



OCTOBER NEWSLETTER 2019



Malawi Disciples October 2019.

There once lived an old man in a certain village. He was one of the most unfortunate people in the world. The whole village was tired of him; he was always gloomy, he constantly complained about life and always in bad moods. The longer he lived, the more bile he was becoming and the more poisonous were his words.

But one day, when he turned eighty years old (80), an incredible thing happened to him. Instantly the whole village got the rumors that the old man is happy, he is smiling, he is not complaining but smiling a lot and blessing anyone who passes him by.

What do we learn from this brief story? Only God transforms us and gives us a new life through His love and by His grace. This transformation is evidenced by a changed attitude and character.

Subsequently, PHARP in the month of October engaged in activities that would help participants seek and draw nearer to the one who truly transforms; and that is God through discipleship, peacebuilding and conflict transformation training, amongst religious and community leaders comprised of men, women and youth in Malawi, Kajiado County (Kona Baridi) and Nairobi county (Kibera slums). Throughout the month, we learn that yielding to the power of God leads to right living.

On 1st to 3rd October: PHARP held a discipleship training that brought together 55 pastors and ministry leaders from 32 different churches within Mbayani, Blantyre- Malawi. The three-day training was hosted by Ebenezer Baptist Ministries. Many pastors in the area under the ‘Peace Pastors fellowship (PPF)’ wanted to attend due to the change they witnessed from those who previously attended training in May 2018. But due to having a limited number, they probably will be trained in the next year.

The participants who majority serve in the interior away from the town center learnt much on the: need for discipleship, who are disciples, Why are there so many dying churches, Symptoms of a dying church, Reasons for dying churches, Basic stages of discipleship: basic, intermediate and advanced, Convictions from Matthew 28:18-20 and how to use the “*Finding your place in the world*’ material written by Joe Williamson.

In the course of training, participants were put into groups, each group having 8 members to discuss and learn from the following questions: What is discipleship? Why are we involved in discipleship? Who is a disciple and How and when do we do discipleship?



Participants in different group discussions

One of the pastors shared how he got to know the book 'Finding your place in the world' through his fellow pastor who attended discipleship training in May 2018. When I first got to read my friend's book, the first chapter I landed on was on Reconcile. I quickly read the introduction and I realized that in our church there is a big problem. He realized that the church was not doing enough to reconcile sinners to Christ. The church was more focused on growing numbers as this translates to more giving, but the leadership was not intentional of disciple making that helps believers to grow deep into the word of God. 'Today I am more than challenged. If my bishop is not keen on discipling the idle youths because they are seen as trouble makers, then me who has learnt and equipped with material, I will be deliberate to reach out to the idle youths I pass by in the market and the bus stop as I go home from church.



Left: Pst. Keith sharing on the need to reach out to the youths. Right: Elders listening to the preaching

'I am a mother of five. My pastor who was trained last year used to read the book for us during our small group meetings and on Sunday after service. I serve in the ministry of Apostolic church as a

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deacon, but for some time I used not to trust God completely, but very active in the programs of church. one day my daughter went out to look for firewood and it reached dark without her return. We searched everywhere without seeing her. But as I was praying, the question; 'Lord what are you teaching me now through this circumstance?' came to mind. And I remembered the pastor reading it to us. Now I am very happy that my daughter came back safe and I got my own book since I was invited to this training! I will be reading it with my family every day without going to the pastor. "



participants listen to testimony

At community level, participants were encouraged to be role models where they respect and obey others.

One participant shared his experience on how he got to know about the 'Finding your place in the world' book. It was through his pastor who attended discipleship training in May 2018. The trained pastor used to read with them the book but when they reach on the topic of OBEY the participant realized that he didn't obey his pastor. He used to disagree with his senior pastor in front of other members, whether the senior pastor was right or wrong. After understanding what obey means He started working on his attitude towards the senior pastor and today they are good friends. When a misunderstanding happened, he knows how to approach it in a respectable way.



