

The Link

Are You Listening? My wonderful precious wife of forty-four (44) years, Candy, does not hear like she did twenty years ago. I often have to repeat my words for her to comprehend—to understand what I've said. She has a hearing problem (I sometimes joke that it is selective hearing). Yet, there are those who have a very different kind of hearing loss when it comes to our relationship with our Father in Heaven. We either drown out God's voice through busyness or through selective hearing or we completely shut Him out. Again, it is the same issue with family & friends—not truly hearing our words.

We all have encountered people that tune us out. One can carry on a conversation with another individual, but he or she is not really listening carefully. Do you know such a person? The really obvious case is when a person is yawning as a person shares a thought, problem or a particular crisis in their life. Then there are those who hear the sound of our voice, but they are thinking about what they are going to say next rather than zeroing in on our conversation. We all have talked to a friend on the phone, but in the background you can hear them typing (distracted). Then there are those who constantly glance at their text messages on their phone while in conversation with you. Most of us have a keen sense of awareness when someone has tuned us out while conversing. Good listening skills are very important, if one aspires to be a good counselor, pastor, confidant, parent or spouse. Listening compassionately & attentively is an art form that is rare in our modern "me" generation. To take it one step further, there are many who are good attentive listeners who have trained their ears to apprehend the voice of God.

God wants His children to listen—to pay close attention when He is speaking. Without question, He is always speaking especially through His Word, the Bible. Caution: Those who are plowing through a yearly "through the Bible" reading schedule/plan must be careful to read AND LISTEN. For example, when a person is reading and not listening (not internalizing), one can easily miss the thrust of Christ's teachings. Here is a prime example: "Therefore, everyone who hears these sayings of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock...and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand...and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall." (Matt 7:24-27 - NKJV) **QUESTION: WHAT IS THE "ROCK" IN THIS STORY?** Don't go back and look, but state what it is from your reading. Is the ROCK Jesus? NO! Is the ROCK the church? NO! **The ROCK are those who HEAR the Word and OBEY (act upon) the Word.**

As a former pastor, I have had opportunities to counsel stressed and troubled marriages interjecting biblical precepts which spoke specifically to the situation. Those in a counseling session usually will acknowledge that they have understood the Word and its application, yet they end up building on the sand (they did not act upon—obey God's Word). For example, the Bible has a prescription for a wife who is confronted with a disobedient or unbelieving husband. First Peter chapter three states that the wife should not preach a sermon to the husband, but simply portray a humble and chaste life before him...and the husband will hear through his eyes when he witnesses her quiet and humble demeanor. **LISTEN:** That kind of counsel given to twenty-first century believers many times is rejected by frustrated wives. Hence...the home life rattles, shakes and fails due to the house being built upon a foundation of sand—disobedience to the Word. She heard, but didn't act upon God's Word.

Even the disciples at times could not hear/see/understand. In **Mark 8:14ff** Jesus and the disciples are in the boat crossing the Sea of Galilee. Jesus is warning them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Herod. On the heels of Jesus's teaching the twelve were equating "leaven" with real bread. They missed the point of His message! One loaf of bread was all they had on board. Jesus interrupts their conversation (actually their complaining) to recall two powerful miracles wrought by His hands. With just a few loaves and fish, Jesus fed thousands of people—the feeding of the 5000 & 4000. The unspoken (obvious) question being addressed to the disciples was: "Do you not think/believe I can multiply the one loaf to feed all of us?" He chastises them in verse 18 saying: "Having eyes, do you not see? and having ears, do you not hear? and do you not remember..?" It is a sad commentary when disciples of Christ having excellent physical hearing, have spiritual ears that are dull. How true is that of us today!

