

The Link

“Amazing Love That Never Fails”

Did Jesus truly love all of the disciples who at various times disappointed Him?

When Jesus selected the twelve disciples, He chose individuals who were not from the religious elite, but average men from all walks of life. Christ picked rustic fishermen, a tax collector whose job was to collect taxes from the people adding a sizable sum for himself, and He even chose a deceptive traitor named Judas Iscariot. Old Testament prophecy pointed to one who would turn on Jesus for thirty (30) pieces of silver. Without question, the Omniscient Christ knew that Judas would be a traitor. For sure he never possessed a redeemed heart, yet accepted the invitation to be one of the twelve disciples. On the other hand, the fisherman Peter was a genuine follower of Christ, even though he was rough around the edges. During the crucifixion event, Peter lied and cursed while denying he ever knew the Man from Galilee. In fact, most of the disciples feared for their lives and were despondent, confused and doubting. Thomas earned the name “doubting Thomas” refusing to believe that the Savior conquered death. Thomas needed physical evidence. If you and I analyzed Jesus’s selection of men who were chosen to carry the message of hope to the world, they ALL proved to be deeply flawed like most of us. Nevertheless, I submit that Jesus passionately loved each of the disciples including Judas.

Every true believer is called to be a disciple. There are also many who claim to be followers (a disciple) of Christ while demonstrating little or no life change. Like Judas, they are inoculated from hearing/accepting the gospel message. Yes, many attend regular services, contribute to the church treasury and pat the pastor on the back, but who are really enemies of the cross. Do not forget, it was the religious people who wanted Jesus stapled to the cross. **Matthew** penned in chapter **23** the caustic words that Jesus used to describe these religious zealots: **They love the places of honor...devour widows’ houses...tithing but neglect justice, mercy and faithfulness...full of robbery and self-indulgence...outwardly appear righteous to others but inwardly they are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness (sin).**

Christ passionately loved each of His disciples. The Apostle Peter at times allowed the flesh to control him. Nevertheless, Jesus loved Peter and Peter loved Jesus. The anointed words that flowed from the Master’s lips shaped the life of Simon Peter. Jesus did not mince words with this rustic fisherman, but spoke truth to him. Contemporary preachers often berate Peter for his “sinking” faith that was put on display when he stepped out of the boat to walk momentarily on the stormy sea. When his eyes became fixed on the churning sea, fear gripped the disciple and the angry waters began to swallow him. The other disciples were clutching the sides of the sea tossed boat while watching Peter do the impossible. If you and I could be transported back two-thousand years ago to sit in the boat with the other disciples, I wonder what our response would have been regarding Peter’s attempt to walk on the water?

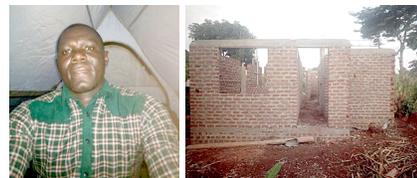
Look at Simon Peter! He thinks he is God! That is crazy!...He is going to drown! Look! He is sinking and crying to the Master for help—It serves him right! Where is his faith!” If Peter was smart, he would have stayed in the boat.

Reading between the lines, I believe (my opinion) Jesus was proud of Peter even though he was grossly impulsive at times. Like the time he drew a sword and sliced the ear from the face of Malchus (John 18:10)...or when Peter declared his unflinching allegiance to Christ followed by denying him three times (Matthew 26:33-35).

I have learned (and I am still learning) that there are times when every Christian fails his/her Lord. Africans are no exception. Some Americans have suggested that MLI have nothing to do with Africans believers who are at times dishonest or deceptive. Yet, as I observe their lives, I know that they are truly called of God, and that I am called to love them (and they are called to love me). In fact, many of the MLI staff and pastors are more dedicated to the Great Commission than I am. Most barely exist having very little physical resources, but who are champions at proclaiming the gospel. A prime example is Evangelist Richard Kasanka who has a passion for lost souls. I recently communicated (texted) with Richard at 4:30 AM while he was resting in a MLI tent. He was in the bush for a few days participating in an evangelistic event. During our conversation, he shared with me his efforts to build a house for his family. (MLI has helped Richard with the construction of his home, but he now needs funds for metal roofing—pictures below.) Extreme dedication!

