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NEPAL

Missions Trip

November 26th - December 4th 2017





“...Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine”. 2Tim 4:2

“And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” - 2Tim 2:2

Members of the FirstLove Missions team had a great opportunity and blessing to participate in a pastor's conference at Canaan Ministerial Training Center in Pokhara, Nepal. Pastor Samuel Rai invited the team to teach on the Doctrines of Grace, and distribute literature to help the brethren in Nepal. Pastor Joe Jacowitz, Pastor Paul Nelson, Deacon Randy Evans, Elder Tom Smith and his wife Margaret, were joined by Pastor John Waldrip and members of his church to minister at the conference.



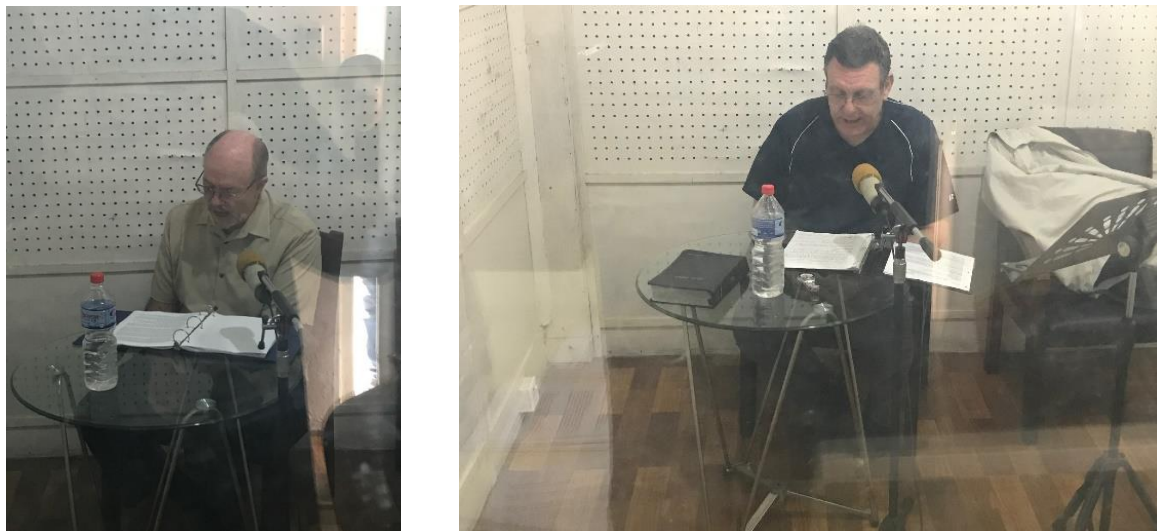
Pastor Joe, Pastor Paul and Randy safely arrived in Pokhara Sunday afternoon after 25 hours of travel on three different flights. Due to a mishap, Pastor Jacowitz's baggage was left behind in China, so he had no clothes to wear when he arrived. Thankfully, The Lord was gracious as Tom and Margaret were able to retrieve his luggage the next day and bring it with them on their flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara later Monday evening.

That Sunday, Pastor Rai picked the first arrivals up at the airport and took them to the Hotel Meera. At only \$25 a night, which included breakfast, the rooms were very reasonably priced. This particular area is generally safe, with the exception of some bombings occurring in the countryside in response to the current elections being held.

That evening, the team ate dinner together with Dr. Rai and his wife as they discussed the preaching schedule. Joe, Paul, and Randy were scheduled to preach that first Monday to the 21 current ministerial students at the seminary. Tuesday would begin the three-day conference celebrating 25 years of ministry in Nepal. Pastors Joe, John, and Paul would inevitably preach at least once a day over the duration of the conference. Randy was assigned to preach two times, but was surprised that he was scheduled to preach three times, so everyone was up at 4am preparing messages with no electricity (power outage). It is a busy schedule, but what a privilege to be part of such a great work of God.



Monday morning, the team rose up early and began the day with a prayer. Dr. Rai took us to the Ministerial Training Center where Pastor Joe, Paul and Randy preached to the ministerial students. There were also 14 young women who attended and sang with tremendous enthusiasm.



