



**TIMOTHY**  
LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM

# PARTNERING IN MISSION

## RAISE UP GLOBAL MINISTRIES CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY RESONATE GLOBAL MISSION

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Sept 25, 2020

Dear Friends,

Warm greetings on this beautiful fall day. A glance outside my office window captures the changing of the seasons. Such an array of colour!

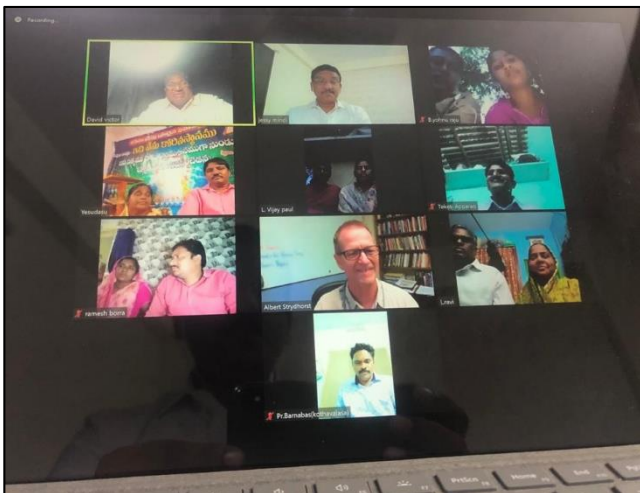
I'm reminded of God's words of promise right after the pandemic waters of Genesis 7:

"As long as the earth endures,  
seedtime and harvest,  
cold and heat,  
summer and winter,  
day and night  
will never cease."

God's faithfulness is our hope in these times of fear and uncertainty.

The COVID-19 pandemic certainly upended the activities of TLT around the world. Almost all TLT training for church leaders takes place in small-group, in-person workshops. In the last six months of 2019, about two hundred workshops were held around the world. In the first six months of 2020, this number was less than one hundred. April through June saw almost no in-person trainings.

In some places, where internet technology was accessible, some groups hopped on to online platforms like *Zoom* or *Google Meet*. In addition to others, a group with [Hindustan Bible Institute](#) in India, another with [Centro de Entrenamiento a las Naciones](#) in Colombia, and [Resonate Global Mission](#) in Japan held trainings this way.

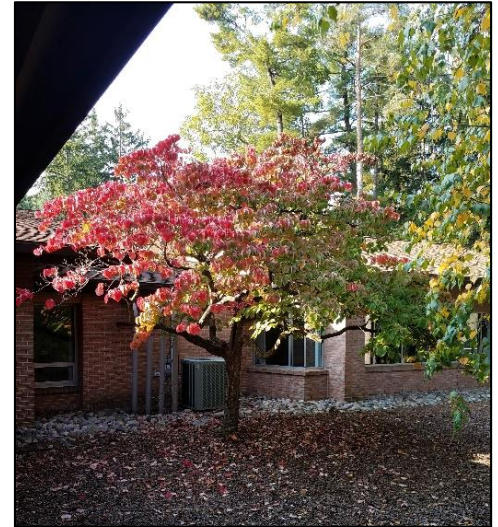


Interestingly, holding trainings online allows participants from various countries and regions to be together, virtually. I was able to participate this way in a training in India with [Harvest Mission](#) in August.

But it is challenging. Many places around the world don't have reliable internet access. It is difficult to "read a room." Spontaneous discussions are infrequent, and usually awkward. Too many people have dogs.

However, a great deal of training in April-June 2020 did take place with the TLT manual "**Loving Your Neighbor in the COVID-19 Pandemic.**" You may recall from my last letter in May, that this was a manual we developed quickly in April to help groups around the world to respond to the pandemic: *"In four lessons the manual highlights the value of all human life, the reality of pain and sickness, practical ways of preventing and responding to COVID-19, and a brief study of the parable of the Good Samaritan."*

Most of the training with this manual took place in home-studies, but some also in socially-distanced groups, online, WhatsApp, YouTube, and by radio. Within weeks of sending out the manual, it had been translated



multiple times; by the end of August, it was in twenty-three languages. We were able to help thirteen ministry partners from around the world with modest grants of about \$500/each for printing and distribution.



One of our partners in Peru wrote, “Over 1,500 people were impacted after church leaders studied and shared the manual. Individuals were reached through distribution of food, organizing street sanitation, love offerings of funds, delivering medications, and more.”

But we also heard from church leaders that additional challenges were cropping up during this time. Many people were very lonely and anxious. Abuse was being reported or suspected within homes where people were confined by stay-at-

home orders. One pastor from Egypt wrote, “I am ... seeing signs of fatigue and a need for forgiveness as people feel judged and misunderstood and hurt as a result of the social distancing that some are trying to practice, and others are not feeling the same need for. ...”

With this need in mind, we developed an additional lesson of four pages that we are *almost* ready to send to everyone who received the original manual. Here’s a snippet of the lesson to give an idea of it’s content and style.

<b>4. God’s Loving Peace: He Calms Our Troubled Hearts</b>		
a. Read <b>Psalm 142:1-2</b> . <i>What does the person in this psalm bring to God? What can you bring to God from your own life?</i>		
b. Suffering involves loss. We lose control, dignity, positions, loved ones, jobs, dreams, and more. <i>What have you lost during your time of difficulty or dark valley?</i>		
c. People respond to suffering in many different ways. Circle words you may feel. What other emotions do you feel? You may write them in the spaces below.		
Anger	Blame	Need to talk
Fear	Fatigue (tiredness)	Feel lost

We are also preparing this lesson in an interactive video format that can be shared on WhatsApp and other social media platforms that are on peoples’ smartphones. Chances are that more people will complete this lesson off their phone than from a manual.

So you can see that while COVID-19 has upended our training activities around the world, we haven’t stopped. We’ve adjusted priorities, plans, and materials. We continue to serve the global church.

But it bears repeating: It is challenging. Thanks for your prayers and support as we meet these challenges by the grace of God.

With Love and Appreciation, *Albert and Carolyn Strydom*

**Family Update**

As of June, **Carolyn** is working 3-4 shifts a week with a home health-care agency, providing nursing care for those who are home-bound with long-term medical needs. **Jessica and Ian’s** plans to serve as teachers in a missionary-kids’ school in Central Asia were adjusted when visas to the country stopped being issued due to COVID-19. So since August they have been teaching their Central Asian classes online from Northwestern Ontario. They are hoping for visa and travel restrictions to be relaxed soon to allow their travel. **Johnny and Kristin** have moved to Ann Arbor, MI, where Johnny has started graduate studies in engineering at the University of Michigan. Kristin is currently interviewing for jobs in the area (prayers appreciated). **Andrea** is in her final year of nursing at Calvin, working part-time in a local hospital, and trying to plan a big event for the uncertain summer of 2021.