



## Mission to Rwanda

Lutheran Mission in Africa –  
Synod of a Thousand Hills



Financial gifts and prayers of many, including  
you, made this mission possible.

**Thank you!**

We bring this report to you on the difference  
you are making in Rwanda.





## Mission to Rwanda



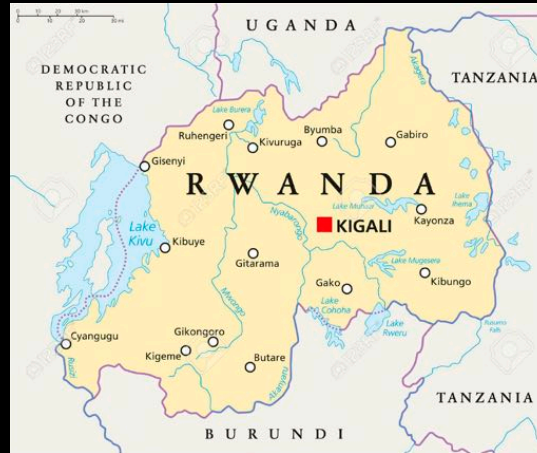
Rev. Dr. Mark Rabe  
LCMS Area Coordinator  
of Theological Education

Bishop Rev. Selestine  
Munyentwari Seburikoko  
LMA-STH



# Rwanda

- Country of Thousand Hills
- English, French, and **Kinyarwanda**
- Kigali (capital)  
Elevation 5100 ft
- Similar geographic size to Maryland
- 12 Million people – Most densely populated African country
- 90% + Christian



Kigali, the capital, rebuilt since 1994.



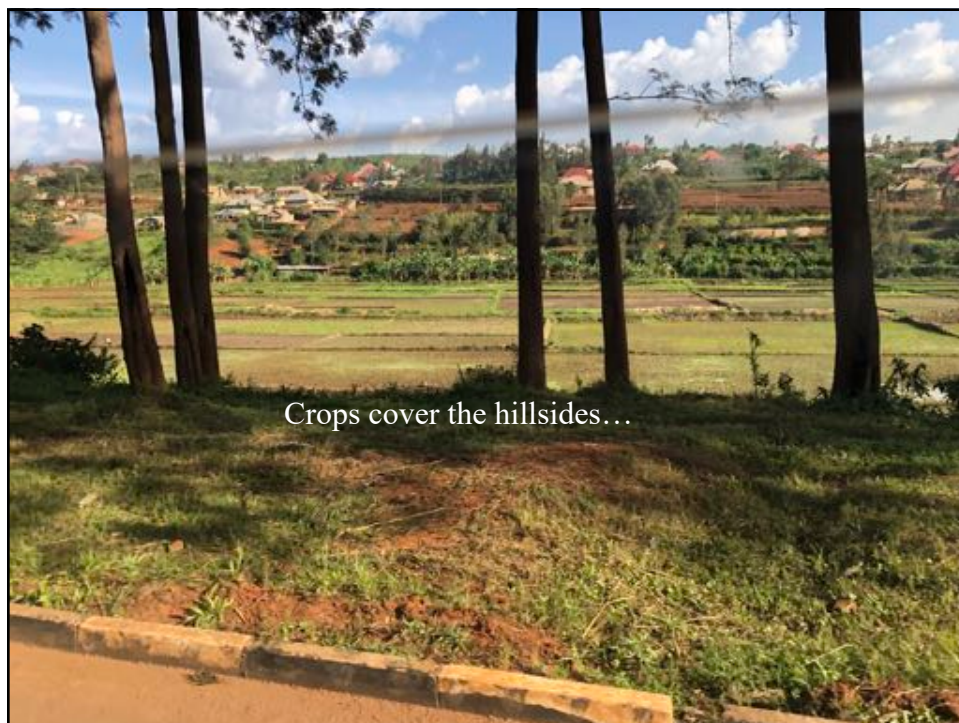
Main streets  
paved with wide  
paths for walking  
and biking

