

de Swardt Missions Update

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I'm sure you're going to battle for the next ten minutes to get used to my accent. Some think it's very cool and others say, "Please speak up. I do not understand you." So it is okay if you struggle a bit. I try and put an American emphasis on certain words so that it is understandable but obviously I come from a different place and I would like to speak about our ministry.

First of all, thank you to this church that has been such an important part of making ministry possible in Africa, and we've been very encouraged by your love and care and the parcels that we receive, Jiffy peanut butter, and my wife hides them. So she buys cheap peanut butter for the rest of the family, and it's not really that bad but it's almost like whenever there's a cow's tail in the house or something from America, that makes her remember her dear beautiful country.

Obviously, we are missionaries in South Africa. That's my family. Our family, Carol Marie in the right-hand corner. The gap is full now. And then Thomas-Wayne. We adopted him when he was two weeks old and he is a great addition to our family. And of course, there are a lot of interesting things that happened when we, as a white family, walk with an African child, go to the supermarkets, and we've really experienced prejudice from both whites and blacks. Blacks call him a coconut: he is brown on the outside, white on the inside. They say he'll never be accepted in African culture. And the whites, of course, think we are communists or something that we would do that kind of thing. It is just weird. Not all blacks are racist, not all whites, or let me rather say it differently, not all blacks are prejudiced towards us, not all whites are prejudiced towards us, but we do have family members that we cannot visit because of our son. So that just reminds us of the fall and that is why we do ministry and that is why we go into a world that is groaning under the consequences of the fall and we shouldn't be intimidated by that, we shouldn't be held back.

So just a few words from us. I want to just do a slide show so that you can understand. Is it possible to turn these lights off so that you can have a clear picture, clearer picture? I don't need the lights so that's okay.

That's where South Africa is. It's at the bottom of Africa and, yes, we don't know anyone in Cairo. People would say, "Are you from Africa? Do you know So-and-so? They live in Cairo." No, we don't. No, Africa is a huge place and so we are in Pretoria and these are

our ministries that we are doing at Lynnwood Baptist Church. On the left corner at the top is Strengthening Ministries Training Institute which exists to promote the excellence of biblical counseling in the local church in South Africa. Of course, this ministry was started by Dr. Mack. He'll be here next month. He'll be able to tell you more. So we currently have about 50 students and the biblical counseling is a very important aspect of our church and our ministry. And on the right of that, you see Strengthening Counseling Center. So we are counseling on a Tuesday and on other days as well, but we created a counseling center so that the students that go through the training can do an internship at our church. So all of this is linked up together. Linked up with the Strengthening Counseling Center, bottom left, is Heartbeat Crisis Pregnancy Center and I will show you some pictures and, of course, this all happens at Lynnwood Baptist Church.

Then we talk about SMTI, that's Strengthening Ministries Training Institute. As I've already said, it's been established by Dr. Mack and there you get a picture of where our students come from. So we have students from, we had a student from Madagascar, from Malawi, from Zambia, Zimbabwe, and of course the rest of South Africa. So we are very excited about that because our influence is not only in South Africa but southern Africa.

These are our current students. This is the group going through our training at the moment and we are very excited to see how the counseling training has moved into more traditional churches. We have a lot of black students. We have, I know this is going to sound funny, okay? We have colored students, so in South Africa we actually have a race called colored. It's a mix between whites and indigenous people. Then you have blacks. Then you have the white Afrikaners and the white English speaking people. It's a very divided nation, complex, but we have people gathered together to be trained in biblical counseling and, of course, we were greatly blessed last year when we were approved as an ACBC training center. So it's the first ACBC training center in South Africa, or Africa, and we are very excited about that.

The steering committee of SMTI, there you have a picture. Neil Henry on the left. He's a great, he's a lecturer down in the Cape at the Bible Institute. During the days of apartheid, he was imprisoned for about five years. You can actually listen to his testimony on the ACBC, Africa Racism: When Color Divides on the audio. It is great. Then, of course, Josh, the second person from the left. And then dear Dr. Mack. Then myself, Andrew Johnson, Patrick, Mike Valentine, Warren Hoffman. So this is the steering committee.

