

# The Power Of Example

## Kenya Trip 2015 Part 2

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*Scriptures from the KJV*

My plan today is to give the second part of a two part report, concerning my recent trip to Kenya. As I mentioned in part one which I gave last Month, it was a very “interesting”, “eventful”, and “prosperous” trip.

As many of you know, we started a non profit called “Kenya Hands of Hope” a number of years ago to try and raise funds to help our impoverished brethren living in that 3<sup>rd</sup> world country, and to push the True Gospel message in a country where the Father is opening up eyes & ears to His calling.

Now in order to properly (and efficiently) utilize those funds, one has to have their feet on the ground. So I've been to Kenya many times, and I know the people we are working with over there, quite well.

We are connected to 33 cog groups over there. Now it's been impossible to visit each & every group on every visit, so I've been making the rounds by reaching as many as possible each time.

The one group I visited for the very first time on this last trip was the one in “Trans Mara.” And in my last report, I left off as we were still in the process of trying to reach “Trans Mara.” As stated back then, it was a difficult area to travel to, especially due to the constant rains that part of the country was having at that time.

I think today, I will continue my report by first repeating what we encountered during the start of our journey to Trans Mara; because what we experienced on that trip brings out how “powerful” one example can be upon another human being.

So let's pick up the story in Masaba Kenya, at the camp where we (KHofH) have built a small school, an Orphanage, and some additional buildings to host the FOT. We also installed a large tank to hold rain water from the roof, and we dug a well.

Our camp at Masaba, is a place where we receive many visitors, most of whom are brethren requesting help with the Scriptures and other things. Occasionally some show up starved, and half dead. We do have brethren living in famine areas, and rationing food to stay alive is quite common amongst our Kenyan Brethren.

It was from Masaba that we started our journey to Trans Mara, and my time in Kenya was running out, with only a week left before the flight back to the US was scheduled to leave out of Nairobi.

Now normally, if one was going to travel to Trans Mara from Masaba, it would be a two day trip, following the main roads..... But our plan was to “short cut” on a more direct route along a line that showed up on my I-pads GPS.

Now the problem was finding a driver who was willing to attempt the trip (remember, it had been raining every day for multiple weeks, and when it rains there, it downpours, producing “flash floods” with much erosion and gullies large enough to swallow a vehicle.

Our plan at first was to use Motor Bike Taxis, knowing the road would probably be too rough for a vehicle to pass, but due to the mud, the price they wanted to charge was out of the question. But Haron found a driver with a car in the village that was willing to attempt the trip. So we set out early the following morning shortly after sunrise.

Now some of you may never have heard of “Trans Mara.” But I can bring all of you to that Geographical location in a flash, because Trans Mara butts right up against “Masai Mara” and the “Serengeti.” (Contiguous) I’m sure we All know the “Serengeti” because the “Serengeti” hosts the largest terrestrial mammal migration in the world. It’s also renowned for its large lion population.

When you’re watching those "National Geographic" programs, showing animal migrations with the crocodiles feasting on the mammals they catch crossing the “Mara River,” and "TV shows" where you observe Lions in their natural habitat, you’re often in the "Serengeti."

Now we ran into some obstacles along the way, and those who heard me describe them (or saw them, because many of the videos have been posted on YouTube) found the story quite interesting, so I'm going to repeat it.

At first the trip was going quite well, even though the dirt road was extremely rough, and almost impassable for a vehicle due to the many gullies and trenches produced by the previous downpours & flooding, the driver just kept right on trekking, without even skipping a beat in our conversation.

Until we reached the “Mara River” that had overflowed well over its banks and had quite a torrent of water flowing rapidly, well over the top of the bridge.

(So our trip came to a dead stop.)

I studied the river for a while, but concluded that there was no way our car could cross without being swept away by the fast current, and figured we were going to be stuck there until the river subsided.

Meanwhile, the driver conversed with the 50 or so Maasai’s who were all standing around joking (some sharpening their Pongas [machete’s] on a piece of steel)

Others were teasing me; after all, a white man in the middle of the bush was something to toy with.

Meanwhile, the drivers conversing paid off, he learned of another bridge (one that was much higher) so we detoured, and only lost one hour, before we found ourselves back on that same dirt road that we had been following on my GPS, but thankfully on the other side of the “Mara River” and the washed over bridge.