Our daily prayer should be that of Isaiah 50:4b: "The Lord GOD...awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple" (NASB). The fact is, God will empower us to hear (and speak) as a disciple each and everyday. He will help us to ear, comprehend and act! **LISTEN:** God continues to speak, but we have to be on His frequency to hear. Though family, friends and acquaintances may not listen well, God wants us to pitch our ears toward heaven. God is speaking—are we listening? Pray that we will tune-in to God's voice. He has something to say to His children each and every day. As a former preacher/pastor, there were times that I read the Bible solely for sermon preparation trying to find the right message that would impact the congregation. Now as a missionary, I am learning to read and study the scriptures for personal edification while constantly asking God to help me **hear and to obey His holy Word. Dear Lord - Please give me the ears of a disciple and the faithfulness to obey.**



STREET BOYS: As reported in past "LINKS," **Asam**, 9 year old street boy, has been placed in a school in Jinja, Uganda. Several donors have graciously sustained Asam in school as well as caring for his personal needs. **Zach** (picture right) went to prison for a few months on false charges. The government used him and other street boys to grow illegal drugs. He is now 16 years old & back with us. We have given him clothes, shoes and other sustainable items. Our Director, Philip, has taken Zach to his uncle in Kamuli who will teach him mechanics. Zach needs help for his upkeep (\$28 a month) & tools (\$100). Before returning to the USA, Zach came to me & poured out his heart. Weeping profusely, he ask me to give him another chance to change & get off the street. My shoulder was drenched with his tears. He scribbled a note saying, "Pastor for real I can manage if you put your trust in me an opening... that I can & will to it in the right way. Pastor you are the only person who has kept my hope. Be blessed in Jesus name" [sic]. Your continued help for these street boys is greatly appreciated!

Rick

MISSION LINK'S NEWS BRIEFING: TWO GRADUATIONS ARE PLANNED FOR THE MISSION LINK INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN STUDY CENTERS IN JANUARY. Due to Rick's emergency return to the USA, the graduation ceremony for two village schools have been postponed until January. We will need "at least" **\$450** for the **Mubende** graduation and **\$225** for **Bwingi**. Though we have had a few contributions, much is still needed.

AFRICAN WIDOWS MINISTRY: MLI desires to distribute soap, paraffin/wicks (for light) to our widows. Please...**ANY AMOUNT** is appreciated!

UNDERWEAR & SANITARY PADS NEEDED (KEEP THEM COMING): We have several groups working on this project, but more is needed. Paige Lipscomb, a member of MLI's February medical team, is collecting women's **underwear** (Most—Medium & some Small/Large). Also, volunteers are needed to sew/make reusable sanitary napkins (Email Paige for instructions: plip08@gmail.com). All is needed by Jan. 5, 2017. PLEASE recruit helpers!

PAIGE LIPSCOMB TRIP FEES: (Critical) Paige is a college student needing assistance for her trip to Uganda in February (NOW **\$2600**). She is heading up the above project teaching women's health. She is worthy of our support. Any gift of any size will be greatly appreciated.

MZEE JOHN: Our 83 year old security guard still needs help. Due to termite infestation in his old home, he has been forced to build a new house. We now hope to complete his house by the end of November. There is **\$525** still needed. John is worthy and very faithful and a hard working African.

WEDDING—FINAL CALL FOR ASSISTANCE: Philip and Jackie III have postponed their wedding date until November 26, 2016 **due** to lack of support. They are grateful to those who have given thus far. Their budget needs are being considered by friends and church members, but poverty makes it very difficult for most Ugandans to contribute. Hence, **any gift** (great or small) will be appreciated. Let's help Phil and Jackie to tie the knot!

NEW TEACHER TO TRAIN PASTORS: We are wanting to expand MLI's pastor village schools and consequently must secure another teacher. Raymond Mayega, a former student of Mission Link Christian Study Center, is being considered for this position. The school will be in the evenings in a village called Kitigoma. We will need approximately **\$100** each month as well as some additional funds toward his travels.

PHASE II MLI SCHOOL IN ELDORET, KENYA (ANY SIZE GIFT IS APPRECIATED & WE CANNOT START UNTIL WE HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS): Starting budget is **\$7200+** to put up a metal frame & roofing (no walls). When completed, students from all over East Africa will come to learn the Bible under the leadership of Pastor Anthony Ndambuki. Praying this phase will be completed in 2017. Also, we need to begin constructing pastor's home.

DEAF SCHOOL: MLI has become the much needed "link" for the deaf school in the Kamuli District. Unfortunately, there is no governmental assistance given to these physically challenged kids. Pastor Herbert and Director Elizabeth are both very grateful for the help given by Mission Link thus far. The ongoing monthly need for food is around **\$370**. Any funds left over from the feeding is applied to help pay other expenses that are listed. **Monthly needs:** Food **\$370**; dorm for kids **\$70**; salaries for 5 teachers in total is **\$250** (gross minimum). There are other expenses, but this is a start. Thank you!

