

Kenya Missions Trip

by Todd Atkinson

The Kenya Missions Trip was a life-changing experience for the team, as they shared the gospel, prayed for the sick, and saw the impact of the church's work in Kenya.

Duration: 21:05

Scripture: Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8

Topics: "Kenya"

Description

In the video, Daniel and Marlies Hoecherling express their gratitude to the church for sending a team and for their love, care, and prayers. They emphasize the importance of maintaining a connection with the church and mention that they follow the lives and stories of church members on Facebook. The video also includes a surprising and inspiring story of a young girl who experienced a remarkable transformation in just a week and a half, going from a difficult past to worshiping and loving the Lord. Overall, the video highlights the impact of the church's support and the incredible work being done in Kenya.

Transcript

Well, I'm going to do the best I can this morning. Bill was scheduled to preach and he asked me if I would give a little report of the Kenya missions trip. I'll do my best, not the best of my ability, but that trip has left me a little jet-lagged.

And so I've been up since kind of 4.30 in this morning. I couldn't sleep after that. And so I'm going to do my best to keep my thoughts clear.

But I would like to tell you a little bit about our trip. It was a wonderful time. And the people that are there are so appreciative of you for sending a team, and for your prayer and support to them, and they certainly want to find a way to say thank you.

And so at the end I've got a little video that they've sent along with me, giving an expression of thanks to you. Because the people that we took with us spread across three services, you might not know everybody that went, but it was myself, Pastor Lawrence Kopp, who organized the trip and caused it all to flow smoothly. Marcus and Shane Schaefer, probably most people know Marcus there, but maybe you'd stand up there, Marcus.

That's him. All right. His wife is still there.

Amos Martel usually goes to the 1.30 service, but one of our great young adults was there with us. Lucille Aiken, I don't know if Ron, her husband, is here this morning. And then my sister from Coronation, Alberta, who's a chaplain with the RCMP.

Kimberly Taline and her daughter, 18-year-old daughter Haley, was with us. So that made eight in total. When we arrived in Nairobi, as soon as we were there, it began to absolutely pour with rain.

I've never seen it rain so hard in Kenya. But the people who collected us from the airport were pretty encouraged, because they said there's a tradition in Kenya that when you pick up visitors and extend hospitality to them, if it starts to rain when you do this, this is a sign of God's favor on the relationship. And on their time there.

So we could get a lot worse interpretations. And so I'll take that one. It was great.

And it absolutely poured. But of course, in a land that's parched, when it does rain like that, it really is a gift from God. And the people there really did receive us very well.

So we spent the first night in Nairobi, traveled the next day to the town of Kitali. And many of you may know that name, because that's where Daniel and Merlyse Hoogtelang live and have their base. You'll remember that they were here for two months on a sabbatical, which was December and January.

And many of you got to know them. And they preached here and shared the work that they do there. And that is based in the town of Kitali.

So we flew there the next day and spent the next probably four or five days. Our team were involved in various things while we were there. Lawrence and I spent most of our time with Daniel and Merlyse and their Kenyan team.

They've done such a fantastic job over the last number of years building. And there's so many ministries and outreaches and things that they've started. But they asked if we would help them think through some of the issues regarding growth and help put some structures in place to make sure that everything was keeping on good rails there.

And so we did. We just had about two or two and a half days just behind closed doors, just to listen to their hearts and hear their vision and what God was saying and then to make some recommendations for how to carry out some of those things in appropriate ways. And so it was just a really positive also team-building experience for them.

While Lawrence and I were doing that, the rest of the team did several things. They toured all the ministries that are in Kitali, including the Esther Home. Many people migrate down to cities like Kitali, hoping that maybe there's a little bit better existence than there is in their rural life.

But as you know, urbanization carries its own severe problems. So when they do come to a town, they find out that there's no home, there's no work, there's no family, there's no care. And many of those, particularly young people, end up living on the streets.

And many of the girls who end up living on the streets, unfortunately, end up getting raped. And so the Esther Home was a home that's created for these mums and their babies to provide them a safe place and a way to get off the street and also to provide many of the girls a ways out of the sex trade industry. When

you're there, it's lovely to hear their visions.

