

Global Report

November / December 2010

Everyone in the world ... in the Word

Divine Connections

Some alignments of people, time and place are so improbable that we say, "This could only be God." The Lord of heaven orchestrates earthly events and resources to draw people of all nations to a saving knowledge of Christ and to further blessings. Hints of His influence—a plane flight canceled, a stirring in a woman's heart, a family's move around the world, a propitious phone call—are especially evident in our stories this time. If you will, read in awe and reverence for our great God.

A Mission Field on Our Doorstep

By Veronica Alvarez, National Director, CBSI United Kingdom

God has blessed Great Britain abundantly throughout its history. As a nation, we have sent out many missionaries. Blessings to many nations flowed from their service and sacrifice, and its legacy remains.

The 21st century brings new challenges for Christians here. With roughly 3.75 percent of Britons committed churchgoers, the potential for CBSI is huge, and we have recently felt, as a ministry, that God is asking us to step out of our comfort

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Singapore Pastor Gilbert, third from left, first heard of CBSI from his denominational overseer in Asia.

Glalice, left, has translated CBSI lessons into Mandarin for use in Chinese-language study groups in England.



The Blessings of Obedience

In April, Pastor Michel, the president of a large denomination in Burkina Faso, Africa was in Denver for a short ministry visit when his return flight was canceled. Prayerfully, he and his wife sought the Lord asking God what His plan was for the rest of their time in Colorado.

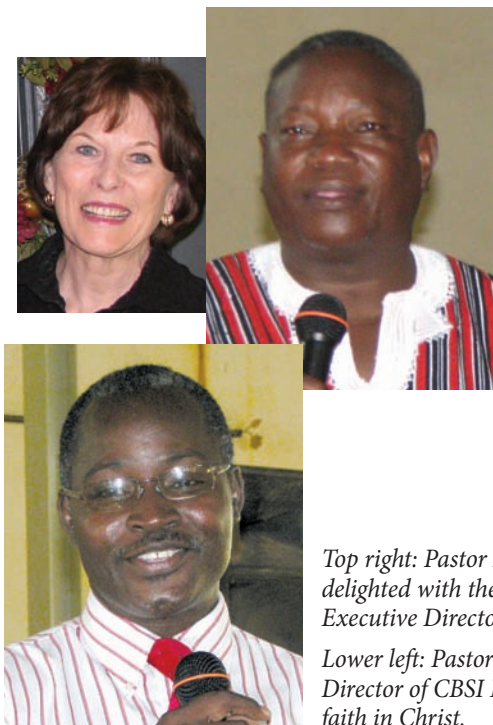
The Lord arranged for Michel to connect with former CBS Board Trustee, Bob Ogden. Bob explained that the CBS Bible study method would be a perfect complement to his ministry. Bob

emailed Camilla Seabolt, Executive Director, to see if she would be at the CBS Ministry Service Center later that afternoon. Many of MSC staff had just participated in a huge training and had taken the day off. However, Camilla had felt led to come into the office to catch up on work. In God's sovereignty she was available for this life-changing, divine appointment.

As they talked in her office that day, Pastor Michel and Camilla discovered their shared passion for seeing God transform lives through His Word, and the Lord began to reveal to them His plan to bring Bible studies to Burkina Faso. People who have never had Scripture studies in their own language

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Directors' Note



Top right: Pastor Michel, keen to launch CBSI in his country, is delighted with the outcome of an unexpected meeting with CBS Executive Director Camilla Seabolt (photo at top left).

Lower left: Pastor Benjamin, called by God to be the National Director of CBSI Burkina Faso, comes from a family with strong faith in Christ.

Mission Field,

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zone to reach those not previously encompassed by CBSI in the U.K. With many different people groups making these islands their home, we have a wonderful opportunity. Our mission field is on our doorstep!

Asking God for an opening was the first step in an adventure that has required only our obedience. Gilbert, a clergyman from Singapore pastoring a Chinese church in Bristol, soon contacted us, explaining that his supervisor in Asia had urged him to embrace CBSI. Now he sees his church studying God's Word in Mandarin as well as English.

Keen for Old Testament studies in Mandarin, Gilbert has provided translators to work with guidance from CBSI's Asia-Pacific Director, Peter Hanscamp. Now, in Luton, we have Chinese students in CBSI and a Chinese church studying *Romans*.