Afterwards, Joe, Paul, and Randy each recorded a gospel message to be aired on Pokhara radio in English. These messages will be on the local radio soon. Dr. Rai broadcasts 3 hours of English preaching each week (in addition to his normal Nepali programming). We had very good fellowship with the teachers and students of the ministerial training center. May God be glorified, and raise these men up to spread the gospel throughout Nepal and neighboring countries.

Tom and Margaret Smith had arrived in Kathmandu on Monday and stayed in a local hotel near the airport. They were able to get an early flight on Tuesday to Pokhara and

eventually arrived at the hotel on Tuesday morning. Pastor Joe was happy to see them, as well as his luggage!

Tuesday morning, before leaving for the conference, Pastor Paul and Brother Randy walked the streets of Pokhara, handing out the gospel of John (in Nepalese) to various people. The Nepali people are very respectful and will not turn down a gift. Dr. Rai had recently printed 100,000 copies of the gospel of John, and 10,000 copies of the NT for evangelism. Brother Tom was in a local shop and told the clerk that he was here for a Bible conference. The young man asked what the Bible taught. Tom was then able to share the Gospel and leave him and his father with a copy of the Gospel of John.

NOTE: Only just recently, the Nepali parliament passed a law banning all evangelism in Nepal. The law includes five years imprisonment if caught and convicted. Dr. Rai is adamant that it will not affect him, he will keep on preaching. He informed the team that if the authorities catch them that they will simply be deported – but, should ask to stay at least until the end of the conference. Dr. Rai is doing all he can to repeal the new law. He recently went to London and recruited 5 members of the British Parliament to put pressure on the Nepali government. At this time, he is seeking to get more help from the USA. Though he does not yet know how much the new law may affect the ministry, we know that this situation must be brought to our Heavenly Father with fervent prayer.

It is currently election time in Nepal and some of the Hindu population want to cause problems will participate in bombings to sway the elections. Recently in Pokhara, Hindu terrorists blew up a Catholic church which killed 13 people. No arrests were made. Dr. Rai led a coalition of thousands of people to protest the way the government handled the situation. He told the authorities that if they did not arrest the perpetrators and bring justice in one week, it would be obvious that the government was behind it, and that he is going to make it an international issue. They could not arrest him because of the thousands of people. Later he learned that there had been a “hit” put out on him and was thus forced to flee to Kathmandu. Within a week the perpetrators were arrested, imprisoned, and are now awaiting trial. It eventually became safe for Dr. Rai to return to Pokhara.





The ministerial conference began on Tuesday afternoon. It's about a 20 minute drive to the ministerial training center, very bumpy and constant dodging of motorbikes. The marked lanes are simply suggestions, people are weaving and going the wrong direction all the time. Dr. Rai indicated that *"in Nepal, they don't drive by law, but only by grace."* He has a good sense of humor. Brother Tom went to the conference on Tuesday riding on the back of a motorbike.



There was a total of 360 registered conference attendees. Of the attendees, approximately 70% were pastors. People had come from all over Nepal, as well as a number of other countries. Some traveled six days to get to the conference, some walked for three days, and some rode their motorbike 600 miles. The ministerial academy building where the conference was held was overflowing to such an extent that a majority of the attendees had to listen from outside the building.



Pastor Joe started the conference with an overview of the doctrines of grace and then he preached on the perseverance of the saints. Randy followed up on the same subject, preaching out of Jude. Dr. John Waldrup made some introductory comments out of 1 Thessalonians. The pastors and other Christians in attendance were eager to learn. There were three excellent translators. Pastor Paul met Simon, one of the translators, who had translated his own Presuppositional Apologetics book and A.W Pink's Sovereignty of God. He said God had opened his eyes to the doctrines of grace through translating these books, which completely changed his life. I also was able to meet the man who translated Dr. Downing's Catechism on Biblical Doctrine. He is now currently working on translating the 3rd volume of the Bible Survey. The third translator was "Tek" (from India), who translated Randy's and Pastor Joe's messages. Tek happens to be the dear brother who had translated all of our messages the previous year.