Once again, things were going quite well, but it didn’t last long before we found ourselves in the same situation again, with another overflowed bridge on the river, yes, another fast moving torrent of water flowing rapidly completely over the bridge.

So we found ourselves stopped & parked right behind a bright yellow truck that was also stuck in his tracks unable to cross the flooded bridge. But this time, as our driver conversed and was finding out that there was no alternative route, I was studied the river and concluded that this time, the car could actually make it across this flooded bridge.

The problem I saw was convincing the driver that we could do it, and on top of that, convincing Ondazi & Haron that we could do it, as long as they were in the back seat of the car (I wanted their extra weight to ensure that the car wouldn’t get washed off the bridge.)

I thought it was going to be quite a challenge to convince Ondazi & Haron that the car could actually make it across (especially being that neither of them could swim, and both had a fear of water.)

But I had to try, because there was No turning back now, not at that point, not after traveling so far along that disastrous gully filled dirt road, and now deep into the wilderness. No matter how many wild animals inhabited that area, we had to move forward (Persevere.)

So I set off to convince them that we could make it across. But to my surprise, there was no convincing necessary for Ondazi & Haron, or even for the driver. When I told Haron & Ondazi we could do it, they jumped right in the car.

Why? What had them convinced that we could do it, that we could safely cross the flooded bridge and be back on our way? "Rice" that's right, thanks to your ordinary every day "white rice" they were hopping in the car soon as I said we could safely drive across!

You see, a few weeks back, when we were in the orphan house, they were cooking supper "rice" and they were cooking it the same way they had cooked rice their whole life, by bringing water to a boil on their Charcoal stove, throwing in the rice, and then letting the rice continue to boil for about half an hour as they continued to add more charcoal to keep the fire going.

I told them back then that they could remove the pot of rice from the fire as soon as it begins to boil, and cover it, that the rice would continue cooking even without the fire.

Well to them (especially Ondazi) that was impossible, a bit crazy to even think that it could cook without fire.

But one night we had gotten in quite late from visiting one of the groups, and besides the rice, we had purchased some beef from the village butcher; and everyone was hungry and everyone was quite anxious to eat some meat.

So soon as the rice began to boil, Haron asked me if I was sure that the rice could be removed from the fire, and my reply of course was Yes, as long as you cover it.

Well he did, he removed the rice from the fire, covered it, and began cooking the beef.

(Ondazi didn't say anything, but you could see on his face that he thought it was crazy, impossible.)

Well, soon as the beef was cooked and ready to serve, Haron walked over to the rice, uncovered it, and began chuckling & smiling in amazement (Ondazi was Totally Astonished too.) The rice was completely cooked and ready to eat, they were both completely amazed.

But little did I know at the time, that that little cooking lesson would put two water fearing non swimmers in the back seat, and a driver in his seat behind the wheel of a car that was about to cross a bridge on the Mara River that was totally overflowed with a fast moving torrent of water passing over it. (It was totally amazing.)

Yes, after studying the river, and concluding that we could safely make it across, I first went up to the driver of the yellow truck, telling him that he could drive across, that it was safe.

(He didn't even answer me verbally, but only gave me that same look that Ondazi had given me the week before when I told him you could cook rice without fire, a look that pictured me as being a bit crazy, thinking we could do something that (to them) was impossible.

But when I walked up to Ondazi & Haron (they were conversing with our driver) and told them to get in the car, that it was safe for us to cross, to my total amazement, they didn't even hesitate, they didn't even open their mouth, they just climbed right in the back seat of the car, and I got right in the front seat.

The driver didn't open his mouth either, just hesitated for about one second and then got in behind the wheel, started the engine and drove right on to the flooded bridge and began driving across.

I didn't see the bystanders faces as we began driving across, but I know they were all watching in amazement with their jaws hanging down low, as some were shouting (very tensely) "Poli Poli" "Poli Poli" Kiswahali for "Go Slow" "Go Slow" ....

Well we safely reached the other side, and guess what, a few minutes later came the yellow truck, once he saw us make it across to the other side, he followed.

(Again, Power of Example.)

Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that Ondazi & Haron did the right thing by trusting my judgment and following me into that dangerous situation. On the contrary, the Scripture is quite clear, not to put our trust in any man, but only in God.

But we do have to learn to trust God, and follow the example of His Son. After all. He's the way, the truth, and the Life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Him.

That incident got me to thinking about the "power of example" the power that ones actions can have on another. And how maybe that kind of influential power can be used to help others to "persevere" to reach what may be considered by many to be the impossible.

