



# RIVERS of JOY MINISTRIES

NEWSLETTER  
1 April 2016

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Dear Pastor

Greetings in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. I thank God for your life and commitment to this ministry and above all to God's service. Here is my latest Pastoral letter for you all. Please share it with your people. It is very important that your people can be blessed with these great teachings.

## **Important notice!**

As you are all well aware by now I have been very unwell since mid February. Though I am much better generally speaking now I am still undergoing hospital tests and may have to undergo an internal operation. Therefore for the moment all travels are cancelled but I am planning to start again in July with a visit to Malawi (Leadership training) and Mozambique/ The program of travels after that will be decided once my health situation has been cleared but I am hoping to see as many branches as possible in the second half of this year. Please keep me in your prayers.

## **The Word of God**

### **Mission accomplished!**

Since the beginning of time or in other words since Adam and Eve, our ancestors and forefather and foremother, committed the original sin and broke the law of God, God had devised a plan to rescue and save His children. The whole Bible talks and points to that plan and the many many references to Jesus and His mission are there to remind us that God had not forgotten us not had He abandoned us to our destiny and our death. But as the Bible says, in the fullness of time or in other words at the right time, Jesus came to save us. Our salvation however meant His suffering at the hands of vile men, His torture by wicked men and His final death on the cross.

This was in perfect fulfillment of all that the Bible had said through the centuries as we read in 1 Cor 15: 3-4 where Paul says, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> With Jesus coming to earth, with his suffering and death on the cross Scripture has been fulfilled! What this means, to put it very simply, is our freedom from sin and death and our salvation. We are being set free to enjoy eternal life with God in heaven! We are saved because of God's amazing grace and His incredible love for us!

## **School of leadership**

### **30 Things I've learned in 30 years of ministry**

It was 30 years ago that I began serving a small rural church in southern Indiana. I was so incredibly green then; I'm glad I didn't always realize it.

I loved those people in that church and, for some reason, they loved me too. I had to be one of the most inept pastors in history, but they just continued to show me grace and love me even more.

Three decades later, I reflect back on what I've learned in ministry. Some lessons came rather naturally; others were very painful.

- 1) God is always faithful. Always. Always. Always.
- 2) My family is my greatest gift beyond my salvation. I wish I always realized it.
- 3) I spent too much time worrying about things that I can't even remember today.
- 4) I took too many criticisms personally. Most critics weren't mad at me.
- 5) I always grow stronger when I spend time in the Word and in prayer.
- 6) My wife endured a lot in our ministry. I needed to minister to her more.
- 7) When I can laugh at myself, I am more effective in ministry.
- 8) I learned to be more compassionate through the deaths of my parents and grandson. I can now understand the pain many experience.
- 9) I am always hurt when I hold grudges.
- 10) I need to ask for forgiveness more quickly.
- 11) I need friends to share both the joys and the challenges of ministry.
- 12) I wish my sons had not seen my frustrations when I was a pastor.
- 13) Life is short. Live it totally for Him every moment.
- 14) Some of my most miserable days came when I grew jealous of others in ministry.
- 15) Some other miserable days came when I lived to please people rather than God.
- 16) Children are young but for a season. Some of my greatest joys have been with my three sons.
- 17) I'm not nearly as smart as I sometimes think I am.
- 18) I am always wiser when I listen to the wisdom of others.
- 19) The devil is always looking for a way to trap me (1 Tim. 3:7).
- 20) My success is not measured by the size of my church or the prestige of my organization.
- 21) I've had a lot of grace shown to me. I need to pass that gift forward more.
- 22) Some people who disagree with me have proved right.
- 23) I need to mentor more men.
- 24) I am rarely as diligent I should be sharing the gospel.
- 25) Every church has some really mean people. God has called me to love and serve them too.
- 26) I fight pride more often than I'd like to admit.
- 27) Some of my worst moments in ministry were when I lost my temper.
- 28) Encouragement works better than harsh words.

29) I need to read more.

30) My grandchildren are almost perfect.

God bless you all!

**Bishop Alex Tana**

*General Overseer*