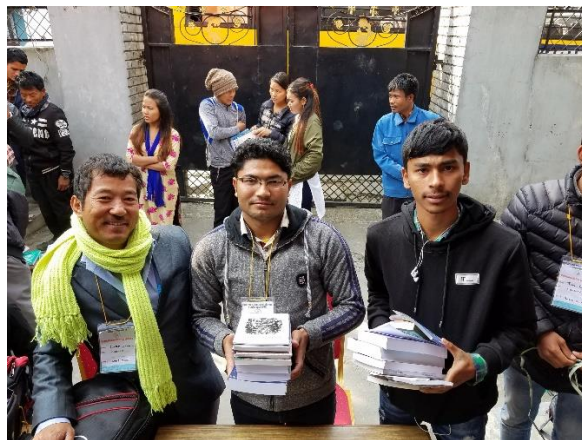


Wednesday was the second day of the conference. The attendance grew to well over 300. The auditorium was now full and the crowd overflowed outside the building. Loud speakers were placed outside for the overflow area. Not only was the atmosphere quite joyful and jubilant, the singing was spontaneous! Pastor Paul preached twice on effectual calling (Acts 16:13-15 and John 6:44). Elder Tom Smith preached twice on Election and Deacon Randy preached on the Sovereignty of God. There was freedom to preach and the interpreters carried the spirit of the messages.



Dr. Rai held up and advertised both the Catechism and Presuppositional books (translated last year) to the pastors, and encouraged them to read them. We ate lunch in Dr. Rai's office again. He is a man of singular vision. He thinks "big." He very frequently quotes William Carey, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God." He now wants to elevate the training of pastors and offer bachelors, masters, and Ph.D. degrees. He developed a model for doing this with Bro. Tek in northern India where they would send a qualified teacher to teach one or more subjects for an intensive 1-2 weeks, then give, discuss, check, and grade assignments. Students study and do assignments for 3-4 months. Repeat process. A bachelor's degree will take 4 years. Almost all the students will be pastors with jobs and unable to leave their congregations. The teachers will be supplied from Metropolitan Tabernacle, FirstLove Missions, Free Grace Bible Institute, as well native pastors. Dr. Rai wants FirstLove to help develop the curriculum. He announced this to the conference, and the pastors were thrilled and clapped. He wants to expand his current training of about 20-30 students per year to 100 with this program. Currently the students are provided room and board, where they immerse themselves in study for 10 months. This is too expensive and does not address the problem of training pastors who cannot leave their congregations. Please pray for this endeavor; it is in the planning stage. The first order of business for Dr. Rai is to build a library of about "10,000 good books." Firstlove Missions has created an account "Nepal Minister's Book Fund" to help Dr. Rai build this library.

There is currently a hunger among the pastors for higher education, to be well grounded in doctrine. They want to move from milk to meat. One influential pastor told me, "we need to be taught the doctrines of grace again, and again, and again".



Pastor Joe was busy identifying pastors who could speak English so he could give them a package of English books. Quite a number of them could speak English. Everyone was thrilled to receive good books. A small book entitled *The Doctrines of Grace* by Duane Spencer translated into Nepali was given to all the attendees. Pastor Rai exhorted the pastors, "If you believe in the sovereignty of God, why do you ask God to do something for you, rather than asking God for grace to do something for Him."



Before arriving in Nepal, Margaret Smith had not been given any information on what her duties would be. Dr. Rai had scheduled her to minister to the ladies in the afternoon sessions on Tuesday, and again on Wednesday. She was given two hours during the afternoons to meet separately with the ladies in attendance. Monica Melendez and Pam Waldrup, who came with Pastor John Waldrup, also helped in teaching the ladies. They spoke to a group of about 50-60 women. Margaret and Monica gave their testimonies and tried to be encouraging and redemptive with the women as to how God worked in their lives to bring them to their husbands. Margaret also spoke about the blessing of children and grandchildren. They shared about their churches and how the Lord is the same everywhere - we just do church in a different language! Margaret also spent some time talking about being a Titus 2 woman and made it appropriate to everyone from the young girls (late teens) to some women who were married and had children. The Lord blessed this ministry. The highlight was a Q & A where discussion was opened up to allow for any question they could think of. The questions ranged from keeping the Sabbath, to dating non-Christians, to dealing with unbelievers within your family. Many of the same issues we deal with in the United States. This was the first time that there had been time made in the schedule for ministry to the women. There will likely be future opportunities to minister to these dear ladies at future conferences.