The teachers. Of course there you have our dear friend Dr. Wayne Mack teaching. There is myself. Josh is one of our teachers. And then we've got international teachers that will come over and teach. We have Jim Newheiser. He spoke at this last ACBC conference. Great guy. Great encouragement. Dr. Ted Tripp. He will be in South Africa next year, October, to do the ACBC conference with his wife and they will come and do a conference on shepherding a child's heart. Nicholas Ellen, he was also one of the speakers in the past. And of course, George C. Scipone, one of the fathers of biblical counseling in the beginning days of that very complex and difficult time. Then Ed Wilde, he was in South Africa this year doing a conference and I will show you the slide later on the theology of psychologies, and that was great. That was wonderful. If you can get him

over here, that would just be wonderful for people to understand that. Jennifer Chen, she's one of our lecturers as well. There's my dear wife. Glenn A Dunn. Patrick, whom some of you know. He's also one of the lecturers. And they are students of the SMTI or the Strengthening Ministries Training Institute.

There is a lot of information. Any questions? Let me rather get the blood flowing here. Are you okay? Are you on board? Do you need a coffee break? Are you sure?

The Strengthening Ministries, in order for biblical counseling to work in Africa, we need to have it accredited and so we've just completed our application for accreditation and we really want to ask you to pray with us that this will happen. So we've applied to offer a Masters in Biblical Counseling in South Africa. That is the first. There is no one doing it. We are the only light on a hill there. So that's the accreditation. That's the day we submitted our accreditation.

Then, of course, the ongoing classes of SMTI. We have week-long modules that we are doing now but next year in January, we will also start evening classes. So please pray that God may send people who are gifted in that area, that pastors may recognize that we need counselors. I had a phone call from a Baptist pastor a while back and he said, "Can you refer me to a counselor in the Johannesburg area?" And there was no counselor and so I wrote him back and I said, "Have you ever considered sending people from your church to be trained in biblical counseling?" So that's the kind of thing that's happening and we hope we are going to have some more students, so we might end up with 80 students which is quite a lot of work that needs to be done, but that is just great for biblical counseling in South Africa.

Next year, we will also start counseling workshops, in fact we're going to have four throughout the year. We are going to look at difficult counseling cases and then we're either going to...Dr. Mack will probably speak on one of them and look at the theme: how do you approach this counseling case? What are some of the resources available to deal with this? What are the things you need to avoid when you counsel a person like that? We might even, can I say it, transmit folk from the state's in. Is that the right words that you use here? Like Jim Newheiser. to actually help us. So that's going to be for about an hour and a half, pastors would come together to actually attend the counseling workshops. So you can see there is a lot of biblical counseling activity going on at our church and that is just great.

This is the conference we had with Ed Wilde and he spoke on the theology of psychology. There is a theology behind psychology, it's actually psychologies, none of them agree so there are different, over 100 psychologies, and each one of them have a theology and it's important that we as believers understand the theology behind that and it's different from a theology that we find in Scripture. So it was one of the best conferences we had, just for people to realize, you know, usually people say, "What do you do with mental issues? Or when people have these strange and wonderful things?" And it was just a great way of putting it in perspective so that was a great conference we had. He's a great guy.

Then we have the counseling center. We have resident babies. I don't have the picture here. We ordered some little babies, plastic babies, in all the different stages that when we go to a mall or we are at a conference, people can actually hold it and it's quite incredible to see the response. So this is the actual size of a baby at 12 weeks. It's wonderful to just see the response of people.

So we have the Strengthening Counseling Center and you can read about that on our website. There is our Crisis Pregnancy Center. We have been given this 3D scanning machine. We were on holiday down in East London and we were sitting around a pool and a doctor came, a gynecologist, and we shared with her what we were doing in our church and she said, "Well, I have a 3D scan. If you know of anyone that wants it, you can have it." And so there it is and it was delivered and we have the bed and we've had already a few ladies come in for scans, and the purpose of that is to show them the heartbeat. So if anyone comes in wanting to abort, we show them the heartbeat and that, of course, brings a whole new dimension. Here is a human being that is alive. And so we're very excited about that.

There is my counseling room. You'll see the desk in between and the writing and the board at the back. And so we're very excited about what's happening there.

That's our reception area. Which leads me to talk about the ACBC Africa. You know, it's absolutely incredible how God has used Dr. Mack. He was part of establishing NANC which has become ACBC here in the States, and he also used him to establish ACBC Africa. So ACBC, he was part of establishing it on two continents. That's just absolutely incredible if you think how God favored his ministry. So we, of course, are privileged to have him there and Association of Certified Biblical Counselors exists to encourage quality biblical counseling in Africa by training and certifying. So the SMTI that I showed you early on, that's the training and the certifying happens, of course, and you need a Fellow for that and Dr. Mack is the Fellow, to be able to not only train but help certify the people who go through the training.

