



PROJECT TIMOTHY

The church in parts of Africa has grown so quickly that finding enough preachers for local congregations is next to impossible. In India it isn't as difficult but some areas do not have regular training programs for pastors, so local churches don't have the teaching that they deserve. Baptist church leaders in areas of Africa and India where Global Interaction has ongoing relationships, have asked Australian Baptists to work with them in helping the situation.

Global Interaction has responded by establishing Project Timothy – an avenue by which Australian teachers and preachers work with African and Indian colleagues in a grass-roots level training program which empowers local pastors in leading and developing their churches. The aim is to train local leaders to teach their own pastors and evangelists using a curriculum that they themselves have developed.

Project Timothy is currently working in Zambia, Malawi and India. So far, 13 teachers from four Australian states have taught 24 subjects in Kabwe (Zambia) and Tukrajhar, Debitola and Baghpara (Assam, India) since Project Timothy began in 2012. This year a further six Australians will teach 12 subjects, including in a new location – Lilongwe (Malawi).

The normal teaching period is two weeks, teaching 20-30 hours each week. However, in Lilongwe, two participants, Gary Moore and Rod Macready, plan to spend eight weeks each, consecutively, at the Malawi Baptist Theological Seminary.

They will teach subjects in the diploma and degree programs.

Gary Moore from Wellington, NSW has been to India three times and once to Zambia. He says, "Through my involvement in Project Timothy I have been stretched physically, emotionally and spiritually, learning to rely more on God in often remote and basic conditions. Sometimes being on my own in a foreign culture has helped me to critique my own culture and appreciate others."

"The generosity of those we go to serve has constantly astounded me, giving out of their limited resources to ensure our visits go well. My Christian walk and ministry has been greatly blessed through serving with program."

Melinda Cousins from South Australia reflected on her involvement with the pastor-students in her class in Kabwe (Zambia), "These pastors are also teachers. They are an incredibly inspiring group! They are all bi-vocational, leading churches as well as managing crops or shops. Most have experienced significant loss and hardship in their lives. They minister in a context where 10-15% of adults are HIV positive and 25% of people are affected by malaria each year."

"They are all incredibly eager to learn and did not take this opportunity for granted. They also taught me so much. I realise that if my interpretation of the Bible only 'works' in my comfortable, middle-class Western context, then it actually doesn't 'work' at all. I'm grateful for how my Zambian students challenged my thinking and teaching of the Bible, and for how much they inspired me with their passionate and persevering faith."

Perhaps you want to be involved in Project Timothy. Opportunities still exist for 2016 and more will be offered for 2017 and beyond.

Contact Roger Kemp (Global Consultant for Leadership Development) on rkemp@hotmail.net.au or 02 47511722