out or ask us to cease.



One of the leaders of the "host" church was called O'Brien, and I had a good laugh with him about his Irish roots (which were of course non-existent). He listened attentively to every single one of

the nine messages, as well as the Q&A. In fact, when I answered a question about the right way to interpret Romans 7:15 (a difficult text – it was a really good question), he led everyone in a spontaneous round of applause. I am not sure if he styles himself a prophet or man-of-God, but he is certainly one of the leaders in the church, yet he was so engaged and keen on all that was being proclaimed.

Another man was a chaplain who came for the full conference dressed in his military uniform. He followed every session with great interest. When it came to the Q&A we were speaking about sanctification, and how there is no conflict between the word of God and the Spirit of God, as Paul explains the armour of God in Ephesians 6. It was most appropriate that our military friend should be ready with the answer at that point: the sword of the Spirit is the word of God. Praise the Lord!

Then there was an older man who travelled 180km to attend the conference for the two days. As he sat at the front, there were times when I thought his eyes might pop out of his head. He had one of those stares that was so fixed and intense, it was difficult to see if he ever blinked! He expressed deep thankfulness for the teaching. Who knows what impact these two days may have upon his ministry.



### **Friday 21<sup>st</sup>: Reformed Baptist Church Solwezi**

The conference was the fruit of Brian's work. He had clearly spent many years building relationships with these men and opening the door of opportunity for us to come and make our presentations. It is deeply humbling to see the level of hard work and perseverance that such faithful brothers put in to their labours.

The reason why the conference was not held in Brian's church building is because he does not have one! They have bought a plot and have begun construction (see the pic), but there is a



long way to go. In the meantime, they meet in temporary accommodation. Please pray for God's blessing upon this dear brother and his faithful labours for the glory of Christ. We enjoyed a second lovely meal with his family on the evening of Friday 21st after the conference finished, and we commended him to the Lord. Please pray for him, that there will be much fruit from his labours in Christ's name, for his glory in Solwezi.

## Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>: The Team



Saturday was a travelling day as we drove from Solwezi to Ndola, still in the Copperbelt region. We began the day with fond farewells to Brian, who came to see us at breakfast. What a dear brother he is, and how blessed to share such an encouraging time together with him. Over the 3-to-4-hour drive, and then into the evening, we shared another meal and enjoyed sweet fellowship together as the APC team

in Zambia. Let me tell you a little more about these dear men.

Our "esteemed leader" is **Joshua Bolaji**. Born in Nigeria, raised in London, now ministering in Welkom, South Africa and the "Executive Director" of APCs. Being Nigerian he is of course a big man with a big personality! As he drove us from place to place, he did so with great confidence, which, although a bit shocking at times to a driver used to UK roads, is absolutely necessary on the African continent. We laughed out loud many times to hear him



remonstrating with other drivers from his car seat, knowing that of course they could not hear him, but it is his way of staying sane on these crazy roads. At one point, stuck behind two massive trucks with misaligned axles, one overtaking the other on a two-lane road at high speed, I did think we might be about to enter heaven – but Joshua knew what he was doing!

Pray for our brother, as he has four children, the youngest of whom is adopted (a boy named Moses), but the papers are still not completed and there seem endless delays. It is a cause of great concern. He has many responsibilities on his shoulders too, with ministry in his church, APC responsibilities and oversight of Morning Star Children's Centre, where they care for orphans and children with HIV. I have the highest respect for his work ethic and tireless



commitment in the face of great challenges. We often laugh together about his London accent and the phrases he comes out with like "come off it mate" and "you have got to be kidding" – he is a real Brit-at-heart! Yet he loves his homeland of Nigeria and often speaks with great pathos about the needs there, as we discuss together ways we might be able to assist the men ministering in that spiritually barren land.

**Malcolm Blake** was with us as book store manager and administrator. Being his first time on the job, Lusaka proved to be something of a baptism by fire, with so many delegates and literally hundreds of books selling in no time at all.

However, he soon got into his stride and by the time of the third conference in Solwezi, he had it all in hand. His conversion to Christ is a wonderful account of grace, especially in relation to serious problems with addiction, from which the Lord has graciously delivered him. To God be all the glory. He is worshipping at a Reformed church in Port Shepstone and is seeking the Lord for the next steps in his life, especially in relation to work and marriage – he dearly desires to be married and have a family, if the Lord wills. Pray for the Lord to guide and lead Malcolm, so that he might prove in his own life that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.



