

The Link

Significance

Innate in every man and women is an intense desire for self-worth

Every child wants to feel significant—important—especially in the eyes of his or her parents. There was nothing more uplifting than to hear my father and mother praise me for something I did well. Yet, there are voices coming from every angle in life wanting to steal our self-worth. Have you ever wondered why people spend a fortune on cosmetics, top-of-the-line clothing or even getting a facelift? Our world places great value on beauty, intellect and athletic prowess. Take a moment and analyze a few commercials which will prove my point. This phenomenon begins at birth. “What a beautiful baby!” exclaims one. Another whispers, “That is the ugliest baby I have ever seen.” In my youth, occasional comments were made by peers making me feel like a failure due to my being held back in second grade. Throughout my youth I was a free spirit. I wanted to run, play, climb trees and explore rather than sit in a structured environment. I had an overabundance of adrenaline. I don’t know if the drug Ritalin was available (used to calm children), but I am sure I could have used a triple dose. Though, I never made lower than a C- on my report card from grammar school onward, my teacher and parents felt I was not ready to graduate to the third grade. The terminology used was, “he failed.” What made it doubly worse, I was a twin. From time-to-time I was asked, “Why is your twin brother a year ahead of you in school?” My response, “I failed second grade!” Ironically, I was selected by teachers and students to receive the “good citizenship award” for both grades and conduct when transferring from elementary school to middle school, yet this still did not help my self image. After serving my country in the military (USMC), God systematically revealed His plan for my life regarding ministry and education that shaped my understanding of authentic significance in Christ. The KEY—I began to realize that true significance is only realized in Christ Jesus, even though many try to find it in their physical appearance, a spouse, humanitarian endeavors, writing a book, ministry, education, athletics just to mention a few. All are short lived, if Christ is not the supreme focus of our relationships and endeavors. For most of us it is a lifelong exploration of discovering that our true identity and value is only in Christ Jesus.

Each day God lovingly reminds me that my self-worth (significance) is in my relationship with Christ. I am loved and kept by Him. The Spirit encourages me to yield to the Lord each day so He can live His life through me. Seeking significance “outside” of an intimate relationship with Christ is empty. THE LINK, MLI’s monthly newsletter, could be construed as exalting the work rather than Christ, but that is NOT the intent. I sincerely wish I could live the “mission life” in obscurity where I did not have to demonstrate through newsletters and MLI’s web site what the mission is doing month-by-month. Yet, it has been the primary way MLI has raised awareness for both monetary and prayer support. Gratefully, donors have remained consistent in their support over the years including occasional notes of encouragement. I sincerely understand that a person does not succeed in a vacuum. From birth until the day death knocks at the door, God places individuals in our path to accomplish the mission task. The one praying, or writing a check or sending a note of encouragement is just as important as the one ministering in some remote place of the world. When there is a unified effort—oneness, God receives glory (John 17). Allow me to close with a few thoughts about significance and self-worth.

- 1) True significance can only be achieved when we totally surrender to Christ. Again, our true self-worth is only in Christ. It is also important to understand God’s unconditional love as it relates to self-worth. In other words, His love is without conditions. Like a good Father, His love NEVER fails. The Lord sees our potential and values each person to the extent that He was willing to give up His life for sinful humanity.
- 2) We must constantly reevaluate our life. For example: How do you feel when another is praised for the very same project you have sacrificed and invested much of your time and money for? What negative emotions surface when you are not recognized. Having been a pastor for over twenty-five years, I can remember when a prominent leader of the church addressed me after a Christmas choir special. The gentlemen was emotionally and visibly upset! “You recognized everyone but me—the narrator!” How do you feel when someone gets noticed and you are left out? Sincerely, this a prideful emotion! Our pride attacks true self-worth, and it is difficult to subdue or kill.
- 3) As a former pastor, I have known parishioners who have kept track (and control) of every dime given or deed they have accomplished. They remember and dwell on the few works done which “makes them feel good, important & of value.”
- 4) CAUTION: In a MLI survey, an African pastor stated that he flatters whites in order to get something from them. Inwardly, we ALL love to be wanted, recognized, needed and flattered. It gives us a false sense of value and self-worth.

There is much more I could say on the subject of significance and self-worth. May God give believers the extra ordinary ability to know when we fall into the trap of finding our worth in the world rather than in our Savior.

Rick

News Brief

THOUGH COLD IN MANY PARTS OF THE USA, IT IS VERY HOT IN UGANDA! Our Ugandan staff is busy preparing for the teams arrival (see pictures below). Some staff are cleaning and painting walls at the MLI East African Headquarters. Others are visiting ministry locations, arranging for reliable transportation, purchasing supplies for the team and ministry sites, etc. Rooms at the hotel for the team are now assigned.