At the end of the day there was a Q & A period which Dr. Rai moderated. We were surprised by the level of their biblical knowledge. They were astute, and their questions revealed a significant level of scriptural understanding. We certainly do not need to simplify the gospel ("dumb it down") for third world countries!

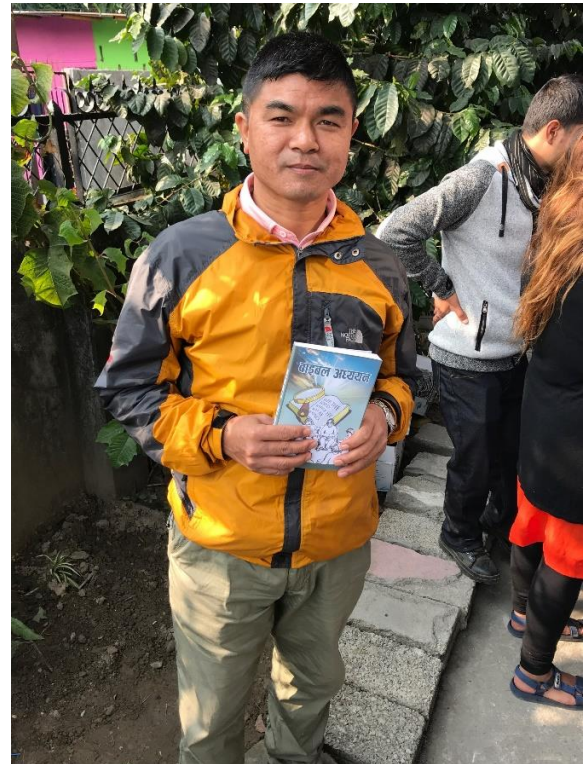
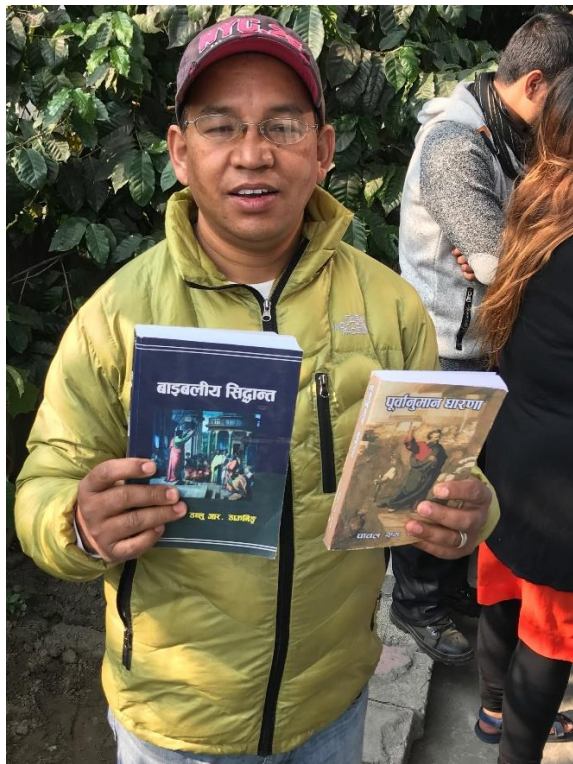


On Thursday morning, the third day of the conference, Dr. John Waldrup continued his preaching on 1 Thessalonians and Pastor Joe continued on Perseverance of the Saints. Pastor Paul followed with a message entitled "Not by the Will of Man (John 1:11-13)". All the messages were well received. The audience applauds after every message, as their custom is. After lunch, Samuel Rai gave a great message on the orderly worship of God. He preached in Nepali and sprinkled in a little bit of English. Even though he preached in Nepali, we all completely understood the message. Tom Smith finished the preaching with a message on practical applications and the sovereignty of God. Margaret, Pam and Monica continued to minister to the ladies in the afternoon. Then followed the Q & A time. Again, difficult questions were asked. We answered the best we could. All in all, another great day.