The steering committee, there you have them. Again, Neil Henry. You have Ernie Baker on the front left. Heath Lambert in the center. They were in South Africa last year. And Dr. Mack and the rest of us. It was just a wonderful conference that we had.

So the first conference we had was Sex As God Intended and there were people that almost fell from their chairs when there was the word "sex" on the flier, and it's like why would you do that? God created it. God made it and as believers, we need to be able to speak about it confidently, this is the right way, or we need to allow the world to train our children how to do it not in the way that God intended for it to happen. So that was the flier and we had about 220 people attend that conference and we have various road trips. We still have road trips on this topic. Pornography is a huge issue in Africa.

And so that was a great conference. There is Dr. Mack opening the conference. Then we had one in Cape Town, also Sex As God Intended, and there we were all enjoying the

most beautiful western Cape, which is a part of South Africa. We were down in Port Elizabeth.

Now, I spoke about a divided community or a divided culture. You have many black folk living in townships and you have colored folk living in townships and you have Indian people living in townships, and so we went into a township where we had the Sex As God Intended conference.

Then I mentioned earlier about the conference with Heath and Ernie. We had that conference last year and that was a great success. There is ???. He has done so much for biblical counseling, bringing the old school and the new school together, just ministering and a great encouragement for us. They've just assisted us so much in establishing biblical counseling in Africa.

There's Ernie. And this was our last conference we had. We had this in August, Racism: When Color Divides. In our country, it's a problem. It's also a problem in your country and also a problem in the rest of the world, and so we had this conference and it was great. It was wonderful.

Now we've had many road trips to speak about this. This is the Free Reformed Church. It's got Dutch missionaries came to South Africa and they established that church and so we have very good connections with them. There I'm teaching. There's the guys. These are all pastors.

Then at that conference, we had Charles Ware speak and that was just a great encouragement. It was just wonderful. He's from Crossroads Bible College and he was a great encouragement. There he is sharing with some pastors. That's our auditorium on the inside. It's not as beautiful as yours.

Then Vanessa Allen. She spoke at the ladies' conference but that was wild. Look at that. And there was a lot of African singing going on. It was local, you know, it was just wonderful and she did such a good job with that.

There is Dr. Charles. There is the whole family. They all arrived and there's little Thomas-Wayne standing in front of us. That was the conference.

Then, of course, when we have visitors, we take them to a wonderful place called Kruger. We take them on a safari and I know you want to see, you came for these pictures, okay? So this is Kruger. We take them on a safari. That's the river and that's the kind of view you have from the vehicles. It's just fantastic. It's wonderful.

There is a giraffe. Buffalo. There's Jack now with his rifle. Those are the huts we stay in. It's really wonderful. Zebra.

This coming year, we are going to have two ACBC conferences in South Africa. On the 9th of August, we're going to have Mothering God's Way, and that's women's day in South

Africa so we are going to have speakers speaking on mothering, and then the next day, it's going to be Fathering God's Way. So please pray for these conferences.

Then in October, we're going to have Ted and Margy Tripp here. We're going to do a conference: Your Family God's Way. From the 24th of October to the 27th, and I think some of you might be joining us. I hope that's a possibility.

Yeah, I think you have a great need of seeing the animals, but we have a greater need of your assistance, so if you want to come and assist and see animals, we would love you to come and help us put the conference together, help with all the detail of that. I know the elders need to discuss that. I'm just extending an invitation.

Heartbeat Pregnancy Counseling Care Center, as I've mentioned earlier, is also joined to our counseling center and this is Nadia and she's just a great godly girl that is running with this ministry. I'm leaving some pamphlets for you to have a look at that and so we can pray for her. We are actually in the process of joining up with a ministry here called Healing Hearts. I don't know if you are aware of Healing Hearts. So we are going to work together so they're going to do Healing Hearts training online and we will also present some conferences. There is no point in reinventing the wheel. So please pray for Nadia.

And I've shown you this before. These are the counseling rooms. There are our babies, our resident babies, and they are so cute. So we ordered those from the States. Then, of course, always give an opportunity to share about life and people share their stories when we exhibit these.