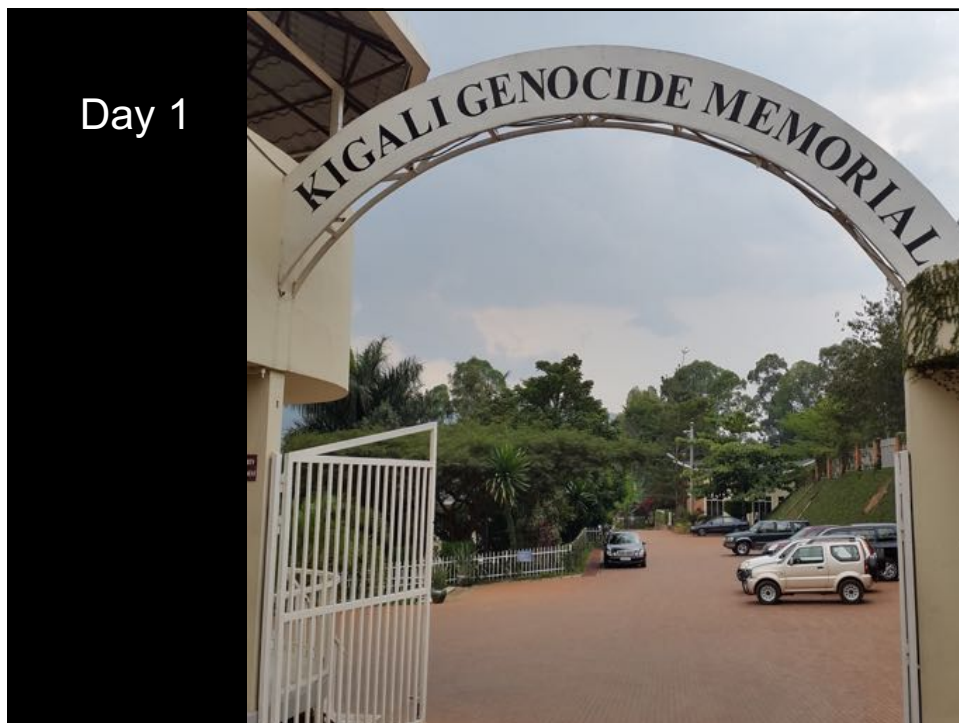
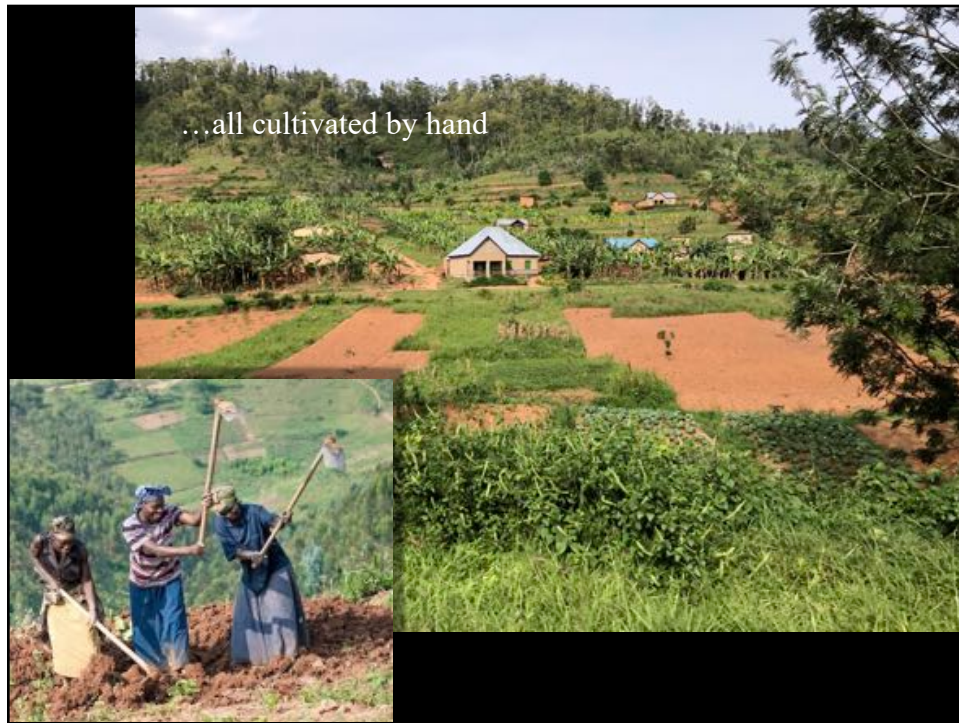