PASTOR EUTICAUL WAMBUA OF KENYA (TEAM FORMING FOR JULY 2017): Pastor is very grateful for the wonderful support received while in the USA. A mission trip is planned for next summer. All interested parties please contact Rick Sadler: thelinkoffice@gmail.com. Total trip cost is determined by group size & the price of summer tickets ("group rates"). The trip will vary from \$3250 upward. The cost includes all in country expenses as well as funding some project cost (plus what we can raise). We will need at least 12 participants leaving from Dulles to secure group rates. All skills needed.

MLI TEACHER NEEDS HELP: Pastor George Stanley needs assistance to be self supporting. George has started a fish farm. He needs help with feeding the Tilapia. We want to commit \$45 a month for 10 months to help him be successful with this project. He is trying to be SELF SUPPORTING.

MARY - A BAKER: Most team members remember Mary for the cup cakes and cookies she baked for us to enjoy last January. She is trying to establish her own business. She now has a store (room) but needs a STOVE costing \$975. A MLI donor has committed to \$400 leaving \$575. We are also going to collect items to bring to her in February: Bread, muffin & square tins; mixer; juice extractor; measuring cups; utensils; & more. Please drop items off at MLI.

GENERAL FUND (VERY IMPORTANT): OUR BANK IN UGANDA IS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE DUE TO CORRUPTION. PRAY THAT MLI'S ACCOUNT WILL NOT BE COMPROMISED. GIFTS TO THE GENERAL FUND gives MLI flexibility to take care of operational expenses & needs/projects/crisis—and there are many! Without this fund, it would be very challenging to operate & assist the numerous needs we encounter "literally" day-by-day. When you give to projects or to a national, would you also consider giving (specify) a little EXTRA to our general fund. Thank you!

GENERAL ITEMS NEEDED for UGANDA TRIP: Used Key Boards (Usually \$50 per unit used); Strong Light Table Saw (\$375); 2 Hand Saws (\$15 per); Chisels (\$17); Router Bits; 2 Small Amplifier; 2 Converters (\$75 per); Kitchen Maid Mixer. Also, funds for transport & feeding 200 pastors for a pastor conference; women's underwear; baseball caps; small testaments; pens; soccer balls; balls; children's bible school or Sunday school teaching materials.

LOOK AROUND THE HOUSE, ASK YOUR FRIENDS AND AT CHURCH

Cell Phones, Digital Cameras,

Laptops, Christian Books

We are in need of your old cell phones & digital cameras. Please drop them by the MLI office OR mail them to: 1677 Avon St. Ext, C'ville, VA 22902. Christian books/Bibles also needed for next shipment to Africa. Thank you so much! KEEP THEM COMING!!!

Please Pray for Iris Jo Wall - Rick & Candy's Granddaughter



Rick's Emergency Return to the USA: While in Uganda I received a message from Candy to "come home." Our granddaughter was having headaches, feeling sick and trouble focusing. A brain scan revealed a large tumor. Please pray for Iris Jo's full recovery. We are still waiting for the Biopsy report but believing the tumor is benign, yet the tumor still has to be dealt with. Thank you so much for praying!

Uganda Mission Trip — February 11-24, 2017: We have a total of 24 volunteers signed up to travel to East Africa. We have reserved two extra tickets just in case we have one or two people late in deciding to join our team. Please contact Rick, if you are interested: Phone... 434-984-1995 or thelinkoffice@gmail.com



Widow Elizabeth Byakika Still Needs a Sponsor for Monthly Support

For **\$30** a month (just a dollar a day) you can make a difference in the life of a widow. Your support will help pay for school fees, medicine, home-based businesses, food, and much more. **So very little makes a BIG difference....**

Elizabeth Byakika: Elizabeth is 68 years old and has 4 children. Her husband died of a heart attack 11 years ago. "I thank God for protection, care and support through Mission Link International receiving soap, stove, water filter and medical care." Her challenges are her grandchildren.