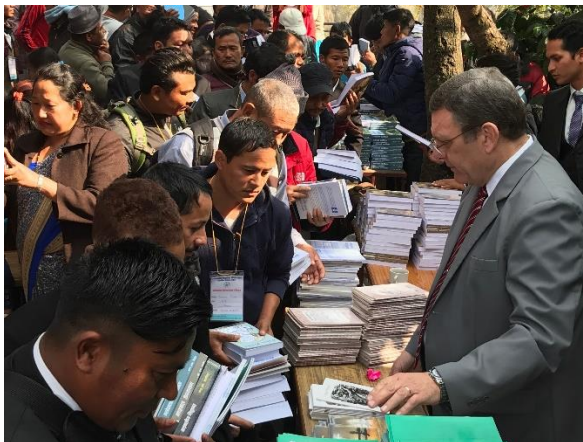
NOTE: Every day the power went out for a while. A generator starts to keep the lights and sound system going. Despite the diesel fumes in the room, we kept on preaching, singing and worshipping God.



On Friday morning, we had the privilege of attending and participating in the graduation service for pastors and young ladies from the Canaan Ministerial Academy for men and the Deborah Bible Training Center for ladies. The young men get one year of training to be pastors, and the ladies receive training in being a Christian women and mothers, including practical areas such as sewing.



The last day of the conference was on Friday and lasted until noon. Three more messages were preached Friday morning (Pastor Joe, Pastor John and Pastor Rai). Pastor Joe spoke on various aspects of the doctrines of grace. Pastor Rai spoke on worship, using Peter Master's book on *Worship in the Melting Pot* as a basis. All attendees received a copy of this book which he had translated into Nepalese



Then the books were distributed. What a blessing to see the long line and excitement of these Christian men and women to receive these books translated into Nepalese! Piles of books were stacked up on tables and the line was full of eager pastors to get their armful of books. The main books distributed were the following: A.W Pink's *Sovereignty of God*, Dr. Downing's *How to Study the Bible* and *A Catechism on Biblical Doctrine*, Peter Master's *Worship in the Melting Pot*, and Pastor Nelson's *Presuppositional Apologetics* book. The Bible Survey volumes are still being translated and will be printed in the near future. Mitra, the pastor that took over for Dr. Rai at Canaan Baptist Church, said to Pastor Paul, "You teach at a higher level, we need more teaching at a higher level."



It was sad to leave the men and women. All we talked to were greatly blessed by the conference, both the teaching and fellowship.



That afternoon, Pastor Rai gave us a tour of the orphanage where currently 14 young men are being housed and educated, including the gospel and biblical teaching. The orphanage has recently been moved to the ministerial training facility due to lack of funds. He houses and educates, including gospel and biblical teaching, 14 orphans at a total cost of \$16,000/year.



We also toured the training center where the young men and ladies are housed and taught. The training center provides all room and board, and training at no cost to those attending. He also took us by the printing facility, where Bibles and Christian books are printed in Nepalese.



Dr. Rai then took us to see the new school he built in the “untouchable” district on the outskirts of Pokhara. It is a modern facility that has the capacity to house 1000 students (K-12). Currently there are 400 students and the enrollment is rapidly increasing. He charges a small tuition for families of some income, but the “untouchables” are given free tuition. The tour was very impressive - a computer room, a laptop room, a music room, and a science room - all very spacious.



