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Global iNSIGHT

The Suffering Church in Zambia

What happens when no one is trained

The church in Zambia is suffering not from persecution but from false teaching within.

Fegas remembers the day Zambia was declared a Christian nation: December 29, 1991. "It was a moment of national pride," he says, "but also a moment of opportunity—an opportunity that not everyone used well. Almost overnight, men and women began calling themselves pastors and preaching to congregations, many without ever having been discipled or adequately trained." What followed was a corrosive stream of misinterpreted Scripture, legalism, and false teaching. Many pastors stood in front of their congregations week after week, preaching doctrines they were not sure of because no one had ever taught them.

"Pastors teach salvation with works," Fegas says. "They do not understand salvation by grace." Legalism is at one end of the spectrum of false teaching; lawlessness is at the other. Some pastors preach that people "do not need to be saved, because God is merciful and will never punish." He will not judge anyone, so people should simply live how they want to live. Such deception is the bad fruit coming from some untrained leaders.

Perhaps the saddest part is that most people in the churches want to honor the Word of God. That instinct is exactly what makes deception so effective when untrained pastors misuse the Scriptures. "They [the people] don't know how to analyze the deception based on the Word of God," Fegas says. A congregation trained to respect the Bible will

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extend that respect to the person who holds it - even if he is misusing it.

Some untrained pastors actually refuse biblical training when it is offered to them. They defend their lack of training by saying, "The Holy Spirit leads me; whatever I do, I get from the Holy Spirit." Yet the church suffers. Fegas explains, "There's no spiritual growth, because the pastor has not achieved competence. He's just maintaining the level of not understanding."

Young people in these churches often leave. Their generation has phones and can look things up online. "If members discover that their pastor is not trained, they will leave the church."

These churches have little to no spiritual or physical growth. The few people who remain are being fed the wrong doctrine, which, as Fegas says, "is a danger for the pastor and for the members of the church."

However, there is hope thanks to the work begun in Zambia by iTEE Global. The first class of facilitators in Zambia numbered thirteen. There are now about 30 face-to-face cohorts running across the country, spanning multiple generations of training. Around three hundred students are enrolled face-to-face, with roughly forty more studying online. Among them are cohorts of visually impaired students in two towns — pastors and leaders who, despite their zeal to learn and teach, would never have been allowed into other programs.

And the ministry is crossing borders. A training event in Livingstone, near the borders of three countries, drew pastors from Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia.



They caught the vision and took it home to their churches. In October, they returned to receive further instruction. In Malawi, the Anglican Church — an institution with its own long-established system for training its leaders — has asked Equip to Equip Zambia to teach its lay leaders.

Fegas's response to that is one comment: "This is all God's doing." It is a joy to participate in God's ministry to His church in Zambia.

Please pray for pastors who teach week after week without ever having been discipled or trained, that God would give them a hunger for sound teaching and open doors to receive it.

Pray for those who have taught error out of ignorance, not malice, that teachers would be raised to train the teachers (2 Timothy 2:2).

Please pray for the pastors who received training in Botswana and Zimbabwe in October, that they would lead others in ways that will produce an abundant harvest.

Head, Heart, and Hands

The story of Jimmy Smucker, iTEE University student and missionary in Uganda

"My name is Jimmy Smucker. My wife and I are raising our two boys in Uganda, a long way from Pennsylvania where I grew up. I came here to serve, which sounds simple when you write it on a support letter. In practice, it means standing in front of a group of people who know their own language, their own soil, and their own church far better than you do, and trying to be useful anyway.

Through the Willow Resource Foundation in Masaka, I learned about ITEE Global. What began as a course or two has become a source of equipping in our work."

Teaching that goes deeper

"When I began teaching in our local church, I wanted more than a lesson plan. I wanted to understand the text well enough that I could stand in it, not just recite it. The courses in *Galatians* and *Romans* gave me that. So did *The Incredible Journey*. I have drawn from all three again and again, and the difference shows in the room. People ask better questions when the person in front of them has actually wrestled with the passage.

But the courses that surprised me most were *Transformational Teaching* and *IDEA*. They gave me useful tools for my own teaching, but their deeper impact has been in how I mentor other teachers.

Here is why that matters. A missionary can teach a good lesson. A missionary who equips local teachers doesn't simply teach more people—he multiplies his ministry into communities he may never personally reach. *Transformational Teaching* and *IDEA* handed me



a framework for introducing new teaching concepts to others, a way of explaining not just what to teach but how people actually learn. I have watched Ugandan brothers take that framework and taken it further than I could have myself. That is the whole point."

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Conversations at the kitchen table

"Some of the most meaningful moments have not happened in a classroom at all. The Hands activities have opened up remarkable conversations with neighbors and acquaintances, the kind that start over a cup of tea and end somewhere neither of us expected.

The *Christian Marriage* course was a gift to my wife and me. Much of what the course covers is simply not taught by the local church in our area. Young couples around us were building marriages without ever having heard these biblical truths about marriage.

So now we walk alongside them. We share what we were given. There is something humbling about receiving instruction and discovering that God intended it for more households than your own."

Breaking the yoke

"The core of each course is the Head, Heart, Hands model.

Our work involves teaching farmers biblical, management, and technological principles so they can break the yoke of poverty. A man's faith, his understanding, and his hands in the dirt are not three separate lives. They are one life. The holistic Head, Heart, Hands approach speaks to the whole person, because it refuses to split what God did not split. You cannot disciple a man's soul and ignore his harvest. You cannot improve his yield and ignore his heart.

When a farmer learns to steward his land well and comes to know the God who made it, poverty loses some of its grip. That is not an abstract metaphor - it's a family with food, a child in school, a household standing firmly on biblical foundations.

Jesus promised abundant life, and not only in the future – now and in the future. I get to watch that promise take root in red Ugandan soil, and I am grateful for every hand that helped equip me to be here for it."

Please pray for Jimmy and his family, and for the teaching happening in Uganda to impact communities, take root, and multiply into churches.

Pray for more opportunities for unscheduled conversations and for young married couples.

Pray for the farmers, that the biblical, management, and agricultural principles would translate into real harvests and real households standing on solid ground, and that families would come to know the God who made the soil.

Ministry Opportunities

Video Journalist

Is responsible for creating video content in its entirety by filming, editing, and posting their work online. Video journalists must perform research on a given topic and source individuals to interview when necessary.

Course Publisher/Course Migration

Works with existing course materials to prepare them for use in print and on the web. This can include some modifications to make the course materials more interactive. This may also include migrating the courses from one online platform to the ITEE University Moodle platform.

Funding Development Administrator

Uses funding development tools and practices to acquire the necessary funding to adequately support the ministry of iTEE Global. This person will write grant/funding proposals and develop relationships with key contacts to help them catch the vision of iTEE Global.

Interested? Contact: HRinfo@iteeg.org

www.iteeg.org

If you would like Global Insight in your email, use the QR code.

Call our office for the paper edition: 512-712-2495

Communications Team:

Rob Brooks, Beverly DeWit, Stan Klapauszak, George Law, Eve Mazzara, Lembe Tayilo, Abby Tumelo.

iTEE Global

PO Box 125
Copperas Cove, TX 76522
Tel: 512-712-2495

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