Marlise carries some very, very strong vision in her heart. But one of the things that she was telling us, and you might already be aware of, is that when we tend to think of the slave trade movement in its kind of classic era, according to the statistics that she's familiar with, she says that there's actually more slaves alive on the earth right now in this day than there ever was in the classic slave trading era. And many of them find themselves into the sex slave industry, which is unfortunately alive and well in many parts of the world, including Africa.

And so they told us the story how this was such a concern to her. She began to gather people into intercessory prayer meetings over the subject. And they'd only had two times where they'd gathered a prayer.

And a young lady that was previously unknown to them came to them crying and under deep conviction. And she said, I can't do it anymore. I can't do it anymore.

So Marlise answered, do what anymore? And this young girl runs a brothel in Kitali. And under these circumstances, the girls are not there under voluntary arrangement. And so she said, I can't do this anymore.

She sat down her brothel. And actually, as she was telling Marlise, Marlise gave a word of knowledge over her, actually about an injury to her niece. And she described it.

The lady pulled up her knee, up her pant leg. It was exactly as described, very kind of ruined and pussy, her knee. They prayed for her right there on the spot.

And her knee was instantly healed. And the girl fell to this sore knee, praising God, gave her life to Jesus, shut down her brothel. And we had the privilege of meeting this young lady.

It was a wonderful story. When Marlise gets praying about things, it only takes about two weeks. That girl is a powerful young woman.

And stuff just begins to happen in weeks. So after having met this young girl, first of all, not even knowing who she was, Daniel said, that's the young girl who ran the brothel. And you kind of do one of those quick double takes.

There had been so much change in her life, you could never look at that young girl now and imagine the past that she had come from. And then to see her in church on the Sunday, absolutely worshiping and loving the Lord, and all this in like a week and a half. Just incredible transformation that was produced.

So those were some of the great highlights. One of our areas in Kenya is called the Turkana, which is a northern desert. And it doesn't attract a lot of missionary attention because it's one of the more inhospitable climates on earth.

So even the Kenyan people refer to these as the lost people of the Turkana and don't like to go there. But many of the Turkana people have come down and again are displaced and have formed a slum outside of Kitali. And so one of the days when Lawrence and I were meeting with the leaders, the team just went down there and brought food and care and preached.

And again, just some of the things that came out of that. But Amos isn't here this morning. But when we were praying for the sick last year, I think there was a little bit of an inner struggle just regarding confidence.

Would the Lord use me? And he found it really hard to engage in. But now he's had 10 months between trips to think about it. And the guy was just like a lion let loose.

The people there just said as soon as he got the opportunity. He just went and prayed for every sick person in the slum. And the reports came back of the Lord healing people.

And I was just so proud of Amos. I mean, as a team leader, probably my greatest joy is seeing team members overcome things and step out in faith. I mean, you wait to hear Marcus's story.

In Nairobi last night, he receives a dream of a woman outside this shopping market who's lame and about going to pray for her. So we're on the way to that market that day. And I'm just thinking this would be just like the Lord if that lady was there.

We've actually been there in the morning and she wasn't. But we ended up having to go back and I thought something is up. That dream was not about it for nothing.

And so we kind of affectionately referred to her as the woman of Marcus's dreams. Which needs a little bit of interpretation. Sure enough, we come around that corner and there's that lady.

I said, Marcus, this is just like the Lord showed you in your dream. Here she is. And he's like, I've never done this before.

I said, well, it's a great time to learn. So we kind of supported each other through it as a team. And found a translator and ended up praying for her.

And it was evident that it really meant a lot to this dear lady who was lame and just stricken there on the street. And I was just, again, so proud of Marcus. Afterwards, I said, how'd that go? He said, oh, that was a new experience.

I mean, it was really cold turkey. And he did such a good job rising to the challenge. So there was just so many good things.

We split up on Sunday, ministered at the church services. And it was a little bit new territory for some. The service that Lawrence was preaching in had a fairly militant pastor.

And so if you weren't standing up, he'd threaten to kick you out because it was his church. And he actually had everybody in church take their chairs over their head and doing some kind of very militant exhibition. And Lawrence was kind of hoping we would import the idea back home.

I didn't think it was going to go down all that well. But I appreciate his sincerity. So after about four days there, the team actually split in half.

