

"Look to the fields. . ."

SHAD WILLIAMS EVANGELISTIC ASSOCIATION

"We Go To Them"

August 2023

PRESSING TOWARD THE GOALS

15 MILLION IN 2023 – 100 MILLION BY 2026

I know these numbers seem astronomical, and by some measure they may be. Admittedly, that is a lot of people praying to receive Jesus, and lot of harvest to reap, in a short period of time. But as lofty as these goals may appear, they are VERY realistic for two reasons. First, they are FAITH goals, trusting in the power of Almighty God for fulfilment. Second, they are based upon recent ministry results, as well as current activity. In July, 32 skilled evangelism teams in 7 countries (over 150 people) conducted 1,461 events in schools, markets, prisons, and film shows. They averaged preaching to 48,000 people PER DAY. Those who responded by asking Jesus into their hearts were 1,312,361. Thus far in 2023, the teams have conducted 11,000 events with 8,500,000 people praying to receive Christ. Is it possible to see that number rise to 15 million by the end of the year? It is still a big hill to climb, but knowing that with GOD, NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE, we are compelled to reach for it by faith.



A market meeting in Congo (DRC)

As of July 31, we have seen nearly 54 million people respond to the Gospel and are currently averaging 1.2 million per month. We expect that average to increase over the next couple of years, as the number of teams expand, enabling the ministry to conduct more events each month. Our goal and prayer,

therefore, is to add another 46 million names to the Book of Life over the next 40 months. Again, is it possible? YES! But, not because of our efforts or expertise. Not because of our methodology. Not because of "averages". When it happens, it will be because of GOD empowering HIS Gospel message and supernaturally changing hearts and lives through the invasion of His Son, The Lord Jesus Christ! And, on the day that number is reached, ONLY God Himself will receive the honor and glory. By faith we look forward to that day and ask you all to join us in believing God for it.

MAKING A FINANCIAL IMPACT FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

I normally don't say very much about money or financial issues in our newsletters. But I'm going to make an exception this time, because I want those of you who are helping financially, to have some idea of the tremendous impact you are making. Recently, we received a contribution of \$100 from a dear friend. When I mentioned it later to the person who gave it, they said, "Well, it's not much, but maybe it will help." I replied, Well, it may not be 'much' if you're shopping at Walmart, but in the world of SWEA it means more than you might think." Here's why. It currently costs an average of \$16.50 for an SWEA/WGTT evangelistic team to conduct one event; school assembly, open-air, or film show. The average attendance of each event is 850 people. So, a hundred dollars will pay for SIX events, in which roughly 5,000 people will have the Gospel message presented to them. Normally, at least 80% will pray to receive Christ. For reasons known only to God, response to the Gospel in the countries where we work is very high. That means that a \$100 investment in this ministry will likely result in as many as 4,000 people praying to receive Jesus. Now, I realize that most of you probably don't think as much about "return on investment" as I do. You just obey God, give as He directs, and leave it with Him. But, I still think it is good for you to have some idea as to just HOW HELPFUL your gifts are! SO - with that in mind - let me say, THANK YOU VERY MUCH for your faithfulness in impacting lives for the Kingdom of God!



Sharing at a high school in Tanzania

SHAD AND SHEILA ARE RETURNING TO AFRICA: OCTOBER 2-14, 2023

When we left to come home from the Tanzania campaign in February 2020, we had no idea it would be so long before we saw the team again. But then Covid happened. The pandemic prevented us from traveling for a long time. And then when the way cleared for us to go again, our daughter, Rachel, was diagnosed with triple negative breast cancer. Of course, there was no way we were going to leave her alone for ANY period of time without our support while she went through the very long process of surgery and ongoing complications. She is still dealing with a lot of issues as a result of the cancer, but she feels now that she can handle our absence for a short time. So, we are planning a two-week trip in October. Our primary purpose in going is to conduct team meetings in Nairobi, Kenya for the Kenya/Tanzania team, and in Kigali, Rwanda for the Rwanda/Burundi/Congo team. We have a LOT of work to do in preparation for this project, so we very much need and appreciate your prayers. And, as always, thank you for being with us as WE GO TO THEM!

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Amsterdam '83 - God Makes A Way

"I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert." Isa. 43:19

In July 1983 God miraculously opened a door for Sheila and me that was absolutely impossible - yet so important to our future life and ministry. It was for us to attend the first International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, hosted by Dr. Billy Graham in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. And from a human perspective, we almost missed it.