People use their  
heads for carrying  
heavy loads











April – July 1994 in Rwanda

In just 100 days,  
more than 1,000,000 people  
were murdered.



But the genocidaires did not kill  
a million people.

They killed one, then another, then  
another... day after day, hour after hour,  
minute by minute.



Every minute of the day, someone,  
somewhere was being murdered,  
screaming for mercy.

Receiving none.  
And the killing went on and on and on...



10,000 each day.

400 each hour.

7 each minute.

The genocide resulted in the deaths of  
over a million people.





People seeking sanctuary in churches  
were trapped.  
Killers threw grenades into the buildings, then  
used machetes and clubs to kill the survivors.



Children brutally  
murdered in front  
of their parents

**Fabrice MURINZI MINEGA**  
Age: 8

Favourite sport:	Swimming
Favourite sweets:	Chocolate
Best friend:	His mum
Behaviour:	Gregarious
Cause of death:	Bludgeoned with club

But death was not its only outcome.

- Tens of thousands tortured, mutilated and raped
- Many infected with HIV/AIDS
- 300,000 orphaned
- Thousands widowed
- Streets littered with corpses where dogs and buzzards ate their rotting flesh



Try to imagine...  
Living in a country where  
**EVERYONE** was involved.

As a victim...  
As a survivor...  
Injured...  
Infected...

Or as a killer...

Traumatized...

Neighbors, friends, and relatives

Sometimes, I get terribly sad because I can't imagine what my life will be like. I'll never see my parents again, and yet I'll see the people who killed them, and those people's children, for the rest of my life. I can't bear the thought of it.

Donata, age 11

## Day 2 Questions for Our Team



Leaders from the Lutheran Mission in Africa –  
Synod of a Thousand Hills

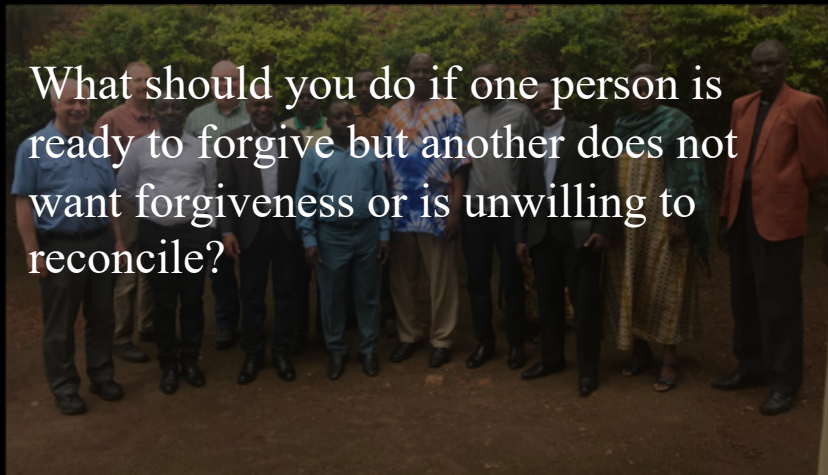
## Questions for Our Team

How can a pastor help to heal others when he himself is wounded and hurting?