As I close, I am reminded of how much the Heavenly Father cares for His children even when they disappoint Him. Personally, I know that His love for me never changes because it is not based on my performance but His FREE GIFT. I am simply a child of God in transition; when I fail Him, He picks me up, dusts me off and then helps me take another step in my journey. This revelation has empowered me to love others in the same way—to assist believers with their spiritual walk/growth. What is so AMAZING, Christ’s love is not only for those who are His (the redeemed) but even for individuals who refuse to accept Jesus as their Savior. **“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you are not willing”** (Matthew 23:37). First Peter 3:9 says it best, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” There are multitudes who have and will reject the Savior resulting in eternal separation. Does God take pleasure in those who reject Him (Eze 18:23)? No! According to the best known passage in the Bible, Jesus declares that **“God so loved the WORLD that He gave His only Son—Jesus....”** Yet, those who say no to salvation must suffer the consequences of their decision. (Also read: 1 Tim. 2:4-6; 4:20; etc.). Truly—His love is Amazing!

Rick



MLI overwhelmed by Pandemic and social needs!

In this newsletter, I am suspending the normal/typical plea for specific needs and the ongoing need for general fund giving, to highlight both MLI project events and immediate needs. The MLI Board sincerely and gratefully thank donors for ALL they do for African Missions.



The Kamuli town council requires architectural drawings for the new **deaf school** in Kamuli District. **\$875** needed!



Albinos: Late September, MLI contributed food and soap to the albino community. Flavia, pictured above, serves the Albino community caring for their needs. Please pray for this ministry.

Widows of Mafubira and Itukulu Villages: Last week in September, MLI gave soap, food and funds (shillings) to over 120 widows. Thank you!

UGANDA NEWS

Below are a few highlights of Uganda's pandemic changes as announced by President Museveni:

- ◆ Schools will reopen October 15th
- ◆ International Airport and land borders open for tourist provided they test negative 72 hours before arrival in Uganda.
- ◆ Curfew from 9PM to 6AM will be maintained. Boda (taxi) movements must end at 6PM.
- ◆ Places of worship open with governmental guidelines followed: Maximum 70 attendees meeting only on Fridays and Sundays; face mask worn; sanitizers present/available; social distancing & temperature taken. Night prayer gatherings not allowed.
- ◆ Bars remain closed

CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

As of September 29, 2020

- 7,218 confirmed cases
- 71 DEATHS!
- Recovered—3291



(Left to Right) **Bodas** (motorcycle taxi) given food and the gospel was shared by Pastor Emma. **Two muslims receive Christ!** Next picture shows our **Doctor Moses** helping a MLI sponsored boy needing a hernia operation. **Please pray** for Moses as he is having serious colon issues. Next is a picture of **Thomas Kunya's new home**. MLI has been seriously helping Tom and Mary with building. He is an incredible young man who handles ALL our financial affairs. Finally, **Pastor James** is seeking help to purchase a plot next to his home—**\$1800** All the above Africans need your prayers and help.

NOTICE: Again, October is a continuation of MLI's cell phone collection. Please ask your family, friends, Bible study group and church (Pastor) to donate their old cell phone to Mission Link. Also needed are laptops, tablets, electronic keyboard, and cameras. Thank you for helping!




MLI cares for street boys like Zack pictured left. Carol, a vendor on the street, acts as Zack's caregiver. Carol's husband (a pastor—pic right) has cancer and is seeking treatment in Kampala. Please pray for the pastor and his family.

MLI has had Azam in school for 4 years. He now has a rabbit project!

Reagan has been helped by MLI many times; yet, the street life continues to have a grip on him. Pastor Phil took him to a local clinic for a foot "repair" paying the doctor and purchasing some meds.

Thirty (\$30) a month brings great happiness & needed provision for our African Widows in Uganda!



Jane Nangobi: Jane was born in 1966 and has 5 children. Her husband died of blockages in 2015. She is so happy that God saved her, and she thanks God for her pastor who gave her a job to be a cook at the school. She is also grateful for the stove, medical clinics, soap and food that she always receives through Mission Link. Personal and medical needs are a challenge. Jane fellowships at Itukulu Baptist Church.



Pictured left is **Pastor James Mafabi with his wife Esther**. James has been the pastor of MLI Christian Church for over 6 years. He is one of the most humble and dedicated pastors that I know. His wife serves faithfully the women of the church. MLI recently gave the them a **monetary gift** toward their home that is being constructed. Others needing prayers and assistance: **Tom Kunya** needs help with plumbing and floor for his home (pictured above)—**\$1300**. **Richard Kasanka** needs trusses and roofing (Pic on front page)—**\$1900**. **MLI Instructor Paul Akise** must finalize the purchase of property for a MLI church plant/school **\$2300**. **Head Teacher Pr. James** needs **\$1800** for plot (land) next to his house. Purchase blankets and sheets for **25 widows—\$520**. **General Fund for many other needs.**