**Cary Kimbrell** is 69 years old and has been preaching since he was 17 years old, in 1972, the year after I was born. He is presently pastoring Bethlehem Baptist Church in Laurel, Mississippi (not to be confused with Bethlehem Baptist in Minneapolis, where John Piper was



the pastor). Laurel is a town about the same size as Ramsbottom, but with nearly five times as many churches, since it is based in what is called the "Bible belt". Sadly, many of them preach a non-gospel, or at least a very mixed and confused gospel. Cary's church belongs to the SBC (Southern Baptist Convention), and supports the work of Founders Ministries (led by Tom Ascol) in their attempt to promote the Reformed faith (i.e. biblical Christianity) in the Convention. He is a man of a thousand stories, many of them extremely funny. We had a wonderful time of fellowship together, finding that we saw eye-to-eye on almost all matters of theology and ecclesiology, if not culture and national life. I can't count the number of times he referred to the day the Americans "invited the Brits to leave our country, with a little persuasion in the form of loaded guns". Don't worry – I gave as good as I got!

As we spent many hours together, the sweetness of Christian fellowship became all the more manifest. Indeed, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, especially when concentrated upon the work of the gospel. Open invitations have been given by each to all, with open homes and open pulpits. The Lord is gracious.



## Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup>: Ndola Baptist Church

We worshipped at Ndola Baptist Church on Sunday morning. It was a long service, beginning at 9:30am and not finishing until nearly 12:00pm. There was a lot of singing, and about 20 minutes of the service time seemed to be taken up with notices! There was also a dedication, commendation of about five or six folks for membership and quite a time taken with the collection. With a congregation of about 300, it was a significant undertaking. The sermon, preached by the pastor, was on I Corinthians 12. Although clearly a gospel church, there were a number of things said and done that demonstrated there is still much need for reformation. For example, it was evident that at least some (including one elder) believed in the continuation of tongues and other revelatory gifts. It reminded us of the need for the work of APCs and the teaching that we bring. Some have never heard it before, while others may have heard, but are still unpersuaded. Pray for grace to persevere.

Much of the rest of the day was taken up with rest, study and reading. Praise the Lord for his day of refreshment and renewal! However, today was the day I really missed being with God's people back home at Trinity Grace – there is no joy like the communion of the saints in your home church!



## Monday 24<sup>th</sup> / Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup>: Ndola Conference

The reception we were given in Ndola was not as warm as in the other locations, especially Solwezi and Lusaka. There seemed to be much reticence, and despite Ndola being a large city, with a population over half a million, and many Baptist churches, numbers were low, reaching only about 35-40. In the past there have been up to 200 at this conference. It is discouraging, and we shared this with the local organiser and the other men. It was interesting that here we had only one question for the Q&A, compared with very many in Solwezi! The conference finished early for this reason.



As we delivered our messages, I sensed that they warmed to the ministry. One or two spoke with great enthusiasm about the expositions given. I hope that they will manifest greater zeal and that there will be a much greater attendance next year. Our experience at the church on Sunday and conversations held with many showed that the need was very great. It may not be so dramatic as with the Pentecostal brothers, but it is nonetheless



very real, even vital, for the health and growth of these churches. As APC directors we need much wisdom and grace in all our decision-making. Pray for us in this regard.



### **Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>: My Final Day**

Although there is still one conference to go, in Mazabuka, to the south of Lusaka, it was decided that it would be too difficult to arrange for transport for me to get back to Lusaka tomorrow evening in time for my flight at 9:35pm. I felt for the men who would have a bigger workload in my absence as a result.

After another journey filled with sweet Christian fellowship, I was dropped at the airport hotel in Lusaka around 2pm as the APC car travelled further south.

What a privilege to labour with such brothers and to engage in the work of the gospel in such a way.

I am more convinced than ever that the work of APC is absolutely vital.

May the Lord grant us wisdom and resources so that we can progress with this work effectively for the glory of our Saviour and the blessing of his churches.



## Appendix: The Testimony Of Brian Mutale



My is **Brian Elias Mutale**, born on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1980, I am the first born in a family of 8. I am married to a beautiful and godly woman **Paxina M. Kabamba**. The Lord has blessed us with 3 beautiful girls, and the fourth baby is on the way, the Lord willing the baby will be born on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2024. These are **Bupe Cecilia Mutale** (10 years old), and the twins **Barbara Mwansa Mutale** and **Martha Bwalya Mutale** (5 years Old).