That was a conference we had at the beginning of the year, how to do crisis pregnancy counseling. So it was a conference on a biblical counseling approach. There is no biblical counseling approach to crisis pregnancy counseling. It's all heavily psychologized so we are really taking the lead in this so please pray for us as we will have to contextualize the Healing Hearts information for an African context.

We had a jumble sale. Do you have jumble sales? No, you have garage sales here. We have jumble sales to get money for the counseling center and, yeah, and then there is Lynnwood Baptist church. Currently on a Wednesday evening, we're doing Dr. Mack's book "Anger and Stress Management," so what we've done is he presents the book or he talks on each chapter, and we opened it for the public and we had 9 folk come in. And of course, that feeds into the counseling center so it's just a great opportunity for us to give hope to people who are struggling with things like anger and stress.

That's the end of that. Any questions?

Major challenges. I think when it comes to the biblical counseling in South Africa, there is animosity towards it even from Bible believing churches. You know, it's okay to use a professional Bible for my doctrine but it's not sufficient to use it for the way God wants me to live. So that's a battle that we are facing, but God's in the business of using his word to convince people.

But that's about it. We don't really have challenges. I mean, I know we live in Africa and from time to time people say to me, "I can't believe you left the States to go to Africa." But we are not, I mean, as you can see, we are still in one piece and we are healthy and we are ministering in a beautiful city. We have a house with running water and so we don't have any of those challenges.

L., anything that you think to add to challenges?

("I just think on a church level, we've come ?? We are grateful for some people that God brought in and how God is building the church... atmosphere of the church and so we are very grateful for that.")

Yeah, so I think that's an encouragement for anyone when you build a ministry. Imagine Paul going to Rome, there are a few people in the church, having to establish in truth and "Thus says the Lord," I mean, there is a reaction to these things. And I think personally, sometimes that gets a bit overwhelming that you have people who preach well but they don't support your approach to dealing with the difficulty people face in their own lives. That's hard.

So we do get tired. We have some health issues. We both had typhoid the beginning of the year, which is nasty. It's not a nice thing to have. And so medically we've had quite a few things this year. They discovered that I have a disease called Goutieres disease. That's got nothing to do with gout. It's a genetic disease that my body doesn't produce enzymes to break down carbohydrates and so I have an enlarged spleen and enlarged liver and then I get shingles every month and a half. So at least they diagnosed that. There is treatment available but it's \$200,000 and it has only got a 30% success rate. Then part of that was that I was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver because that's caused by that. But all of that is used by God and he is good. So there are times when I really have to take a day off and just lay down and sleep, and then we can continue again.

But we are not complaining. I mean, we are so blessed. You know the joy of seeing people grow, the joy of seeing people take the word of God and they believe it and they love it and they grow in the knowledge and they taste that the Lord is good, that is wonderful. I mean, that's a great joy.

("I think another challenge is ... While he's very wise.... It's a challenge because there aren't men in the church right now who can come in and serve as elders so it means a lot falls on Sybrand , so please pray that God brings up elders in our church.")

Yeah, we have five men that we train. They're not there yet but we are very thankful for them. Then, of course, the future of biblical counseling. In order for biblical counseling to thrive, you need a Fellow. What's another word for a Fellow? How do I describe that to you, to this audience? A supervisor. And so Dr. Mack has been the Fellow for many guys who are doing their certification but he runs out of steam and so we need to think through how to get another Fellow in South Africa so that the biblical counseling can continue.

We don't have that and so if you could pray for us, we need to make a decision to do some studies at Southern and so that I can do the Doctorate and then I'll be a Fellow at the end of that. But please pray for that, just for wisdom. You can see we have a lot on our plate but we have that need, we need to work a way out for a Fellow to be established in South Africa and many others in the different cities of South Africa.

When it comes to our children, we are blessed. We've got 2 vipers, that are just absolutely wonderful. Yeah, we are very blessed with that.

Anything else? Any other questions? Yes?

(??) It's a very complex question to answer but it's a very good question. We have 11 tribes, 11 official languages in our country and many of these folk live in poverty and they have many children, and so there's a tradition in South Africa that if a young lady has a child, the mother raises the child, okay? There are a lot of births out of wedlock but among the poorer black folk, there is not much abortion but among professional blacks, you have that where, "I need a career. I need to make a name for myself. I need to establish. I don't want to be poor." So they're moving out of those cultures. This will be the first generation after apartheid, of folk that can actually go to university and study, and so there's a lot of abortion happening in that group and among the white folk. But we have many people in our country so, obviously, there is a lot of abortion taking place.