It also got me to thinking about the time when the Apostle Peter walked on water. Peter said to Christ: "Can I walk on the water? And Christ answered yes. And Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water....

Well I ask you, if Peter didn't begin to doubt, and continued to walk around on the water conversing with Christ, what do you think the other disciples would have done with that "example"? Don't ya think they would have gotten out of the boat also, and began walking on the water too?

One's example to others can be VERY Powerful. There's also an old saying: "where's there's a will, there's a way." God's will is for those He has called "us" to enter into His Kingdom. And He gives us a very powerful example to lead the way for us, His Son. But only if we follow His example.

Well, once across that flooded bridge, we continued on our journey for another few hours and we did see some Giraffes & and some Zebra, and I'm quite happy to say we encountered (No Lions.)

Well, we finally reached the little village of "Dikirr" which is located in Trans Mara, and we checked into the village's small hotel to get some much needed rest. The following morning, after some tea & toast for breakfast, we headed out on foot to join the Trans Mara Brethren at the wooden structure where they meet.

(It was just over an hour walk from the village.)

Now these brethren really impressed me, because they are quite unified, and set a wonderful example for the rest of us. I learned that the entire congregation participated in building their meeting hall, from supplying wood from their properties, to laboring in the construction. (What a wonderful example for others.)

They seem to do everything together. Even when they announced special music, the entire congregation got up to sing. Yes, the church choir consisted of everyone in the congregation.

(With that kind of participation, tremendous "feats" can be accomplished.)

We spent two days with that group, with much of our discussion on how we are to come out of this world and completely “overcome” in order to fulfill our High Calling.

We discussed how Revelation 2 & 3 doesn't say that all those good things like the “hidden manna” or “eternal life” or “power over the nations” will be given to those who only “try” to overcome, but to those who succeed at overcoming.

(We had a wonderful visit.)

We also met a number of people in the village, some of whom had questions concerning the Scriptures. One man (a school teacher) requested a private meeting, and the following evening we sat down with him discussing “rebaptism.”

He had been originally baptized by a cog minister years ago and had hands laid on him. Now he was beginning to fellowshipping with a different church, and they were telling him that he needed to be re-baptized by them.

So we discussed how the “church” is a spiritual organization, not divided (or united) by incorporations. That when he was first baptized and had hands, that he was then a member of God's church, and didn't need to be re-baptized by this particular “controlling” incorporated group.

All the groups we meet with, our messages are always plain & simple, and also important. Like the fact that we can only pledge our allegiance to God the Father and His Son, and Not to any man. But sorry to say, many (if not most of the larger incorporated groups) demand ones allegiance to be pledge to them.

(That's a dividing line for true Christians.)

While in Dikirr, we also visited the home of one of the University students “Darius Rono” who was involved in that tragedy where 147 students were killed a few Months ago by the Islamic extremist group “Al-Shabbab” they had entered the University and began killing all non Muslims, and targeting Christians.

Darius and two classmates crawled under his bunk bed when the gunmen came in, but they fired under the bed killing his two classmates, and injuring him in the elbow.

Kenya is becoming a very dangerous place. While I was attending a conference in New Orleans a Month or so ago, I meet a man who's involved in a work in Uganda (bordering country to Kenya) he told me that when he flies to Uganda, his hub is “Nairobi” But that he Never enters into the City of Nairobi because its too dangerous. Instead, spends the night in the Airport and flies out the following day to Uganda.

As for me, I know Nairobi is dangerous, but I have no choice but to go there because we have four church groups there (all four are in slums.) And those brethren need our help.

The “Kit-a-cu-chu” slum is where I visited after leaving Trans Mara. But before I comment on conditions there, I want to mention my experience when leaving Trans Mara.

I had traveled to Trans Mara with Harron & Ondazi, but we didn't depart together. I didn't want them to accompany me back to Nairobi, because of the added expense (we are always trying to stretch the little funds we have.)

So they left Trans Mara headed South on Motor Bike Taxi's, headed back to Kisii and Masaba, but I caught a ride headed North with some construction workers who just happened to be working at the Hotel we were staying at. (I had noticed on their truck their business address was “Nairobi” so I asked if I could travel back with them, and they agreed to take me.)