Half of us went up to the Turkana. And half of us stayed back. The team that stayed back were doing a children's outreach in Kitali.

They had prepared for about 50 to a maximum of 70 children. There ended up being more than 250 kids that showed up. And, again, we're only just starting to get some reports coming in right now.

Just absolutely fantastic. But, again, so proud of Shane Schaefer. And the leadership she just showed didn't miss a beat.

It didn't matter if there was 50 or 70 or 300. She just absolutely rose to the challenge. And so we were actually gone for that.

But we are getting reports of what a fantastic time that that was. So the rest of us, we went up to the Turkana Desert. When you arrive, we'd actually arrived in a couple different plane loads because there were some plane problems.

So they flew half of us up in a small plane and then the other half was up a couple hours later. And it was rather pleasant when we arrived. By the time Lawrence and the rest of the team arrived, it was what Turkana normally is, and it's hot.

It's a really hot place. In fact, when he got off the plane, I'll give you the edited version, but he was like, what have you brought me to? And that is the edited version. Because when you step out of the plane in Turkana, it's like you're not sure if it's the moon.

It's a desert and it is cooking hot. When I was there in 2002 with Daniel Hoogteling, the first time there, we were there on that day, the Turkana, the town that we were in, was the hottest spot on the planet. And that's the only time I've ever been to a place that claimed that in a day.

But again, they'd had rain only a couple weeks before we had got there, and so I've never seen it as green as it was this time. So we traveled up to the village of Lokere, which is a village in the Turkana, and it's just the most wonderful spot to get to. So as a church, you need to know you feed 400 kids a day in that village.

And so because of that, the standing of the church in that village is extremely high. So when we host a village feast, and it's a real village feast, I mean, it looks like something out of the National Geographic film. There's slaying of goats, and Marcus participated in that, and Amos.

And so I turned the other way when they were doing that. But I mean, just the whole situation of them dividing their village up into groups and according to age and things, it's just a whole education. But the interesting thing for me is that the chiefs welcome us, and that village, whether they're Christian or not, are so thankful for the work that this church has done doing in this town.

They know that something has happened in their town, and that goodness and kindness and blessing has come to it through this church. And so the village elders, the older men in the village, everybody, they turn a hand toward the church, and whatever kind of blessing that they're not all Christians yet, but they still have this kind of elderly role, and they do deliver blessings. And they thank God for the church.

And it was just so remarkable to see the standing that Christians have there in the village. And it was, again, just a wonderful time being with the children. I mean, there's just fewer things in my entire life are more fun than just walking through an African village with a whole bunch of kids.

Or the Philippines is the exact same experience, and those of you that have been know what I mean. It's like, I always say someone else can preach when I'm here. I preach a lot.

I just want to hang out with kids. And it's just the funnest thing in the world to be able to do it. It's such a privilege.

So then again, the team there was involved in some different things. We worked with a man there called Wilson. I'm going to bring him here sometime, maybe in October for a missions conference, because he will be one of the most interesting missionaries you've ever met.

And I sat him down for one night, and I said, Wilson, just tell our team stories of God's activity, and just tell us stories of how did you end up being in the Turkana. And he told all these stories. I didn't know them.

That one day he was in Bible school, and he took a class. I wish I could remember its exact name, but it's like how to go on a mission trip and never come home, or something like this. It's like literally preparing to die.

You're just going to go and reach the lost people group, and you probably won't come home. And the name of the class was something that affected. I thought, who'd take that class? But he takes that class, and he rolls up a map under one arm, and a Bible under the other arm, heads out into the desert to reach unreached people, who doesn't know their language, has no money, financial support, or anything.

And now, I would consider him the leading Christian witness in the entire Turkana. You've got to hear his stories. God supernaturally, in the night there, gives him the Turkana language.

I mean, and the stories that just roll out of him. Our whole team was sitting there with mouths open, because we just know our little chapter. We have no idea of all the things that led up to these people, that before he arrived there that first day, these people had never in their history ever heard the gospel, or ever heard of the person of Jesus.

And so, we are really, I mean, it's holy ground. We go there, we are working where there's been great sacrifice, and great steps of faith. And so, we're looking forward to taking many, many of you there in the future.

