

Understanding People



This past week I found myself thinking about a quote from one of our high school English texts 'To Kill a Mockingbird'. The main character gives this advice to his son:

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

As Mark and I prepare to travel to S.E Asia with others of the BHW team this month (February) we are reminding ourselves that one of the most important things we can pack is the right perspective. We want to go with eyes to see things from our partner's point of view, to lean in close and come alongside them in the work they are doing.

If we stand on the outside and peer in it is too easy to jump to simplistic conclusions about how we can 'help' to make things better. We can fall into the old trap of seeing poverty as mainly about people lacking material possessions rather than remembering that it is more about things like shame, fear, hopelessness, isolation and a lack of choices. We might inadvertently gloss over significant aspects of difficulty, or worse, overlook the gifts, resources and creative energy that those in the situation can bring to bear on it themselves.

So while some of our partners face some fairly large challenges, we are humbled and encouraged by the tenacity, determination and faith they bring to bear on them. We are also reminded that God is always at work behind the scenes, making a way. It is one of the privileges of partnership to join with our partners in finding that way and coming alongside them as they journey on it.

Eugene Peterson describes this perspective as assuming:

"...always God is doing something before I know it. So the task is not to get God to do something I think needs to be done, but to become aware of what God is doing so that I can respond to it and participate and take delight in it."

That is one of the things we enjoy the most about spending time with partners. They are people who have a high awareness of what God is doing and have totally thrown themselves into being a part of it, regardless of the cost to themselves. So as you read updates about Bright Hope World's partners this year, we invite you to take the extra step of 'climbing into their skin and walking around in it' so that you can catch an even closer glimpse of just how extraordinary it is to be part of partnering with them.

Emma and Mark Stokes
S.E. Asia Partnership Facilitators

Bright Hope News

Just a week ago in late January the Bright Hope World team all met together near Nelson for our annual retreat.

This is the only time of year we are all together in the same place and is an incredible time of refreshing and catching up. This time always leaves us inspired and encouraged for the year ahead. There is nothing quite like spending a weekend with a bunch of people that all believe so strongly in our mission.

At this retreat we focused on the strategic direction of Bright Hope World – where we want to go in the next five – ten years, and what we're doing to ensure we're ready. It is, of course, all subject to what God wants from us!

One of the big new initiatives we have launched is freeing our Field Director Kevin Honore up to focus pretty much exclusively on new partnership opportunities. We are able to do this as our incredible and capable team of volunteer partnership facilitators has grown to a level where they can look after most of our existing partnerships.

All of our partnership facilitators give up their time to serve our partners and pay their own travel costs to visit them.

We are truly blessed to have such a dedicated team to work alongside our incredible partners.

Life Change Story – Lonard Daka



Lonard and Rosemary Daka are Bright Hope World partners in Chipata, Zambia. However it was with great sadness we were informed that Lonard passed away on 19th January 2015.

Lonard was a great example of someone who cared so much for his community and the people around him in an unselfish way. He was a trained engineer and could have spent his life making a lot of money for himself. But he wanted to help others, because of what Christ had done for him. He showed God's love to many people in various ways.

Lonard was running an orphans programme, helping to put some young people through school, and helping them with programmes once they had left school to try and give them a hand-up with life. He was also currently involved with setting up a rural community Bible college totally funded by very poor local churches, who were providing the bricks and labour to build some small buildings. The idea was to then run short courses to help teach people in church leadership.

In addition, Lonard was a trained dentist providing a service to the community. Actually the dentistry was pretty scary to us - his skills were basically to pull out teeth, but this was needed by many people. They used to queue up outside his house. He would turn his most comfortable chair towards the only window in his mud hut for light and get to work. By then we were quickly off somewhere else to see some farm plots or whatever else we could! He also planted 26 churches in his area, and continued to disciple them.

Lonard was an amazing farming trainer and after coming to be trained at Maplehurst farm, he went back to his village and trained many people in the community, increasing maize yields by 500%. Almost every photo we have of Lonard is him bent over with soil or compost in his hands teaching whoever he happened to be talking to at that time.

Lonard used to have Sophie, our eldest daughter, on when she wasn't listening. He would say "Sophie, do you have bananas in your ears!!"

Please pray for his wife Rosemary, and other members of his family. Also for wisdom in regard to this partnership going forward, which we will review when visiting them in March. His son, Stephen, has been involved with the partnership, and Norman Tonga as well, so these people will be ready to take up the baton.

Jerry and Hayley Field
Zambia Partnership Facilitators

Prayer and Praise

1. Wisdom and safety for Mark, Emma, Fraser and Karena who are travelling to Thailand, Laos and Myanmar later this month. Also for Matt who will be in Uganda for two weeks in February and Jerry and Hayley who head to Zambia for a couple of weeks in March. Kevin, Helen and James are also in India in March.
2. For Rosemary Daka and family mourning the loss of Lonard and for wisdom as this partnership is restructured.
3. For all our team to have the ability to truly 'understand' our partners.
4. Praise for a very beneficial BHW Team Retreat held recently in Nelson.



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