## Questions for Our Team

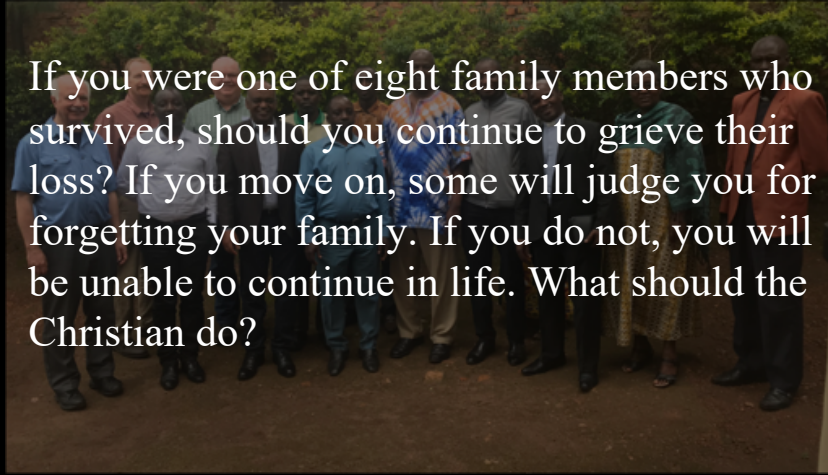
What should you do if one person is ready to forgive but another does not want forgiveness or is unwilling to reconcile?





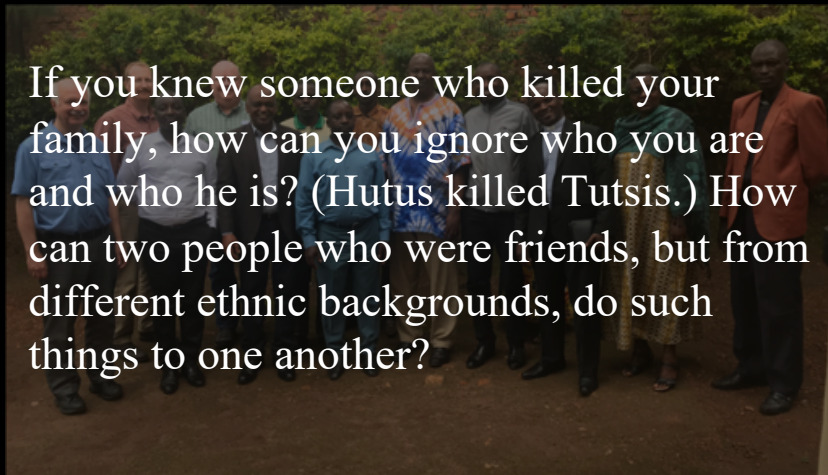
## Questions for Our Team

If you were one of eight family members who survived, should you continue to grieve their loss? If you move on, some will judge you for forgetting your family. If you do not, you will be unable to continue in life. What should the Christian do?



## Questions for Our Team

If you knew someone who killed your family, how can you ignore who you are and who he is? (Hutus killed Tutsis.) How can two people who were friends, but from different ethnic backgrounds, do such things to one another?



## Questions for Our Team

I was born after the genocide, but I don't know my father. My mother was raped in the genocide. I asked about my father but my mother cannot answer because to tell me would bring back too many memories. How do I reconcile who I am? How do I relate to my mother?

## Questions for Our Team

If you were a perpetrator and have been released from prison, what do you do if you and your wife had three children before the genocide. But while you are in prison, your wife had three other children. How do you treat your wife or her other children? What if the six children are divided — three and three against each other?

## Day 3

On our first Sunday, we drove two hours to worship with a church near the Tanzania border.

They had been waiting to welcome us...



Their welcoming song continued as we got out of the car and walked into the church...