Pastors being taught on how to use the TSOAR material

The pastors were much encouraged and thanked PHARP and tSOAR-USA for this most needed capacity building which they so much needed and is going to help them revive and energize their churches.

On 17th October: PHARP received some members of a women's empowerment group in Kona Baridi, Kajiado North County. This group of women has been keenly involved in matters of peacebuilding and discipleship in their community. The women leaders visited PHARP office to give an update of an economic initiative that they started as pastoralist women.



Left: Women group leaders in fellowship with PHARP director. Right: Women groups leaders being taught principles of discipleship

On 20th October: PHARP team visited the Church of God of Prophecy-Kibera Slum with a membership of 80 congregants and 20 discipleship groups meeting in 7 locations. PHARP in partnership with this local church have been supporting in the area of discipleship and capacity building of the pastors, lay leaders and church members of the church.

The church member who had been assigned to deliver a teaching, shared on the much conflict that is being witnessed in the immediate community (the slum). There is a lot of misunderstandings amongst families, which then spills over into the church and wider community. There is a lack of discipleship within the homes in Kibera slum which is evident to much violence that is carried out by idle youths.

Recently, a church leader chased his wife away. *This man was walking with his wife at a public function. When they met with some friends, including men, one man remarked and told the wife that she looks good. The husband who heard his wife being complimented got furious. Immediately he concluded that his wife was not being faithful. When they got home, he asked the wife to pack her things and leave. The wife was perplexed because she did not know what she did wrong.*

There is a lot of pressure amongst people and this has greatly contributed towards negative peace in our society. As Christians, we need to know our true source of peace, who is God. We need to learn from Abraham and Lot on what true conflict resolution should look like.

We were urged to be a people who preach through our character and not merely words. We are called to be Christ ambassadors; ambassadors make attractive what they represent. Therefore, as disciple makers in Kibera, leaders occupying church positions were encouraged to live an exemplary life. Especially when by-elections in Kibra Constituency are approaching on November 7th, the church must stand and be a godly example. Lay leaders should not be the active ones in the political arena campaigning for an individual, but they should be in prayer and championing for peace.





Top left: Janet (church member/small group leader) giving the word. Right: PHARP staff (Pelagie) illustrating a point to small group leaders.

Below left: Small group leaders equipped with a discipleship tool. Right: Pastor Peter praying for members to be filled with the Holy Spirit and enabled to overcome fear and go out to make disciples for Christ.

On 26th October: PHARP made a follow-up visit to Kibera Baptist Church. It was on a rainy Saturday morning travelling to the slum amidst sewage, coupled with muddy water. Nonetheless, the spirit to serve was not dampened.

The follow-up meeting was done with 7 pastors and two PHARP staff. One of the issues the pastors are grappling with; is how to interpret scripture correctly within its context. The lead pastor for the meeting read from Acts 17:1-9. And there was much discussion on whether the believers Paul was reasoning with in the synagogue were saved or not, by the fact of them not having received the Holy Spirit.

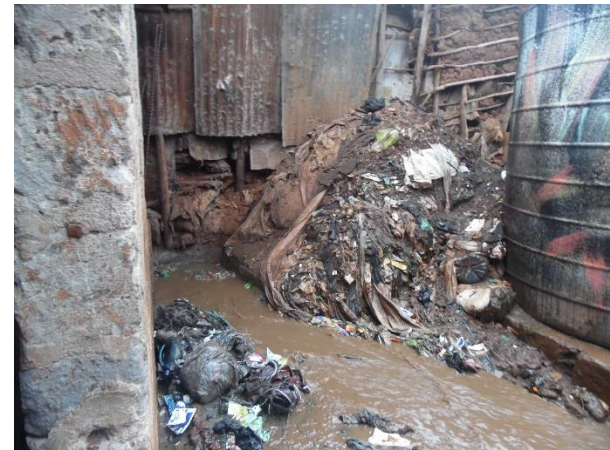
One of the things that we learn in discipleship; is spending quality time with God reading and interacting with scripture, since we are better placed to discern that which is from God and that which is not. In relation to this, the hosting pastor gave an illustration of how he invited a preacher to come and charge the congregation towards missions.

