



**News Report from Eternity Minded Ministries**

January 2009

**The Lord Directed Our Steps in Rwamagana**  
*A Ministry of Renewal, Encouragement, and Forgiveness*

We plan our course carefully; but it is the Lord that ultimately determines our steps. Proverbs 16:9 says, *“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.”* That verse seemed to be the theme of our ministry in Rwamagana, Rwanda last month.

The people of Rwanda are recovering from a brutal period of hatred and destruction. In 1994 in the span of 100 days close to a million people were shot and hacked to death in a tribal genocide. Even recently ex-President Bill Clinton said that his greatest regret of his presidency was that he did not act on Rwanda soon enough. In the months before we left for Rwamagana we carefully planned our course. Our focus of ministry in the area was to bring hope through renewal and reconciliation to the churches, and encouragement to believers. *“As we prepared for our ministry in Rwamagana the Lord laid it upon my heart to bring a message of encouragement and forgiveness to the people of Rwamagana”* said Dan. Dan goes on to say, *“Although Rwanda is a place that has been traumatized by the affects of genocide, I sensed the Lord’s urging not to talk about genocide at all. Instead, I put my emphasis on hope through the amazing love, mercy and forgiving spirit of our Father in heaven. Later it was revealed why that direction was so important.”*

Upon our arrival in Rwamagana, the local government informed us that they had revoked the permit for us to use the grounds in the city’s center for our evening renewal festivals. This decision was due to recent riots and events that had taken place in the days leading up to our arrival. The area where we were to hold our festival was adjacent to the police barracks and the police needed the roads to be clear of crowds so they could get out if they needed to.

They appointed a new location, which was quite remote, for us to use for the evening festival. Government officials and the local churches were gracious and helped to move our platform and equipment to the new location and helped to spread the word about our new location.

In spite of the initial challenges, there was a great turn out on our first night. We began our festival with entertainment, upbeat music, and a great time of worship. The audience listened carefully as Dan delivered a message of encouragement, forgiveness, and hope through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. You could tell that the message was touching the hearts of the people, so we were surprised when a large group of people left about halfway through the message. One of the local leaders decided to follow the group to see where they were going and discovered that our new location was just a short distance from a prison camp. The inmates from this camp are serving a sentence for acts of genocide. Because they had confessed to their crimes, shown remorse, and personally asked society for forgiveness, they are able to serve their sentence in this par-

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*Dan Owens ministering to the people by giving eye examinations and distributing eyeglasses.*



*Steve and Marcy Hannah encouraging and praying for those that accepted Jesus.*



*People dancing with joy before the Lord during the evening festival.*



*Janet Noweir ministering to prisoner at evening festival through prayer.*



*Mayor Valens thanks Dan Owens for our ministry and contribution to Rwamagana.*



*Jan Snyder ministering to women that lost their husbands in the genocide.*



*This man just received health insurance thanks to you and is holding his new insurance card.*



*House mother at the youth center asked us to come minister to the children.*



*Children on the street are curious by our ministry at the youth center and are invited to come join.*

ticular prison camp. Inmates can leave during the day to work and take care of business, but they have a curfew and must be back at camp before 5:30pm for roll call. That is why they left the festival early the first evening. The next day Carl Dawson, our ministry director, went to speak to the prison warden and asked if he would grant permission for the prisoners to have an extended curfew for the next couple of days so that they could stay until the end of the festival. The warden, a Christian man, agreed and the prisoners returned the next couple of evenings to hear a very special message of hope and forgiveness that changed their lives forever.

Although these men had confessed and received forgiveness from society, they had never asked the Lord for forgiveness, nor had they been able to forgive themselves. Spiritually, they were in a tremendous amount of pain and they were walking in darkness. They had never heard that our God is a God of compassion, mercy, and forgiveness, and when they heard those words, God's light broke through the darkness that had consumed them for years. Many of the convicts stepped forward to receive Christ, forgiveness for their sins, and spiritual healing. They trembled, fell to their knees, and wept tears of joy and release. Praise God that He directed our steps to this new location so His children could receive forgiveness and spiritual healing. Because of His perfect direction, thousands in Rwamagana heard a message of hope, and hundreds of souls are saved. To know that our God, abounding in love and faithfulness, had directed our steps towards these men who had committed such horrific acts of genocide so that He could forgive their sins is awe-inspiring. We planned the location of our event, but the Lord moved us to where He wanted us to be. He knew best what souls needed to hear the message of love and reconciliation.

### ***Daytime Team Ministries Praise God for His Faithfulness***

*"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin." (Exodus 34: 6-7)*

God's holy power and amazing love flowed during our daytime ministries as well. Dan gave a pastor's seminar to train, encourage and bring hope to the Rwandan pastors that was transforming. Pastor Ntagwabira Alphonse said, *"The Pastors seminar was meaningful to me, as I learned a lot on knowing my hope in Jesus Christ. The training upgraded my level of hope as a leader. I am going to also teach my church members on our hope in Jesus Christ as a number of Rwandan people lost their hope as a consequence of what happened in 1994 and they need to be taught on this subject."*

Pastor Kamuzinzi Elisa said, *"The seminar and festival helped me to understand the meaning of unity because at times the devil creates division and hatred among denominations and church members, this is no longer the case among Christians in Rwamagana, through this festival we have realized that we are one in Christ."*

We visited orphanages, hospitals, street children, and an HIV/AIDS center to spread the love of our Father to people who desperately needed to experience the warmth of His love and touch. The patients we met in the HIV/AIDS center touched our hearts in a very special way. These people are isolated from society, their families and friends because of fear of the disease. Even family and friends will not touch them, or even come near them, because they think they can get AIDS from just being near them. These patients are tucked away in a corner and treated much like lepers were treated in biblical times. When our ministry team arrived bringing the love and compassion of the Lord, sat down next to them to visit, hugged them, and touched them, the patients were so overwhelmed

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with emotion and joy. God's love was felt in a powerful way by both the patients and the ministry team that day, and lives are touched forever.