The Bishop led 250  
people in worship



This congregation has  
started five other mission  
churches within 45 km





3 choirs  
sang in the  
service



Food offerings were  
auctioned off following worship





Day 4  
The team prepares



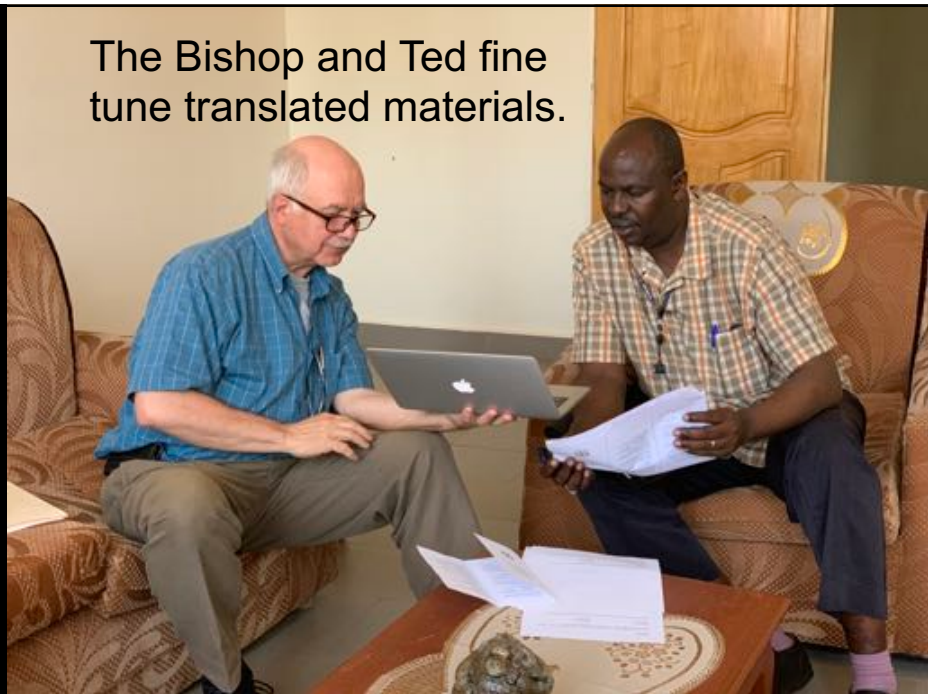
Ted Kober  
Ambassadors of  
Reconciliation

