



July 14, 2009



Dear Friends and Family:

I can hardly believe it! The training conference in **Ruhengeri, Rwanda May 26-30** was *my sixth teaching experience with LVIM*. Nearly **100** pastors and church leaders **from Rwanda, Uganda, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** attended the courses in theology, preaching, and the life and ministry of Christ. For me **the distinctive feature of this conference** was the contrasts that presented themselves, **contrasts that underscored unity and diversity** in the body of believers.



Like previous conferences, **this one began with a time of worship in the Swahili language**. Although I did not understand the *words*, the *melody* of one song was instantly recognizable: “*Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus...*” Without a translator it was difficult to communicate with each other. Yet when it came to worship, **we praised our savior together** as members of the **one body** of Christ.

Later I was struck by **the testimony of three pastors who were beaten and robbed at gunpoint** the last time they traveled to an LVIM conference. **They returned to find their homes destroyed** in the ongoing civil war in DRC, **but they praised God for their lives and the opportunity to participate in another LVIM training**. I do not live with fears of such treatment by a lawless rebel group, but **these church leaders live with this threat daily**. Yet **we both are united** in our commitment **to attend these meetings** so that the body of Christ might be strengthened for His glory.



The **contrasts continued**. I am blessed with *a fine theological education*; these African pastors have *little, if any theological training*. Yet **we all serve the Lord and His people**. I attend church in north Dallas; they lead church services in a mud hut in a remote village, or perhaps under a tree in a refugee camp. Yet **the body of Christ** is not a building, but a **single spiritual organism** (Eph 4:4-6).



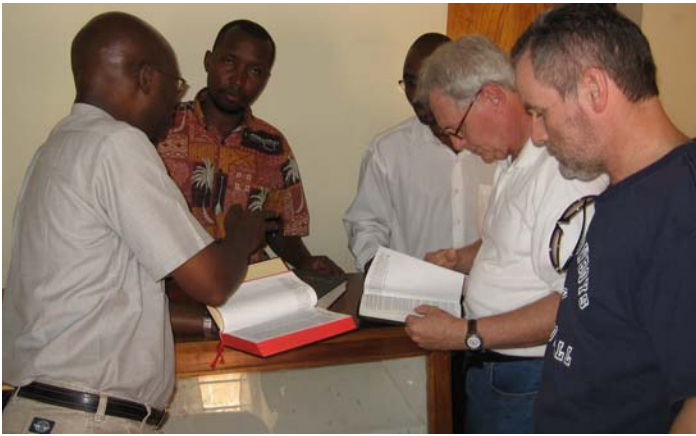
We are all united by our identity in Christ. At the same time **we are differentiated** by such elements as **language and culture**. Furthermore, American believers are blessed with educational opportunities not available to our African brethren, yet God is enabling us to share our knowledge of His Word with these faithful servants. **Will you pray for LVIM? Will you volunteer your time? Will you give financially? Will you tell a friend about this ministry or give them a copy of this newsletter? Please consider how you can partner with this ministry to build up the body of Christ in Africa.**

In Christ's name,

Brian Stout
Associate Director



There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.
Eph. 4:4-6



Starting at the top l to r: All participants and teachers at the 2nd Ruhengeri, Rwanda conference; translators and teachers coordinating passages; 5 preaching practicum students with David Bohyer; the teaching staff: Brian Stout, Patrick Foss, Stephen Bamuleke, David Bohyer; a cultural difference; a preaching student asking a question of teacher David Bohyer through a translator.