Our eyeglass clinic was a powerful ministry, as well, as we ministered to and distributed thousands of eyeglasses. Through our ministry, we realized how great the need was as most of the prescriptions required were very strong. When we began eye testing for a seventy-five year old woman, she threw down our eye chart, picked up her Bible, and tried different glasses until she found a pair that helped her read. When she could finally see God's Word again she started singing praises to Jesus.

On the final evening of our ministry, the mayor of Rwamagana thanked Eternity Minded Ministries for our contribution in providing eyeglasses, health insurance for widows and orphans, and food for the sick. He was grateful to our team for bringing reconciliation and hope to the Rwamagana community. The mayor added that even after fourteen years of genocide, Rwandans are still suffering from trauma, hatred, and an inner wound that needed to be healed. He thanked the Eternity Minded Ministries team for their commitment and support and insured his support as we expand our partnership with his community.

The church leaders of Rwamagana expressed their gratitude and said that the role of the Eternity Minded Ministries team went beyond preaching and training pastors; it also restored trust among church leaders and gave a new vision to the church in Rwamagana. The church leaders promised their collaboration as we continue the Lord's good works in Rwamagana.

We did our footwork and planned our course, but the Lord directed our steps and His name was glorified. Churches are united and renewed in Rwamagana. Pastors are encouraged and ready to touch the lives of their people with the love of Jesus. Sinners are forgiven and washed clean. Two-thousand people now have health insurance. Thirty-five hundred people can now read their Bibles with new eyeglasses. Thousands of believers have a new hope. And hundreds of souls are saved and now part of God's glorious kingdom. Glory be to God in the highest.

### Ministry Team Testimonies

*"I definitely felt his power in many things on this trip: Flowing through me as I prayed for all those people at the festivals; flowing through them as they danced and sang; in the eyes and smiles of the people as they read for the first time in years; and in Dan's words. In the prayers of men that I could not understand, I could feel Him. His power was everywhere."*  
James Seay

*"I am changed forever with the love of the Father for all of His children. The Father's love and forgiveness for us leaves me speechless truly in awe, that the blood of Jesus can wash away the blood on those men's hands and soul. Yes, we were right where we were to be. I have never experienced the love of the Father in such a way. It was surreal. I did not see those men as murderers but as lost, so very lost, dying under the weight of their sin. Sin is sin...He came that we could all be washed clean and have our names written in the book of life."* Linda Wellington

*"Beauty was everywhere. Considering all the pain this country has been through in the past, restoration was happening right in front of our eyes. Lives were being changed and we were honored to be a part of seeing God work in such a beautiful place."* Jan Snyder



*James Seay playing with and encouraging children that joined our ministry event at youth center.*



*Carrie Seay encouraging hospital patient.*



*Joe Preston praying for young boy that came forward during evening festival.*



*Dee Preston praying for healing for a young boy.*



*Many came forward for prayer for reconciliation.*

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*Ben Owens and ministry team teaching children at the youth center songs about Jesus.*



*Children at the youth center listening as Carl Dawson presents the Gospel message.*

**Looking Back/Looking Ahead**

Recently I've heard a number of people say they're glad 2008 has come to a close. I can understand that if a person lost a job or a portfolio they would feel that way. It has been a tough year economically and EMM has felt the sting as well. However, from an eternal perspective, 2008 has been a fantastic year.

Praise the Lord for each one who helps make EMM a ministry that transforms lives. This past year we have had amazing ministry with wonderful teams in South America and Africa. In Peru, we saw thousands come to the Lord and scores of eyeglasses and stoves to cook for the children distributed. The team that went with us did an amazing ministry and was used by God. In Rwanda, I can only say that it was supernatural! One of the highlights of my life was watching God direct our steps at the very last minute as He placed us right next to a prison so they could hear the message of God's love and reconciliation. To see our team love and minister to HIV patients and widows of the genocide, and to see them give reading glasses to those in need, touched my heart deeply.

The most lasting memory that I will carry from 2008 was captured in my mind one night while preaching in Rwanda just a few weeks ago. We knew that there were hundreds of convicted murderers in the crowd from a nearby prison camp. When the invitation was given, the men poured forward to have someone pray for them and to turn to Christ. I will never forget looking out over the crowd and seeing our team with their arms wrapped around these men praying for them. There was no fear, no hesitancy, and no judgment, just the love of Christ being unleashed in power upon these men from our team members. To God be the glory!

This New Year, 2009, will be a brilliant year of ministry. On the personal side I am looking forward to preaching in Hawaii in March, inner city London for a week in May, and at a citywide out reach in Oregon on the 4th of July. Once again we are focusing back on Peru. Belen, Peru has been called the 'Venice of Peru' because for much of the year the town is under about two feet of water due to the rising of the Amazon. Unlike the Venice of Italy, the Venice of Peru is actually quite poor. This coming April, we will take a team to Belen, Peru from the 13th to the 20th, leaving the day after Easter.

You can join us in sharing the Gospel with words and deeds by either going with us as part of the team, by giving towards eye glasses or stoves to cook for the children, or by praying for 'Mission Belen'. There are some who choose to do all three, which is an amazing blessing to everyone. I just praise the Lord that in one way or another you will join us in continuing to transform lives in Peru!

With Eternity in Mind,



Dan Owens