The pregnancy care center has joined up with Josh Mack. He's also one of your missionaries, I think, with their baby house so if we get a girl in and she wants to get an abortion, we're going to encourage her to have the baby and give it up for adoption. So we are starting to work together on that.

But it's a very complex question that you're asking and whenever people come to South Africa, we just say it's complex and they ask questions and you go describing, there are different layers in our culture of understanding these things, but generally poorer black folk don't abort their children, they give it to what's called a gogo, to a grandmother, and they would take care of the children but, of course, then they are raised in great poverty. And so you have liberals say, "You see, it's better to have an abortion. Do you want a child to grow up in such a way? In such poverty?" And of course, that's growing as well. You know, there are people that this is going to make life easier if I have an abortion. So that is happening.

How would you answer that question? I think that's...

("I think there is a lot ... I mean, it's legal obviously....")

Good. Jack?

("I was going to ask you, one of the things I've enjoyed listening is you talk about stories of people that God has used obviously in biblical counseling to make dramatic changes.

Is there a story that comes to your mind of somebody that you've seen God work in their lives in a great way?")

Sure. I'm going to talk on the counseling perspective. Beth and I, we had a couple that came to our church. They came to our church and after a while we got an email from them saying could they meet with us. They have a son who is 14 years old and they had dinner and this boy said to his dad – now we have security gates inside our homes between the bedroom and the lounge. And he said, "Dad, you're going to come home and you're going to see me hanging from there." And so we started meeting with this couple and we don't counsel the kids first, we counsel the parents, and the story is that at the age of 4, the boy went onto Ritalin, he started seeing a psychiatrist at the age of 8, medication, and he's 13 and he doesn't want to live. He started counseling with his parents and in the counseling, it came out that it's a very legalistic family; it's a very everything needs to be done perfectly and the expectation is so high for the children. And so we've counseled them for about 9 sessions now and there has just been a turnaround in the parents and only God that can do that.

So we were counseling and the wife was crying and she said, "I'm not loved. My husband is not interested in me. It's a war zone at home." And he was making notes and I said, "Why are you making notes?" He said, "Because I want to defend each of her statements." He wants to beat up with words and he said, "We don't have problems in our marriage." And he left and I held his feet to the fire and I said to him, "You're going to destroy your family." And that Monday evening, they had a huge fight and the Lord really worked in his heart and he, then, did all his homework. He didn't do any homework while we met, and one night he went through everything and the next morning he was there exhausted but he surrendered. He said, "I cannot deny this anymore."

So we've seen this family and just to encourage you to think through your family, think through how you raise your family, when your children think about you, what is the picture they see. It's not that the parents are to blame for this child's difficulty, but they created the soil in which this child is growing up. So that was a great encouragement and remind me of it, I'm on the spot here...

(?) Yeah, that was interesting. I got a phone call from a pastor and he said, "My son came home and told me he's homosexual and can you please counsel him?" He came to see me. We had 4 sessions, this is about 3 years ago, 4 years ago, and he insisted that he could retain the friendships and I said, "No, you cannot retain those friendships. You have to break them." He walked out of the counseling room and then about a year later, his dad was killed. His dad was a pastor, on his way to work he was killed and I called this young man and I said, "I'm sorry to hear about your loss," and that was the end of it.

Now three months later at one evening service, we came to the church and he was standing there just absolutely broken and he said, "I can't run anymore." And we started counseling him, this is over a period of about 2 ½ years, and just the wonderful change in this young man's life and he's getting married in February and it's just incredible to see how God worked in his life and in his family's life. His whole family joined our church

because they've seen God's word work in their son's life. That was a great encouragement and we have many more of those.

But it's wonderful, the word of God, able to teach us, to reprove us, to correct us, to train us. You know, and that is what we're busy with, that we believe that the word of God is sufficient for these things and especially in an African context where it is complex. I see Dave, you there as well. I mean, you know what I'm talking about. They were missionaries still with BMW. They're also going to South Africa to work there. And yeah, I would say that has been some of the highlights of our counseling ministry.