

# IF THE LORD WILLS AND I WILL LIVE ...

Our family was excited to be going back to Malawi in July 2017. My wife Darlene, our children, Hannah and John, and I were eagerly anticipating being with our Malawian brothers and sisters, and especially being reunited with Bishop Samuel Sosono (Malawi AC conference president) and his family. Over the years we had become very close, becoming family and using family terms for one another. I was his grandpa and he was my grandson.

I had just completed the finishing touches on my teaching material when we learned via Facebook that Samuel had gone into hospital. He died two days later, July 6, a week before our departure date to Malawi. Unthinkable. He was only 38 years old. We were devastated. My plans were thrown into confusion. Would my preparations even be relevant now, or would I have to improvise in response to felt needs?

There were so many things to go over with Samuel. This was my eighth trip to Malawi, and I was uncertain if it could continue forever. I had wanted to review with him what had been accomplished,



*Perkins Family with Samuel Sosono (Far Left)*



*Seminar Attendees*

determine what was remaining, and prioritize so the most important matters would be done, if the trips had to end for any reason. Now everything was up in the air.

Samuel's death hung like a dark cloud over the whole trip. The visit to his grave was very emotional. He was an excellent organizer and everything had always run smoothly. Now preparations were incomplete and we had to scramble. Sufficient translators were not in place, significantly hindering Hannah's and John's plans. Only about half of the conference pastors were in attendance for the seminars and they were dispirited. Only a couple of pastors from other churches participated. Near the end of the first week of our visit, the Chikwawa pastors complained that their arrangements were inadequate and that they would be going home on Friday. It felt like the Enemy was exploiting the situation, and I saw that this could lead not only to the end of our ministry there, but also to the fracture and dissolution of the conference. I told the pastors that God must have something very important for them if the Enemy was working this hard to prevent it, and that they must not let the Enemy win.

Fortunately, they listened and stayed. By the end of the second week of teaching, there was a much better feeling. The seminar participants honored us in a new way. They all filed by in greeting, most employing hugs, a practice my wife had initiated a few years ago. This tribute was also extended in a couple of churches we were able to visit.

As I reflected on the hopes and plans I had, and still have, for this ministry I remembered James 4:13–16. I had always heard this with an emphasis placed on making tentative plans. Now the emphasis on human mortality leapt out. “You are a mist that appears for a little while ... You should say, ‘If the Lord wills and we will live, also we will do this or that.’” The text does not discourage planning. Rather, it is a reminder that only if the Lord wills and we live, will we be able to carry plans out. I don't know what the future holds. I must make a new relationship with a new leader, who will have a fresh assessment of the needs to be addressed, but I will continue to make plans for future ministry. If the Lord wills and I will live, I will return to Malawi and continue the ministry of equipping the pastors and encouraging the churches.

*Submitted by Ken Perkins (Pastor of Bear River Advent Christian Church, Bear River, Nova Scotia, Canada & President of the AC Nova Scotia Conference)*

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## PRAYER & PRAISE

December 2017



“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”  
(James 1:17, ESV)

**Join in united prayer with  
other Advent Christians**

**Advent Christian  
General Conference**



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## PRAY

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1. Cristo Salva in Honduras is prayerfully considering an extension of their scholarship program by adding a youth activity part. Please join them in prayer as they work through the details to determine feasibility for Cristo Salva.
2. Cristo Salva and friends of Cristo Salva are working toward helping a few Hondurans establish their own business. Please pray for wisdom for those leading, guiding and resourcing these attempts to help people raise their self-supporting abilities.
3. That the Lord will add leaders and directors to our mission fields.
4. For God's direction and wisdom for our outreach area directors as they minister alongside our ministry leaders.
5. That God will give direction and guidance to Jefferson and Penny Vann as their positions as global trainers will be ending at the end of this year.
6. That there will be mission donors who will support mission projects on our World Outreach Special Mission Projects list.
7. For our ministry leaders who are seeking increased financial support for their ministries.
8. For our ministry leaders who are working to share the Word of God. Often they are in places where there is danger and violence against Christianity, but they are still able to bring many to the Lord. Pray that their ministries will continue.
9. That more church members will pray for our mission work daily.
10. With us for each staff member at ACGC.
11. That our national leaders on our outreach fields will flourish in their ministries.
12. For Jeffrey Walsh as he directs the plans for the Department of World Outreach.
13. For the ACGC Department of Communication as it works to help the Department of World Outreach connect with our donors and Prayer Network partners.

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## PRAISE

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1. God for 2017 — it had great challenges, but God carried us through them!
2. God for the work of the ACGC Focus Group that finished up in November.
3. God for the safety he granted to ACGC staff as they traveled around the world in 2017.
4. The Lord for our ministry leaders who are working to bring others to Christ.
5. The Lord that the Guindy church in India will be holding a dedication service on December 17 for their new building. Pray that this building will bring much glory to God.
6. God for the blessing that has occurred in the outreach ministry of the Adda Road Advent Christian Church in Andhra Pradesh, India. Founded by Rev. Paul Gantham, when YJM began supporting it, there were about 50 members who met in a small "shed." Five years later, their new building is full with more than 200 members. Rev. Paul has been joined in the ministry by his son Victor Abraham. Give praise to the Lord for the ministry that is being carried out by these ministry leaders.
7. Pastor Pani and his team in Odisha (India) continue to take the gospel into

unreached areas of his home state. Praise the Lord for new converted believers.

8. The Lord for ministries to orphans, underprivileged children and young people being carried out in the Lord's name through our AC outreach ministries. Praise God for making resources for these ministries available through his people, especially for those who respond to the still small voice of the Lord to support these ministries financially.

### Please pray for the following ACGC Directors' and Coordinators' Activities

*Meredith Broadway, Coordinator of Educational Ministries*

*Beth Larkin, Coordinator of Women's Ministries & Event Operations*

• December 3-6 – Meetings Today Conference, Orlando, Fla.

*Matt Larkin, Director of Student & Family Ministries*

*Steve Lawson, Executive Director*

*Justin Nash, Director of Communication*

*Dawn Rutan, Director of Finance*

*Jeff Walsh, Director of World Outreach*