Rev. Dr.  
Mark Rabel  
LCMS  
Missionary

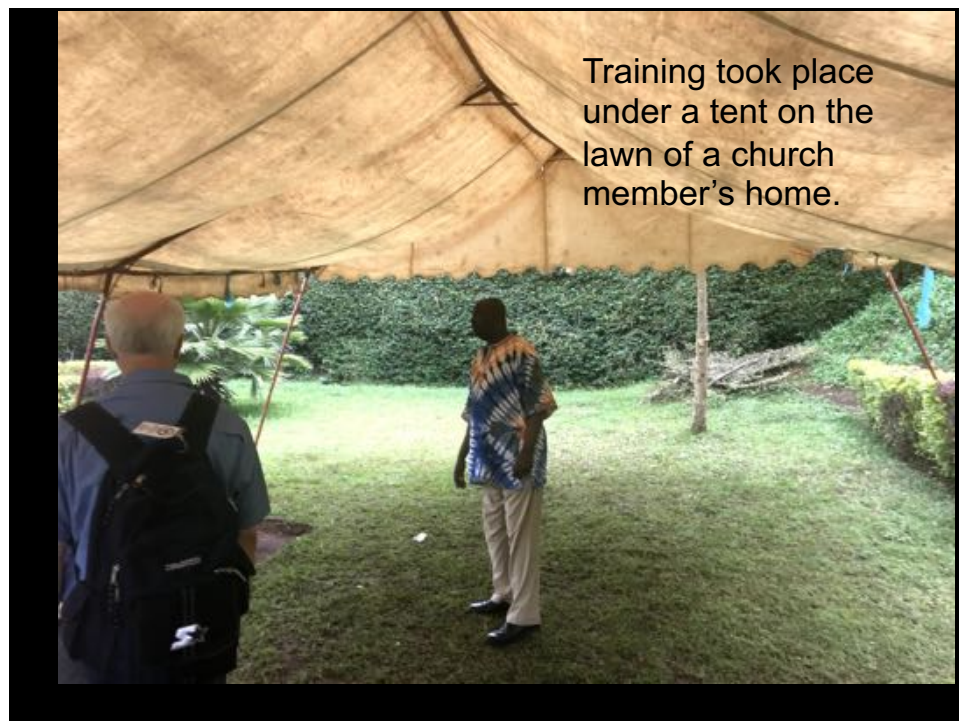
Megan  
Mantey  
LCMS  
Missionary

Dwight Schettler  
Ambassadors of  
Reconciliation

The Bishop and Ted fine  
tune translated materials.







Days 5-8

The main teaching days.

Each day began with worship...

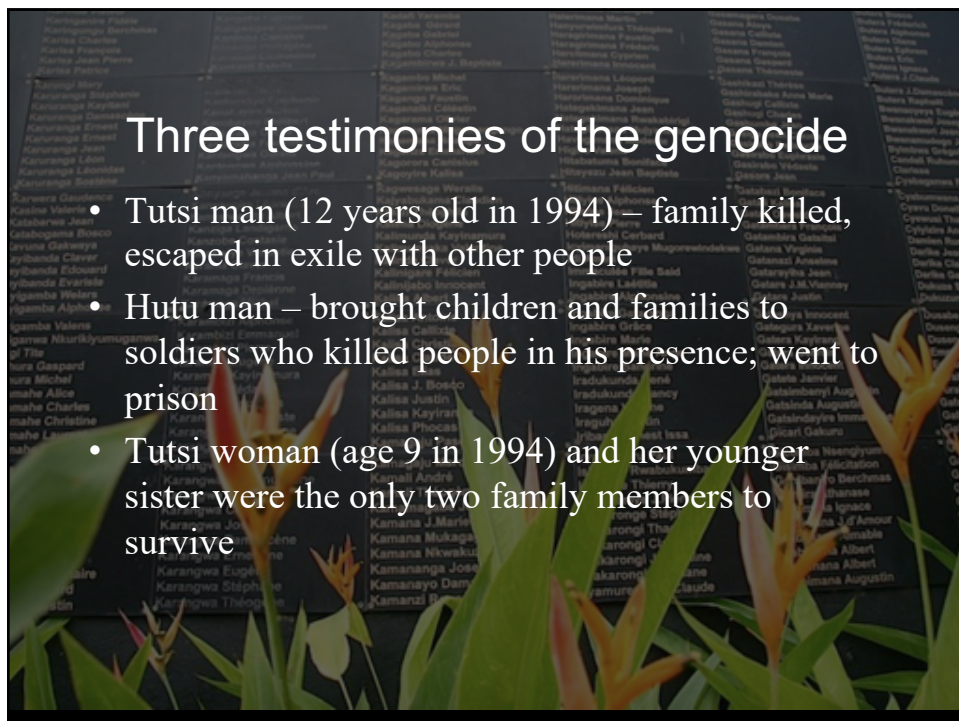


Let the children of Zion rejoice in their King!  
Let them praise him name with dancing,  
making melody to him with tambourine and lyre!