In time we heard from Morris, a

Zimbabwean pastor living in South London, who knew about CBSI from a friend and mentor who had received CBSI training in Zimbabwe. Morris wanted to use CBSI in home churches he had started. Soon there were two large trainings, first with Morris' home-group leaders and then with his own church, whose pastor wanted to use CBSI before his Sunday morning services.

We feel richly blessed to see these Africans reaching into their community. Many have witnessed terrible trouble in their country, but they are full of the joy of the Lord and

can reciprocate.

Then God brought us South Americans. A retired missionary

who had worked in Peru and Bolivia and was acquainted with CBSI in Lima started a CBSI group here. Hector—Bolivian pastor who lived in the U.K. for several years—married an English girl who was on a short-term mission in Bolivia. Two of their four children were born during their five years of ministry in a shanty town and rural community in Bolivia. Hector had been asking God for a chance to serve Him in this country. Now he leads a CBSI group using Spanish-language lessons, and two similar groups are operating in London.

Hector's vision is to present CBSI to the 50 Spanish-speaking churches in London. Feeling a permanent calling to our ministry, he has also traveled to Bolivia to present CBSI to his village and other villages nearby. Bolivian CBSI leaders are eager to work with him. Thrilled with this prospect, we hope the Lord will bring in the financial support that he and his family will need.

As you can see, throughout this amazing sequence of events, our good God has used CBSI elsewhere in the world to provide openings here. As the blessing starts to flow back-and-forth, we hope this is just the start of

such work on His part. How wonderful it is that our ministry translates its materials into many languages to reach and disciple people for Christ! God's strategy and thoughts are far beyond our dreams and plans. Ephesians 3:20-21 says, "Now unto Him who is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work in us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen!"



Blessings,

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would be able to study God's Word for themselves!

The same day, while visiting in Indianapolis, Indiana, we learned that an African clergyman was visiting our son's local church. To our surprise, he was from a country where we were planning to start CBSI in a few weeks. We met with the pastor, but in our conversation with him, we saw warning signs about the other ministry partnership we were anticipating.

We were puzzled about this as we boarded a plane to meet with Camilla the next day. When she told us about her meeting with Pastor Michel, we said, "Where in the world is Burkina Faso?" A bit of research told us that it is one of the world's poorest countries.

We were mystified. Was it truly God's plan to bring CBSI to Burkina Faso? We began to pray, and as we did, God prompted us to read Habakkuk 1:5. "Look at the nations and watch and be utterly amazed! For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe even if you were told."

This was astounding and encouraging. To confirm that God intended to launch CBSI in Burkina Faso, we prayed for Him to give us a strong national leader. Within a few weeks, Pastor Michel directed us to Pastor Benjamin, a man who gave his life to Christ at age 10. His father has been a pastor for 44 years; his seven

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Different Nationalities Next Door



Hector, a Bolivian pastor leading Spanish-language CBSI groups in the UK, here pictured with his wife, Helen, is also helping to develop CBSI classes in rural Bolivia.



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790 Stout Road, Colorado Springs, CO, 80921-3802

Community Bible Study is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

The Global Report is published bimonthly and is distributed free of charge.

Your contributions are welcome to help offset the expenses in providing this publication.





Frank and Marian Vroegop led training in Burkina Faso.

Caleb Corner

Growing Non-English Options for U.S. Classes

By Marcia and Steve Buskirk, Calebs in Training

We said “yes” to Caleb Ministry training in the United States as a response to what we saw God doing in our community, accompanied by an irresistible desire to see what it could become on a larger scale.

After hearing Shirley Adams, CBSI’s Regional Director for North-Central America & Caribbean, share the vision of fostering Bible study in many languages within U.S. borders, Claudia Gutierrez, one of our ladies in Wichita, Kansas, asked a simple question that cried out for an answer. “Could we do that?” That is, could we form a Spanish-speaking Core Group within our CBSI class? Her heart was saying, “That would be wonderful!”

When God brought this about in remarkable ways, we began to see a broader opportunity on our doorstep. Millions of people in the United States speak a language other than English in their homes. To us this means that multitudes in our communities do not have the opportunity to do what those in CBSI classes love and do every week—sit with a group of caring people, listen to God’s Word and share freely about it in the language most comfortable to them, their heart language.

As God turned our class leaders’ hearts to the great opportunity and need in our community, He expanded the boundaries of our own thinking on CBSI’s familiar mission statement: “*Making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in our communities through caring, in-depth Bible study,*

available to all.”