On Saturday, the day after the conference, the FirstLove team attended Canaan Baptist Church for worship. Saturday is the day of worship in Nepal due to an anti-Christian law outlawing worship on Sunday. We were asked to take off our shoes to show respect for the house of God. The ladies wore head coverings and sat on one side of the auditorium, the men on the other. Pastor Joe preached on the righteousness of Christ. Randy, Tom and Paul gave short testimonies to the congregation. The singing was fantastic as usual. A blessed time of worship.



Saturday evening, Dr. Rai treated us to Chinese food. We had some good fellowship and a bit of fun. We spent some more time discussing how to implement a bachelor and master theological degree program. It was agreed that these degrees must place an emphasis on original languages.



Paul, Randy, Tom and Margaret spent time on Sunday with Pastor Rai, as he took us into the hills of the countryside to get a better view of the majestic Himalayas. We spent time with Pastor Rai discussing establishment of a theological school, and future conferences. It appears best to concentrate on the book ministry, and training local men to be pastors, evangelists and church planters to help the other churches throughout Nepal. A matter for prayer and seeking God's guidance and wisdom for this ministry.



Monday morning Tom, Margaret, Paul, and Randy rented bikes to do a little exploring in Pokhara. They rode with the local traffic to visit a waterfall – riding was a bit challenging. Pastor Joe, Margaret and Tom left Nepal on Monday. Randy and Paul stayed a few extra days to do more sightseeing.

Here are matters for prayer. There are three more opportunities that FirstLove Missions is now considering and planning:

(1) One of the prominent pastors we met at the conference was Bikram Barnabas Yekten. He was so excited about the doctrines of grace being preached. He came from eastern Nepal at the base of Mt. Everest. He is thoroughly a reformed Baptist and is currently pastoring 16 churches. He is president of the Biblical Baptist College and Seminary. He is also vice president of The Christian Society, a society that spans some 20 districts in Nepal, 1300 churches, and 600,000 Christians. He invited FirstLove for a conference to teach the doctrines of grace. Bikram said he would get 500 pastors to attend. We have already considering with Pastor Rai to do two conferences next year, one in Pokhara and one in eastern Nepal north of Kathmandu with Bikram.

(2) Kiran Mohote Tek (the precious brother and translator) lives in Nagaland which is in northern India. He is teaching 17 students in collaboration with Dr. Rai. The students have nearly completed their work and will shortly be graduating. This is the model program mentioned earlier for the Bachelor and Master programs that Dr. Rai is very serious about. Tek wants us to come out and do a conference as well. This will be very difficult since it is over three days travel from the nearest airport.

(3) Establishment of a theological school to train Pastors. This is a tremendous opportunity to provide training and books that will have tremendous impact on Nepal and surrounding areas for the spread of the gospel, building up of the church, and bringing God all the glory. This will be the long-term focus of future planning for FirstLove's ministry in Nepal.

Another important thing to pray about is Dr. Rai's upcoming visit to the United Nations in New York. He was able to acquire a journalist pass to enter the UN. There, he is going to lobby UN diplomats to put pressure on the Nepali government to repeal the new law banning all Christian evangelism and conversion in Nepal. He is very concerned about

what will happen if this law is not repealed. It could be very serious. We need to pray for those in authority.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

I Timothy 2:1-4

Thank you for your prayers for FirstLove Missions.

Thomas Smith
Missionary, Regional Manager
FirstLove Missions

How you can help:

1. Funds are needed to increase the number of pastors to train in the pastor's college, and to translate more FirstLove Publications titles into Nepalese for distribution among pastors, Christians, and unsaved people. We also need funds to print more titles in English – which are waiting to be printed in India. We have also received the Macedonian call from our sister churches in Nigeria to provide thousands to books for people who have no Christian books to teach them. We plan to return to the Philippines in April and to Nigeria in June, but as of now we have few books to bring with us for distribution there.
2. We need used and new Christian reference books to donate to libraries, bible colleges, churches and pastors. FirstLove Missions has created the College and Minister's Book Fund for this purpose.

If you want to make a donation please make your check payable and mail to:
FirstLove Missions
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If you want to send books, please mail them to:
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May the Lord bless you,

Pastor Joe Jacowitz
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