Except couples, all will have single rooms with fans! Since my arrival to MLI's Headquarters located in Jinja, Uganda it has been extremely busy. The team has much to do will be kept busy from morning until evening. Our team is small but have BIG HEARTS and a TESTIMONY. Though the newsletter has been a challenge to fit in my schedule, I am grateful for Glassell and the volunteers who will help get it ready for mailing. **Thank you for all you do to empower MLI. Your prayers and support are greatly appreciated.**



THE GENERAL FUND IS ESSENTIAL: This allows our mission to move funds to areas of greatest need. Mission Link has ministries in operation that need continual funding. Like any church or non-profit, MLI has operational and ministry expenses. Thank you!

REMODEL USA MISSION CENTER: We are presently raising funds to remodel our new mission center in Pearisburg, Virginia. We need both volunteers and monetary assistance. Much of the internal walls have been removed and ready to replace floor and ceiling tiles, paint, install shelving and fix some plumbing and electrical. Email Rick if you can invest a day or two in April (thelinkoffice@gmail.com).

UGANDA—GRADUATIONS: Our graduation dates for two MLI pastor/leadership schools will now be February 16th and 19th. We could use help to feed the crowds at the two very special events. We need **\$250** Buvuma (Need to hire a boat for the 3 hour journey as well) and the Bugiri graduation will need approximately **\$225**.



KENYA TEAM February 23 - March 9, 2019: We need some additional **team members!** Our computer technician, **Andrew**, can participate from Uganda, but we will need **\$775** for his travel and upkeep for 10 days. Two computer labs will be installed in both the Korogocho Slum and in the new secondary school in Mwingi. We will be working with Pastor Euticauls Wambua. Also **30-32 monitors** needed at **\$60** each.

MEDICAL FUND: Giving **any amount** to the Medical Fund is greatly appreciated. MLI continues to have ongoing medical needs. Unfortunately, the clinics and hospitals do not compare to what we have in the USA. Yet, the Ugandans make the best of a bad situation.



GENERAL AND ONGOING NEEDS: **Esther's house—Any gift appreciated.** Pr. Wasawa's house for cement floor and doors/shutters—**Now \$375 needed** and the general fund will help with the balance; **MLI's Church Plant Kadomala —\$165** for doors/shutters & **\$260** for cement floor; **Monthly salaries for several staff members \$50** & two staff teachers **\$90**; Street Kids have numerous needs (clothing, food, place to sleep, etc.)—**any amount**; **Julius...a street young man** really wants to go to night school to learn to read and write. Three terms a year at **\$100** per term. **MLI Office—Uganda** (security, taxes, electric, water, etc.)—**any amount**; **MLI's 1997 Ugandan vehicle—**Upkeep, oil, gas & maintenance—**any amount**; **Deaf School—**is a wonderful ministry—**any amount**; **purchase 20 computer keyboards at \$17** each needed for Kenya computer lab—will purchase in Nairobi; Pr. James Senyonjjo's (team translator) windows for his house **\$190**; MLI Church Plant—Kigera and the Uway Island Church are ready for a permanent structure—**any amount appreciated.** **Pastor Anthony's primary school Eldoret** needs a monetary **blessing.** **Widow's project:** MLI desires to establish a widows project for Itukulu. A small plot, small building and milling machine is needed—**any amount.**

Tom (Bookkeeper), Pr. Emma (Properties), Peace (cook/cleaning), Pr. Philip (Director) are busy preparing for the USA Team.



Cell Phones: We need phones! We are able to use some phones in Uganda and the rest are sent to a recycling center. Please ask your family, friends and church to collect cell phones especially those with SIM cards. Also, if you have laptops, electronic keyboards or Christian books, we have a home for them as well. This is a simple way to assist MLI. GBU!

Feb. 2-15, 2019: Rick has arrived in Uganda to prepare for the USA Uganda team. The following members are excited for the opportunity to be on mission with God: Richard Caldwell, Jackie & Glynda Carver, Todd & Jay Childers, Dennis & Terri Hansen (Terri remaining til the 24th), Christi Lipscomb, Aaron Mansfield, Mary Shupe, Rick Sadler, John Neisen. Visiting with us is Pr. Anthony and Hope from Kenya, Pastor Euticauls, Bryan & Wendy Frady and Dave & Kathy Segars. Please keep this team in your daily prayers. Thank you!

Kenya Team: February 23rd thru March 9th, 2019. We still lack help with computer installation and handymen. We would love to add several more volunteers to our team. Email Rick if interested. Cost is Appx. **\$2500; last day to register will be February 15, 2019.**

Pearisburg Construction Team: We need specialized assistance (Electrician/Plumber/Carpenters) to remodel the MLI Office/warehouse in Pearisburg.



Thirty dollars (\$30) a month brings great happiness to an African Widow! **Will you prayerfully consider adopting this dear widow?** She needs a loving family.

Robinah Kagoya — Robinah is 70 years old and caring for 4 children. Her husband died in a motor car accident in 2000. **Testimonial:** I thank God who gave MLI a vision to support widows; she is happy for the things she has received (stove & water filter, medical services, etc.) Pray that God sustains MLI. Robinah fellowships with Church of Uganda Church. Her main challenges is children's support for school fees and housing.