As a Teaching Director, I have often quoted this to our class members, expounding on the fact that with CBSI, it is not just catchy letterhead phrasing, but truly the mission. For us it is becoming a new personal calling. With the assurance of God’s leading, we applied to become Calebs with the thought of developing non-English-speaking Core Groups in the U.S. We look forward to serving existing classes by guiding the introduction of this concept and encouraging the development of independent non-English-speaking CBSI classes as well.

We are thrilled to know that, as God continues to bring people to the United States from the far corners of this globe, He is bringing them not just to America, but to Him. We anticipate a day when some who return to their home countries will take with them His loving message of redemption and a vision to start CBSI classes there. God’s resources are limitless, and we know we can trust Him to carry out His plan.

Surely our response can be none other than that of a psalmist to another simple question that begged for a response: “*What shall I render to the LORD for all His benefits to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD*” (Psalm 116:12).



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brothers and sisters are committed believers, with three of them being ordained clergymen. Pastor Benjamin has served as an academic dean in a Bible institute and is an assistant pastor in a church in Burkina Faso.

When Michel told him about CBSI, both sensed that God was calling Benjamin to this ministry to help their churches develop disciples of Christ instead of followers of men. Pastor Benjamin’s guiding passion has been to bring Bible study to his people in their language, so they can know and understand God’s Word for themselves. CBSI is the answer to his prayers, and he is the answer to ours!

God’s plan is even more apparent now that we have conducted training in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso’s capital city. The 100 pastors equipped for regional CBSI leadership are phoning Pastor Benjamin, eager to see the ministry inaugurated in more than 4,000 churches that they oversee.

The Burkina Faso national CBSI team will be pivotal in bringing CBSI Bible studies to other French-speaking countries in West Africa. During a spiritually precious moment in the commissioning service, Benjamin’s 87-year-old father prayed over him, dedicating him to serve as CBSI’s National Director in Burkina Faso.

Where in the world is Burkina Faso? Right in the center of God’s will! To His glory, God has launched CBSI there. Hallelujah!

Frank + Marian

CBSI Director and Associate Director

Heart Language,

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places in the world to study His Word,” Dora says. “He orchestrated it all. Amazed, we give Him praise and all the glory!”

Teaching Director Marcia Buskirk agrees. “Every week this group blesses us with their unity, enthusiasm, vision, commitment and, especially, their burden for the lost,” she says. “One day after lecture, we were thrilled to see a lady in the group asking heartfelt questions. While the others circled around her in the back of the sanctuary, she prayed

and accepted God’s gracious gift of salvation.

The meaning of the CBSI mission statement, “*available to all,*” is being fleshed out before us, and we thank God for the opportunity He is giving us to be involved in CBSI’s mission of seeing “*everyone in the world ... in the Word,*” even right here in America.”



Core Leader Dora said yes to God’s prompting.



In-Depth Bible Study Has More Impact in Heart Language and Caring Atmosphere

When 13 women from South and Central American countries enter their CBS Core Group classroom in Wichita, Kansas, they are abuzz with conversation. Their joy in the Lord and obvious love for each other, which come through shared study of the Word, are the fulfillment of a worldwide ministry aim—following Christ’s call to make disciples among people of all cultures, regardless of where they live.

At every step in the formation of this group, God’s presence has been felt and His glory glimpsed. The impetus was a special presentation to the class about CBSI in the fall of 2008. Afterward a woman asked, hopefully, if a Spanish-speaking discussion group could be tried in the class.

Leaders had barely begun to pray about this when Wichita resident Dora Chihuahua Davis stepped forward, convinced that God was moving her to help meet the needs of



Coming generations will be blessed through this CBSI ministry within the United States.

Spanish-speaking women new to the community. She had felt this earlier when the class had two visitors, one from Costa Rica and another from Mexico, neither fluent in English.

“I immediately wanted to be with them, to welcome them and to help them experience a Bible study program that I love,” she says. “It was exciting! Later, when I was asked to pray about

being a Core Leader, I was a little fearful, thinking I was not adequately prepared, but I went forward, and this group has been a huge unexpected joy.

I think of 2 Chronicles 16:9, “*For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him,*” realizing that He has done exactly that here. Many of these women love Him and are spiritually mature, but they are a long way from their original homes. They need a place where they can come, share and find support in an atmosphere of love.”

Scripture study in Spanish goes deep, the women repeatedly say, because they and God are using the language of their heart. On Sharing Day for last year’s study, three of the group members read notes they had written with difficulty in English, expressing gratitude to God and CBS. “It is a beautiful eye-opening experience to see how the Lord brought these women together here from different

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