



Melody, Bill  
Hannah & William

# Missionaries To The People Of Malawi, Africa

## The Ashbury Family

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*Poalm 68:6*  
*"God setteth the solitary in families:  
he bringeth out those which are bound  
with chains: but the rebellious dwell  
in a dry land."*

JULY-AUGUST 2006

Dear Pastor & Church Family,

Our great and mighty God blessed us with a wonderful week of preaching meetings as well as a very encouraging church conference. Dr. Danny Whetstone, our mission board director, preached and taught 14 powerful Bible messages in five days. Mrs. Darleen Whetstone also taught our ladies 4 easy to understand Bible lessons. Maxwell Mwachande taught the children 2 Bible lessons on Sunday. And our National Pastors preached 4 Bible messages during the night services at our church conference. God miraculously saved 44 people. Many Christians also came forward to ask their Lord to forgive them of their sins. We thank you all for praying for us as well as praying for our church conference. As you can read, our gracious God did answer your prayers in many marvelous ways.

But that ol' devil did fight us in many ways. Wells, my faithful worker, was supposed to do all of the driving for me this year during our church conference. He never did get his driver's license though. His eight-week driving course has taken twenty weeks, and he still has not taken his driving test yet. My blue Toyota truck was supposed to be ready four weeks ago, and it is still in the repair shop today. So I hired an off road vehicle from a local car rental company. Three of their vehicles broke down in three days. Their last vehicle did get the job done though - Praise the Lord! Malawi also had a paraffin (kerosene)-shortage during this time. We use kerosene to light our lanterns for our night services. We had to use diesel fuel to light them this year. The devil failed to stop God's work through these many obstacles. But Satan did hinder the work of the Lord by using an angry pastor and a few angry church choirs. But through it all, our great God still got the victory.

Our first meeting on Wednesday was at Ng'Omba Baptist Church. Pastor Messick Mander is the pastor there. This church was about 45 minutes into the village, and it was literally on the side of a mountain. After Dr. Whetstone taught 3 Bible lessons from the book of Acts, 8 men and women came forward to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior. And one of them was the village chief, who was a lady. I knew her very well. She was a nice lady. She was a good lady who had helped us very much. But I had always wondered if she was truly saved. She came forward during the church invitation and told the altar worker that she did not have any peace about her salvation. After she was given God's plan of salvation, she bowed her head and asked the Lord Jesus Christ to save her. After she was saved, she told the pastor of this church these words. "I don't know why an American Baptist Preacher would come to my small village, but I'm glad that he did." She has also promised her pastor that she would faithfully attend his Bible studies on Thursdays.

Our second meeting was at Chiwaya Baptist Church in a village close to Bvumbwe. Dr. Danny Whetstone preached 3 more Bible messages, and God's people learned many wonderful things from the Word of God. But God was hindered from doing a great work in this service because one of our National Pastors quenched the Spirit. He was the Master of Ceremonies, and he was very upset that he didn't get to eat any bread or drink any tea for breakfast. I do usually provide



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them with tea and bread for breakfast, but my rental car had broken down early that morning, and I barely got to the service myself. Melody had to drive the Whetstones to the meeting herself. I didn't get there until about 1:00 P.M. in the afternoon. How sad it is that the words and actions of one Christian can hinder the work of God! But God could not do His work there this day. I hope that our people learned a very important lesson from this costly mistake of this pastor and do not repeat it again.

Then on Friday morning, we began our three-day Annual Church Conference Of The Fundamental Baptist Churches Of Malawi. Dr. Whetstone continued to preach several powerful messages, and God began to work in the hearts and the lives of our people again. There were 11 men and 14 women saved on Saturday afternoon. Then during the Saturday night service, which was led by our National Pastors, 11 other men and women came forward to be saved. Our gracious God had abundantly blessed us during the first two days of our church conference. But during the Sunday morning preaching service, some of our church choirs quenched the Holy Spirit of God. They were angry that they could not sing their choir numbers before our white, American guests. They also openly voiced their disapproval. I had repeatedly told our National Pastors for six months during our meetings before the conference that only two choirs would sing on Sunday morning and that I would choose them. But God was hindered again from doing a work in the hearts of our people. No one came forward during the church invitation. This had never happen before in all my years in Malawi. God wanted to do more, but he was hindered from doing His work – How sad!

After our conference had ended, I asked William on Monday morning, "How did you like the conference?" He told me, "Dad, I don't ever want to go to another conference!" I asked him, "What was the problem?" He said, "Dad, My bum-bums hurt." Well, I can understand that. That Sunday service went from 9:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. We had 850 people at our conference this year. They ate 2 cows, 8 goats, 2 chickens, 1700 lbs. of ufa flour, 1700 lbs of rice, 350 cabbages, 4 large baskets of tomatoes, 4 bags of onions, and 2,000 breakfast rolls. Most of them were thankful for the food, but many of them told me that they didn't get enough to eat. One of our city Malawian ladies cooked her church's rice in Ajax Dish Washing liquid on Saturday night. It was golden in color and she thought it was cooking oil. When it began to bubble, the head of the food committee told her what she had done. She thought that it was a new kind of cooking oil. The village ladies laughed and ribbed her about her mistake all night.

During these past two months, our National Pastors have given me reports that 72 people had been saved through their local church ministries. Melody and I celebrated our 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August. Our neighbors, Ron and Lucille Ward, treated us to a meal at the L'Hostaria Italian Restaurant. They also gave Melody 20 beautiful red roses. We had a very enjoyable and delightful night. Melody and I wanted to thank you for all of the nice anniversary cards that you sent us too. Your thoughtfulness and your kind words were very much appreciated. We also wanted to thank you all for your many prayers for us as well as for your faithful, financial support.

We were very happy with the way that our Lord blessed our church conference this year. Many people were saved and many Christians did get right with their Lord. We had a great time fellowshiping with the Whetstones. Melody and Hannah were thankful for the haircuts that Mrs. Whetstone gave them. William and Hannah were very happy with the candy that the Whetstones brought them from South Africa. But I believe that our Lord wanted to do more this year. Why are we so happy with a few blessings when our God wants to bless us abundantly! Why are we so satisfied with little blessings when our God wants to do great things for us! Please pray for this pastor and for these church choirs, who hindered the work of God. Pray that they will confess their sins and get right with God, and that they will never grieve the Holy Spirit of God again. And please pray for Melody's grandmother, Margaret Eaton, who is having some physical problems at this time.

Serving for His glory,

Bill, Melody, William, & Hannah