Psalm 149:2-3







## Three testimonies of the genocide

- Tutsi man (12 years old in 1994) — family killed, escaped in exile with other people
- Hutu man – brought children and families to soldiers who killed people in his presence; went to prison
- Tutsi woman (age 9 in 1994) and her younger sister were the only two family members to survive



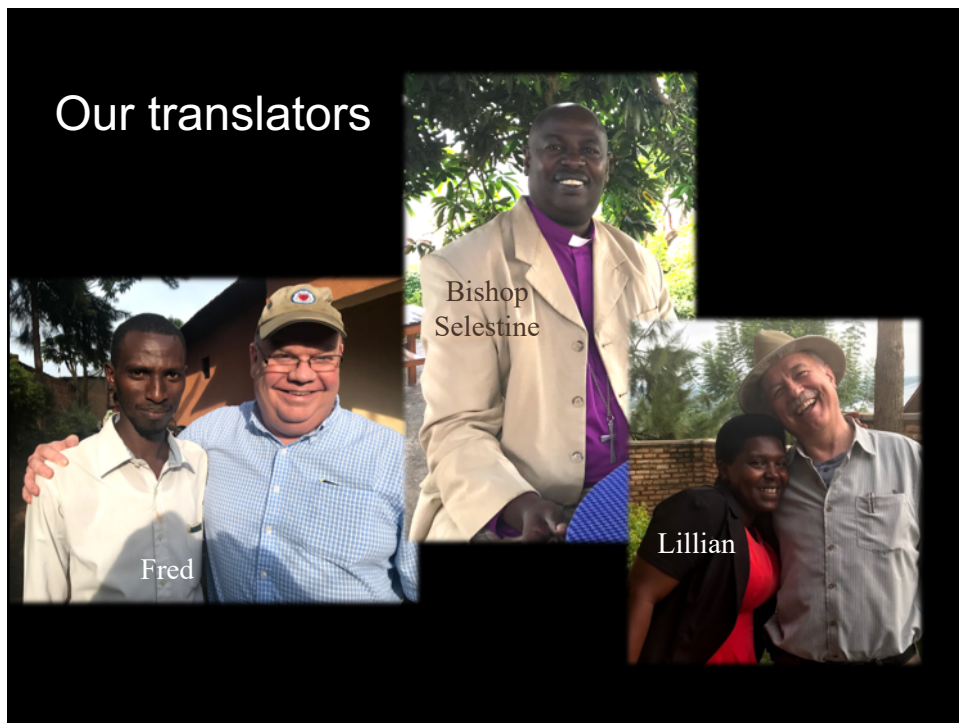
Before teaching, we asked what they hoped to learn...



Issues involving:

- Forgiveness
- Consequences
- Reconciliation
- Trusting neighbors





They received *Luther's Small Catechism* and AoR translated materials.



In small groups, people looked up Bible passages and applied them to questions and case studies.







Each group appointed someone to report back to the larger group, which was translated into English.



When people had personal hurts, we coached them using a translator.



On the 4<sup>th</sup> day of teaching, we separated men and women to work in trios to coach one another about real life issues.



## So, what happened?

- Personal healing
- Remembering whose we are in Christ
- Learned how to proclaim God's forgiveness using the Bible
- Learned how to apply the Ten Commandments
- Know how to forgive as God has forgiven us
- Learned that forgiveness does not necessarily remove earthly consequences

How will you use  
what you have learned  
when you return home?



As a pastor, I'm going back with a heart of an open door.... I'll be using the Word of God. Whenever people repent, I know now how to proclaim forgiveness.... But also [I will] help the process to reconcile with others.





As women, we have many problems in our families.... Because I was in same problem, I would not help.... Today I have learned... even taking time listening to the person, encouraging by the Word of God, praying together, reflecting on the Commandments, reminding them what Christ has done for us... I can be helping others.

I have realized I am a coach.... Forgiveness is very important... You can even forgive without the other person knowing. That helps you to get healed.... The Word of God is very important in this process...





Many people have big problems – not easy to solve....There are some issues you can solve. But there are others you can't.... Instead of solving problems, you help them know that there is a God who can help, who can do wonders, who can change life, especially because of Christ who died for us. If our sins are forgiven, then there is nothing that is impossible for God.

