

Light
MINISTRIES INC.



**NEW PORTABLE
BAPTISTRIES**



**YOU GET A NEW
TROUGH
BAPTISTRY!**



**HERE IS WATER!
NOTHING HINDERING
US NOW.**

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS



Happiness or joy? Inside...or...out?

The American founding Fathers weren't just smart, they were wise.

Even at their relatively young ages (several were in their 30's & 40's), they knew that happiness was elusive and must be pursued. I like the word chased better. Most of us are in a chase that has lasted a lifetime and have only

**If it fades, it was
made.**

**Nothing man-made
lasts forever.**

briefly touched the “golden ring” of happiness. The gold ring seems to have been greased with the oil of elusiveness. Just when we grasp at it, it slips away.

And so it is with anything we can touch or feel. Anything **we** can **do** moves us from the faith realm of trust to the performance treadmill of works. And in most cases, the work required is exceedingly **hard**. The only thing harder than *pursuing* and *catching* happiness is *keeping* it for any extended period of time.

It seems to evaporate into thin air as quickly as the new car smell disappears with use and the arrival of the payment coupon book.

But instead of admitting that new cars don't remain new, we buy small pieces of plastic, impregnated with chemicals to trick our sense of smell. Maybe if the new car smell can trick my nostrils, my mind will believe I still have a new car.

It's exhausting, the games we play in order to be happy.

But, we all do it, don't we? More money, bigger house, lose a few pounds, find a new lover, boat, car, more toys....**exhausting**.

But, it is our right as Americans to pursue whatever we believe will make us happy. I truly appreciate the liberty!

I have pursued so many sources of happiness in my life. I have drunk from cracked cisterns in the desert of my performance, only to have the much needed cool drink turn to grit in my mouth.

And then, in my tiredness, I remember there is a gift available.

It can't be pursued, achieved or worked for. It *only* comes in gift form. It is the **grace-gift** of joy.

Don't get confused. Joy and happiness have little in common. Happiness is *external* in source and limited in scope. It comes from things/people/places on the outside and lasts only as long as those things/people/places continue to produce what we desired of them when we first *pursued* them. But once they are “caught,” the new car smell fades. And so does our happiness. Joy? Joy is *internal* in source and unlimited in scope. We don't pursue it, it is part of the grace-gift package that comes with the new life we find in Christ.

Joy is: an *inner settledness that God is able to sustain me internally regardless of what happens externally.*

Find the Father if you would have joy. The other stuff that brings happiness is but ashes and dust...ashes and dust.

Build



If you are going to gather to worship on the equator, you will need a roof over your head. Not even African's can endure the stifling equatorial sun. And, they won't think about sitting in the rain! Building is just a part of the job in missions.



Back to Africa

It's time!

Actually, it is way past time for me to be with our staff and partners in East Africa. Next month will mark one year since I set foot on the African continent. ***That is too long.***

I have worked hard during the pandemic to keep the support flowing to our pastors and staff. I have worn out my keyboard writing encouraging, correcting, reproving, and rebuking emails (II Tim. 4:2). But the pastors can't see my eyes, they can't hear my tone and inflection, and we can't embrace each other through this wonderful, but desperately inadequate tool of cyber-communication.

I have to go.

Many are doing well and their ministries are flourishing. You have read those reports in my former writings. You know, the ones of record-breaking

baptisms, construction projects being completed, and children being fed and ministered to? The reports that tugged at your hearts...*and your checkbooks?! Ahhh, don't ever forget the checkbooks. I certainly don't!*

But, there are other leaders who are struggling. They are tired. They are lonely. They are isolated and feel deserted. Their support arrives each month, but there are no hugs, no smiles, no words of encouragement or correction that comes with the money. *Money is a poor substitute for leadership.* It can provide the environment for training, but is powerless to train in and of itself. There is a collapsed, termite eaten "pole-barn" church in the Turkana desert (Northern Kenya) that has failed the small congregation of goat-herders. They are meeting under a tree. I need to go meet with them and tell them God has not forgotten them. There is a master church-planter in a witchcraft infested region who is daily fighting the powers of darkness and the resistance of religion (his village is headquarters to an American cult religion). He is tired. He's still doing the hard work of evangelism and discipleship, but he is tired. He needs encouragement, a good meal, and some fellowship with an understanding co-laborer (a new suit might not hurt either?!).

I will not get to visit every church or village, nor sit with every pastor or leader individually. I'll stay at least three weeks in Kenya, but our ministry sprawl has made it impossible to visit our entire ministry in one visit. But, I will maximize every day on the ground, look into as many of our leader's eyes as possible, and preach/teach at every opportunity given.

It is not me nor my "words of wisdom" they need. But, the One who sends me will give me the words our co-laborers need and the wisdom required for each meeting. ***Thank you for sending me!***

Your generosity helped us end 2020 in a stable financial position. While there were no especially large gifts that left us “flush with cash,” every bill is paid and every immediate need is met. The \$5,000 I have been requesting to finish furnishing the dormitory at Mt. Elgon was provided. All of our pastors received Christmas bonuses equal to one month of their normal support. As I write, the winter rains have stopped and construction is back in full swing on the new kitchen facility at the Mt. Elgon training center. We have begun to construct “trough” baptismal tanks made from water storage tanks (readily available in Kenya). This has made baptism safer (no wading through the snakes in the bush to get to the damned up stream/ditch). As a result, the numbers of baptisms reported are far ahead of what we saw at this time in 2020. Each baptism trough costs us roughly \$500. One partnering church has provided for two of these troughs. We need as many as we have churches! This is a great Kingdom investment. It is expensive for me to travel to and stay in Kenya. I hope you will allow this spoiled, rich American the comfort of a good hotel, a hot shower, fresh food, and safe transportation through your generous gifts. **Pray! God has plenty!** Perhaps He has deposited some of the funds needed for this list in your accounts?

KENYA WISH LIST

\$8,150 Mike’s return to Kenya (airfare, hotel, meals, transportation).

*NOTE: The next two items are for Pastor Christiano’s ministry on the Western border of Kenya (Kenyanayana) near Tanzania. Christiano is one of our brightest and boldest evangelist/preacher/pastor/church planter. He is one of those “all-stars” that comes along rarely in ministry. He can do it all. **And, he is doing it all.** I try to use Jesus’ parable of the steward when deciding where to invest the Father’s money. When I find a faithful steward, I trust him with more resources. Christiano is a faithful steward. God is at work in his ministry, we want to join God in His work!*

\$1,000 -Critical need-

Monthly budget for new training center in Kenyanayana.
(new training center for bush pastors/church planters led by Pastor Christiano).

\$14,000 Construct new worship center and children’s ministry building (on property we own) for Christiano’s home church in Kenyanayana.

\$500 (quarterly) Madame Rebecca’s medicine and doctor visits for her heart condition. Rebecca oversees all of our training and curriculum development for our six schools and feeding stations.

“...you should always pray and never give up.”

Jesus, Luke 18:1