Last year, I invited a pastor from Busia to come and off start the mission's week. His role was to preach and help the church to understand the importance of missions in accordance to the Great Commission. When this pastor finished preaching, he asked that the volume of the micro-phone be increased, because it will be used to administer the Holy Spirit to anyone who needs it and is willing to be part of the mission's week.

So, I was not sure what my visiting preacher will do. Well I started praying within myself that God takes control. My friend continued to pray, then as people came forward, he paused and asked them to stretch their hands upwards, as a physical sign of inviting the Holy Spirit. The congregants did this...as they raised their hands, he would come and blow through the micro-phone and then push the one standing to fall. If you fall, then you have the Holy Spirit, and when you don't fall, he will blow

again. And once I saw this, I knew that this is not right. I had the young man at the sound mixer mute the micro-phone.

This illustration is a good example of someone who hasn't had intimate time with God. They are operating in the canal body. Therefore, as I and the church leadership have been using the material given to us by PHARP and tSOAR on 'Listening to Jesus', it has helped us to be more discerning. Every day before any work commences, we have one hour to study God's word and to pray.



Top: PHARP staff interacting with the pastors to study the word. Below: Situation outside the door of church: unclogging sewage

Ongoing project in PHARP- Jilore, Malindi

With the ongoing Discipleship program at the PHARP center in Jilore, Malindi, one lady within the women's groups was always noted to be in bad moods, very quiet, always facing down and not responding to any group discussions. After much discussions and encouragement from other fellow women sharing their stories, she decided to open up.

With tears, Gladys shared her story of pain: *"My eldest son of 32 years is married and doesn't stay far from my house. He is ever working hard to provide for his wife and 5 children. I was shocked to see three police officers invade our compound, accusing him of raping a special needs girl. They put*
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him in chains and took him to the police station. We have pleaded for his innocence several times. The last visit I made to the police cells; I was asked to raise a lot of money that I do not have to bail him out. We went to court the first time; the accuser did not appear. Now I have no peace, the wife and children are traumatised, what can I do?’

The PHARP field officer is now following up on his social network of friends who are lawyers to offer pro-bono legal guidance where necessary. Keep them in prayers.

YOUTH BEAD-WORK HOLIDAY PROGRAM: A beadwork empowerment project aimed at keeping the youths occupied during the two-month holidays of November and December is taking place at the PHARP- Malindi center. This will create opportunities for youths to engage in the word of God and also create short-term opportunities to raise some funds for a youth camp to be held in December.

WOMEN GROUPS FARMING: The women’s group that are involved in farming are very proud of their successful efforts for being able to work together in unity, mobilising their resources together and being able to contract a tractor to cultivate their farming plot at the Pharp centre. These women have shown improved skills in peacebuilding and literacy skills by making decisions together to have the farming plot subdivided to accommodate planting of cassava, maize, vegetables and fruits.





*Top left: Women paying for the cultivating tractor. Right: Planting of banana tree seedling.
Below left: Youths engaging in beadwork. Right: youths in a training session*

NEW COURSE! 6 MONTH INTENSIVE DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

The goal of this intensified discipleship program is to respond to a request of some professionals and any other interested person who can only be available on weekends. They have a specific call from God for their lives to serve within ministry, but didn't know how they can be equipped for such ministry. PHARP is therefore willing and already working towards equipping such a category of people with an intensive 6-month discipleship training.

This program is for people in every vocation, from businessmen/women to full-time parents to cross-cultural missionaries, because as Christians we are all called to live missionally and approach life as ministry, especially in our vocations. At the end of the course, each participant shall receive a certificate.

Registration starts NOW after you see this call to learn, share and fellowship!

Kindly contact the office using the contacts at the bottom of the newsletter.