Only think I didn't realize, was that they weren't traveling directly to Nairobi, but had to drop off some equipment "West" in a town called "Nakuru." (Funny thing, I had never been in that part of Kenya before, and shortly after returning to the States, I got a visit request from that very town.)

Anyway, the trip with these two construction workers was quite eventful, and part of it shows just how "on edge" this world is as we approach the end of the age.

After they dropped off the equipment, we were all very tired, so we decided to check into a cheap hotel there in Nakuru, get some sleep and continue on to Nairobi the following day.

But as we were about to check in, they got a call from their boss requesting them to return to where they dropped off the equipment, so I checked in alone. Next thing I knew, they returned to the Hotel telling me that their boss insisted that they continue driving through the night back to Nairobi, so they wanted me to continue on with them, but I refused, and spent the night in Nakuru alone.

(I had already paid for my room, and the price was much less than Nairobi prices.)

The following morning (well before sunup) I caught a motor bike taxi into town and caught a "Matatu" that was going to Nairobi.... But after boarding the Matatu (and it was jam packed with people) instead of heading out on to the main road & highway, the Matatu traveled into a deserted factory complex. The entire complex was dark as we pulled up to a building where the vehicle stopped and everyone was instructed to get out.

They lead us into an outside corner of the building (and I had absolutely no clue what they had in mind) then (one by one) they began to frisk us (apparently looking for weapons or bombs or something) found none, let us back on the bus and we started our trip to Nairobi.

Seems there's never a dull moment in Kenya, You life (like everyone else's) is often on the line.

Well, once back in Nairobi, I visited the slum group at "coud-a-ch-chu" where I spent the Sabbath, and got to experience a little what life is like for the brethren living in that slum. I also got to see the "hopes" & "dreams" of the children in that church group who are "striving" to work towards a better future for themselves.

These children had previously spent some time trying to figure out what their talents were so they could enhance them, and they came to the conclusion that the one ability they all seem to have in common, was gymnastics. So they started practicing "acrobatics" each day.

They performed for me, and I told them I would try to help them pursue their endeavor. Their hope is to become good enough to be able to compete with others in that field.

Recently I thought of something that would be a tremendous boost to them, inviting them to the FOT in Masaba where they could perform before the brethren attending the feast. (they are super excited about that) So currently I am trying to raise funds to accomplish that.

There are a total of 12 of them, so it will take some generous donations to transport them to the feast sight and back, but what a wonderful experience it would be for them to travel (for the first time in their lives) out of their slum environment and see other parts of Kenya.

And also experience the FOT that they have been hearing so much about; and meet other brethren, and hear feast messages. (And perform their acrobatic program before others at the feast, would be such an "incentive" for them.

But getting others here in the States to support them is a real challenge, but I do hope some hearing this report will consider.

I would like for us to turn to a Scripture now, and maybe shift gears in my message (Like to go to 1 John 3:17 please.)

*1 John 3:16-18 "Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. 17 But whosever hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dweleth the love of God in him? 18 My little chidren, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*

(Yes, our actions, our example is important.)

(This is how the NIV reads :)

*1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. 17 If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? 18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions.*

So many of our brethren living in that 3<sup>rd</sup> world country are suffering, but thanks to the few who have been assisting them, there suffering has eased much. And it's just amazing how God has stretched the funds that come in to help our impoverished brethren.

It's also been stated by many that we need to teach our impoverished brethren to "fish" and not to just throw them fish..... We are well aware of that, But Even Trying to Teach One to Fish, Takes Resources.

It also takes a lot of "Hands ON" and my plan is to do a lot more of that. I'll be headed back to Kenya on the 15<sup>th</sup>, to begin a number of projects. One of which pertains to an elderly Widow in one of our church group whose mud hut is in desperate need of replacing.

My plan is to implement some action to help that Widow by building her a new hut from a design that Dave has been teaching me about. It's a form of construction that uses natural materials.

We also plan to involve some of the Orphans from our Sengera orphanage in the construction, which will intern teach them a trade.

My hope is for more of us here in the States who have been blessed with so much wealth, to get more involved in assisting those who are in need. If more of us will work together here, so much more can be accomplished over there.

Like those brethren in "Trans Mara," when working together tremendous things can be accomplished. And maybe the "example" of this small cog group here, can "powerfully" move others in God's church to follow suit.

Yes, the "Power of Example" can do unbelievable things, things that some may feel are impossible.

(I am going to end my report now. Because I want to leave plenty of time for any questions.)