I had received an invitation to the conference in the fall of 1982, but due to circumstances beyond my control, it was lost, along with the possibility of going. So, I just let it go, without thinking any more about it and without realizing just what a defining event the conference would prove to be in for us. But GOD knew! The fact was, we HAD to be there - Sheila and I BOTH. It was that conference that would set the direction of our ministry from that point forward.

But I did not know that, and therefore did not sense an urgency to go - UNTIL. One Thursday morning in early June 1983, Sheila saw something written about the conference, scheduled to begin on July 12. She came into my office and said in "that tone", "Are you SURE you don't need to go to this?" I said, "Well, if you put it THAT way, then no, I'm not sure. But I have no invitation, and I'm sure by this time it's too late." She argued, "Well, you COULD call and ASK!" So, with that "encouragement", I called the Billy Graham office in Minneapolis. The lady I talked to was very nice and even apologetic, but she told me what I already suspected. Over 3,000 applications from people all over the world had been turned down. The conference was full and there was NO POSSIBILITY of getting in at this late date. I thanked her and hung up. But I thought about it all day and just couldn't seem to let it go - and it wouldn't let go of ME.

So, at 3:00 in the afternoon I went upstairs and knelt beside our bed and prayed, "God, I know I have missed this. I know it's too late. I know it's impossible. But, Lord, I just can't let go of it. God, would You make a way for me AND Sheila to go?" At that VERY INSTANT, the phone rang. When I answered a man said, "May I speak to Shad Williams, please?" I said, this is Shad. Then he said, "Shad, this is Bob Williams with the Billy Graham Association. I'm in charge of the Amsterdam Conference, and I was just sitting here in my office in Amsterdam tonight going over some invitations, and I saw yours. I see you never responded, and I felt led of the Lord to call you and find out why. Do you not want to come?" I couldn't believe it! I asked, "What time is it there?" He said, "It's 10pm, and I was just about to leave the office and go home, but the Lord prompted me to call you. So, do you not want to come?" I said, "YES! Yes, I want to come! But I was told this morning it is impossible. He said, "Shad, if you want to come, we will make a space for you." Then I asked if Sheila could come. He said yes, but only as an observer, not a participant. I said, ok, that's fine. Then he asked what hotel we would prefer? I said, "Brother Bob, we don't have any money." He replied, "Don't worry about it. Just bring it with you, and I will trust God with you to provide it. I thanked him and hung up the phone in utter amazement! GOD HAD OPENED A TIGHTLY LOCKED DOOR! He had made a way where there was no way.

But that was only part of the battle. Now we needed the money to enter the door God had opened. That Friday we figured out that we needed about \$3000, for air fare, conference fees, and expenses. Isa. 43:19 promises both - a pathway AND provision. We had the pathway, now we needed provision. As I prayed about it, the Lord spoke in my heart, "Shad, you need \$3000, so I want you to send \$300 to help someone else go." I asked Sheila if she had any thoughts about our situation, and she said, "Yes, we need \$3000, so we should send \$300 to help someone else!" We had NO MONEY in our account, but we mailed a check for \$300 to the BGEA office to help someone else. On Monday, we received a totally unexpected gift in the mail, which covered the \$300 check AND enough to pay for our airfare! Not only that, but also in the mail was an invitation to Sheila to attend as a full-fledged PARTICIPANT. That entitled her to attend ALL the sessions at the conference and not just the large session at night! This enabled us to attend meetings during the day, together, and that was critical to God's plan.

Then, just before leaving for Amsterdam, we visited some friends, a couple in east Tennessee. The day we left to go home, the husband asked us to come by his office on our way out of town. While there, he asked if we had all we needed for the trip. We confessed we did not. He got up, went into another room, and came back with a check for \$1500. With that, God had provided not only the pathway but also the provision in full! After everything was paid (fees, hotel, etc.), we had \$300 left for food for 12 days. God stretched that money, and we did not miss a meal. Space will not allow me to tell here just how significant that trip was in our life and ministry, but it was foundational, and we HAD to be there! God knew that, and He made a way!

AN IMPORTANT LESSON - Circumstances and "deadlines" may be very real, but they NEVER have the final word. THAT is reserved for God. The wind and the waves the disciples faced in the storm were real. So was the water filling the boat. But there was a greater overriding Reality with them - the Lord Jesus! HE had the final defining authoritative word, not the circumstances - and so it was with our trip to Amsterdam. God made a way when there WAS no way. Are you facing an "impossible" situation in your life? Is your opportunity lost? Well, take heart, it may not be as lost as you think it is. DO NOT GIVE UP! Hang on by faith. Don't stop short of the finish line. God WILL make a way!