This teaching has come at the right time for me....  
The history here has caused many conflicts....  
I used to use the Word of God – just preach, preach, preach, preach. Then you pray and he goes.... But here I have seen how to listen to a person, how to ask questions...





We experienced love and the hand of God, touching our wounds, pains, and past bad memories, into the new proclaimed forgiveness to us, and therefore new life and ministry in the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ ... Your presence in Rwanda meant more than anybody could explain. Thank you so much.

Bishop Selestine Seburikoko

### More opportunities need your support...

- Missionaries in Africa, Europe, Asia, and Latin America
- Church leaders in Africa
- Church leaders in Latin America
- Church leaders in Asia





May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

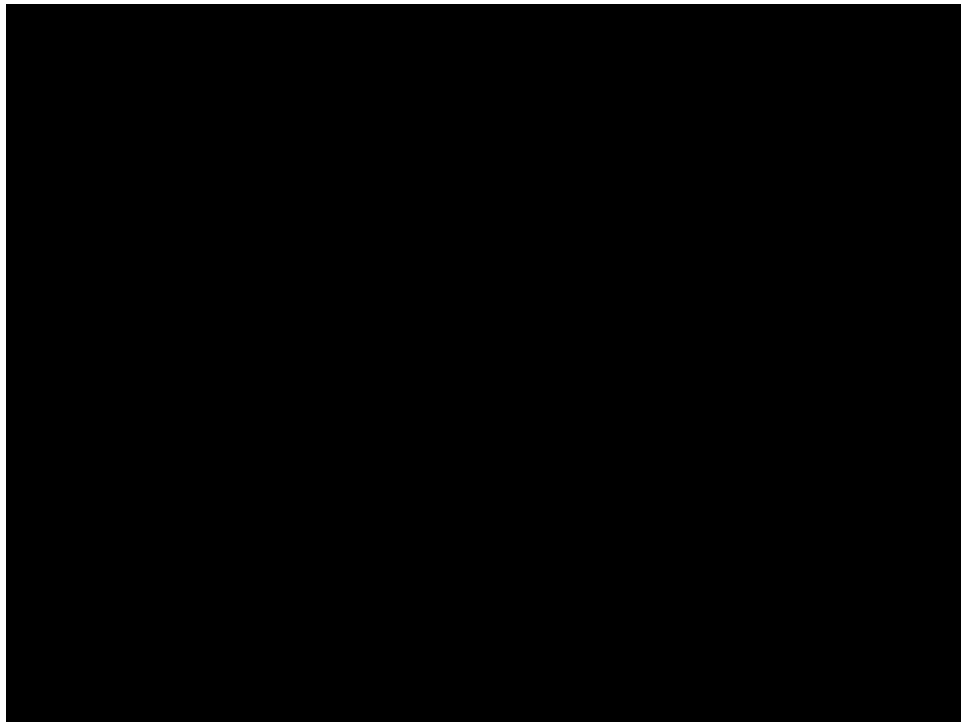
Romans 15:5-6



May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

Romans 15:13





I have learned how to help  
reconcile others... so the  
church will be living in love  
and good relationship.



The issue here is  
how I have been  
doing things that  
cause more harm  
than helping....  
Through this  
seminar I have  
learned to coach in  
a proper way...





Back home,  
some people  
have conflict in  
their families. I  
will be helping  
people reconcile  
using the Word  
of God.

I will not only be  
helping my church  
members. Rather,  
I will be helping  
whoever will come  
to me....

Totally different  
from what I have  
been doing.





I have learned ... even from our presenters... the way they humble themselves to us.... This will help me back home to help others.

We have not only learned from our presenters what to do, rather they give us materials to use.



Humbling yourself  
and forgiving is a very  
important thing.  
Back home, I will  
encourage people to  
forgive but also to ask  
for forgiveness...



I have learned to proclaim  
forgiveness to people...

I have learned how to take  
time, listening to the person,  
asking questions...

Also, keeping secret ... what  
is between you and him or  
her.