### HOW THE LORD SAVED ME FROM MY SINS

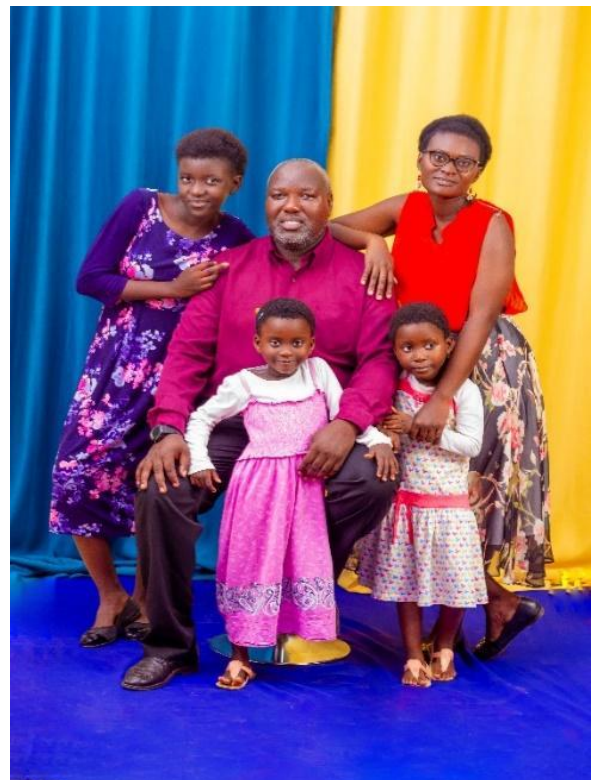
In the year 2000, between the month of October and December, I heard the gospel preached in accents that are loud and clear. I saw that I am a sinner who needed the Lord Jesus Christ to save me from my sins and the wrath of God.

When I got saved, I began to search for a church where I can find a preacher like the one who preached the gospel to me. I found one who also, in a way, I believe was also influenced by the very preacher who I heard the gospel from. The name of the Pentecostal church I was attending is Glad Tidings Assembly in my hometown Ndola. In this church I got to know and see how the Pentecostals preach, pray and the manner of life that they lead.

When I joined the Pentecostal church, I also joined a mission's organisation called "Daysman World Mission". It was in an organisation with Pentecostal pastors in Ndola and the rest of the country. At one point I served as a publicity secretary of "Daysman World Missions". During this time when I served as a publicity secretary, I got to know almost all the Pentecostal churches in the city of Ndola.

During this time when I was serving the Lord as a publicity secretary, I began to sense the call to serve my master full time. I used to preach in different churches, mainly to the youths, though at times I was given the opportunity to preach to the whole congregation.

One day, one of the many Directors of "Daysman World Missions" Dr. Willington Kaponda said to me, "Brian, you need to go to Bible School, because when you go and study theology you



will come and help a number of people”. I am ever grateful to God for Dr. Kaponda who encouraged me to go to Bible School.

At this point because I had known all about ministry in the Pentecostal circles, I was fully convinced that I also needed to start my own ministry. And the name of the ministry that I had come up with was “Brian Mutale Ministries International”.

In 2006, the search for a Bible School where I would study began. Providentially, Centre for Christian Missions (CCM) in Kitwe was found. This Bible College was founded in June of 2000 in Ndola by Bonnie Lou Dolan, a missionary from the United States of America. The College has a Baptist inclination which was very good for me because I had come to know the Baptists are very good with the word of God.

In 2007, I reported for school at CCM in Kitwe and that is where my theological journey began. In my first year of Bible College, the Lord began to deal with me again in a special way. He used his humble servant Pastor Jonathan Mwalimu, who is still lecturing at CCM, to introduce me to the Reformed faith. Whenever he was lecturing, he kept on saying “This is from the Reformed Perspective”. I kept on asking myself the question, “What is this Reformed Perspective?” I said, whatever this Reformed Perspective is, it is very biblical. When I saw that the Reformed faith is biblical, I followed-up pastor Jonathan Mwalimu, who graciously began to explain further to me what the Reformed faith is. After knowing more about the Reformed faith I fell deeply in love with it.

In April 2007, I was sent to Chililabombwe for my first mission’s trip. This was a school requirement for all the students. It was in Chililabombwe where I made my doctrinal shift, from being a Pentecostal guy to a Reformed Baptist servant. Again, God used another humble servant, Pastor Emmanuel Sakala, who was a pastor of Berean Reformed Baptist Church. I still remember on this particular night we spent about 3 to 4 hours in Pastor Sakala’s office as he was explaining to me what the Reformed faith is. It was that night when I made my doctrinal shift, because one thing was made clear to me, and it is this: the Reformed faith is biblical.

In light of this, we who have the true gospel and are Reformed, we should not distance ourselves from the Pentecostal brothers and sisters. Some of them are not saved and a number are very ignorant of the true gospel.

This is why the **African Pastor’s Conference** is very important and should continue for the following reasons:

1. The true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is preached during the conference.
2. Many pastors, elders and all the Christians greatly benefit from the conference through books that are sold at a much-reduced price.
3. Pastors, elders and teachers get to see and learn what expository preaching is.

These pastors, elders and teachers need good and sound biblical books. Here in Solwezi we need the following books:

1. Biblical Theology
2. Historical Theology
3. Systematic Theology
4. Practical Theology
5. Study Bibles
6. Commentaries
7. Biographies
8. Grace Hymns
9. 1689 Baptist Confessions