And having some of them come back to share their stories, hopefully in the autumn. So, he gathered, he's planted numbers of churches in the area, and gathered their pastors together. And Lawrence and I had the privilege of spending some time with them.

And while we were doing that, the rest of our team went up to a place called Kakama, way up in the north, between Kenya and the border of southern Sudan. And one of the reasons I like for our team to see Kakama, it's interesting on numbers of fronts. It's one of the larger United Nations refugee camps in the world.

It used to be 130,000 people in the refugee camp. And now, as some of the civil wars in countries have died down, some of those people have been allowed to go back home. But one of the reasons I take our team members there, is many people who immigrate to Canada from East Africa, come through that refugee camp.

And so, when you meet them in Lethbridge, and you say to them, where did you come from? And they say, Ethiopia or Sudan, or any of the countries surrounding. And we say, oh, have you come through Kakama? They can hardly believe it. You say, you know Kakama? Oh yeah, I've been to Kakama.

And instantly, they know that you know a part of their story. And their heart is a bit open to you. So I deliberately take our teams there, so they can spend time in this refugee camp, not only for the sake of people there, but when you come back here, then you'll understand a little bit of the story of what people have had to endure to come to Canada.

And you can engage with some of our precious Canadian-African immigrants at a more intimate level. So it was a wonderful time. When we'd finished our few days there, you may have heard of the volcanic kind of storm that was causing many flights to be bound.

I haven't had this happen to me before, but I said, I was praying. Well, everybody else was praying, Lord, don't let it affect my flight. I mean, not our team, but people in the country.

I was saying, Lord, make it affect my flight, because I don't want to go home yet. I just want four or five more days here. Just four or five more days.

It's just so fun. And we were just going everywhere, praying for the sick and preaching the gospel and encouraging people and playing with children and just doing Jesus stuff. And it was just an absolutely wonderful experience.

And again, I hope that many of you in the future will be able to join us. That was the end of our time. Half of our team was there for a week and a half.

The others were there for three weeks, so they're still there. So we only saw them one more time, and that is, the second half of the team were going up to the Turkana. So they landed on an airplane.

We got a few minutes of exchange on the tarmac, and then we got on the same plane and flew out, and they're still there as we speak. But Daniel and Marlies Hoogtelen, particularly Daniel, sent a little video. I was a little bit apprehensive, what he might say, but it's Daniel style, that's for sure.

And so he wanted to thank you as a church for sending a team and for all your love and care and prayers. They are absolutely adamant, him and his team, to keep up connection with our church. So any of you that are on Facebook, I know that they're on there, and they follow numbers of your lives and stories, and so it's definitely a connection that's really, really, really important to us.

So we're going to play their little video now. And at the end was a bonus material. It wasn't supposed to be on there, but that's not the start.

Hi, River of Life. This is Daniel Hoogtelen from Kenya, and here with me is my son, Aidan, who's about to go to bed. We just wanted to thank you so much for sending some of your finest men and women and thoughts to us.

And I must say, they were an incredible blessing to us. We had lots of fun, lots of good times. We've done many things.

The women ran a kids conference with more than 250 kids. We went to Turkana. We killed goats.

I must say, Marcus killed goats and Amos. And we were able to share the gospel with people, pray for sick people, encourage people, visit an IDP camp. Todd and Lawrence gave lots of really good input into our team, and we've all been so encouraged.

And I want to thank you, River of Life, for releasing and sending these people. Thank you for standing with us here in Kenya. And we've got lots of good memories.

The women are still here and are having a good time, and they might come back next week. Greetings. Bye-bye.

Today is April 24th, and I know they were coming home. And they won't let us go. We don't know how to get out of this house.

They're not feeding us. It's a horrible situation. We have to live on our own.

So I'm asking for \$1 million. We're worth more than that. We are all people too.

If you go to the hottest spot in the world, it can get to your head. So let's keep these people ever before us. They're our missionaries.

They get very little support from anywhere else in the world, and so they look to our church as their primary source of encouragement and support. And they're sure worthy of it. Wonderful people to work with.

So thanks again for all your prayers and support, and sign you up for the next team to Africa. God bless you. And Pastor Bill, come and meet us.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28731.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/todd-atkinson/kenya-missions-trip/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net