



“This week I was challenged in a new way. I realized how little I have in myself and how much I have in Jesus,” commented one participant at the close of our most recent conference for African leaders and wives. Another concluded, “The strength of our marriage is the ceiling of our ministry.”

These dear brothers and sisters in Christ represented 9 different African nations. They came together to be encouraged in Christ, strengthen their vision for going the distance with their marriages and ministries, and to see how a conference given by Shepherds’ Support might be beneficial to the pastoral networks they are each part of in their respective countries of origin. It was a blessing to have Arlie and Noemi Francis join us. Their teaching on discipling others by retelling the stories of the Bible with a focus on Genesis 1,2 and 3 laid a beautiful foundation for the conference theme of Going the Distance in Marriage and Ministry.

It was a high energy time, with great interaction and lots of iron-sharpening-iron discussion. These catalytic leaders consistently asked how they could reproduce what we were teaching with a desire to multiply and impact leaders in their own countries.

One participant commented,

“This week God has reminded me of His supremacy over my life, my marriage, my kids, my fears and desires. “He’s got this.” I need to chill more, His Word stands



forever and He is faithful to complete what He starts.”

Arlie Francis observed,

“The African disciple makers that our team met in Turkey spoke powerfully into our lives. The Church in the west can (and should) learn much from the people we now have the joy of calling friends. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of this remarkable group of disciplers is the ethos, the culture, that drives the thinking and thus the ministry God has entrusted to them. Each day we met together for five sessions. They asked themselves two vital questions: How does this translate to our culture for the making of more disciples? What are the ways we can multiply this teaching with integrity regarding what the Bible actually teaches in generation after spiritual generation? These are some of the questions that everyone who professes a personal belief in Jesus as Savior and Lord should be asking themselves.”



“It is encouraging to me, actually shocking that God knew I had to spend time with my husband and designed this week way back in advance for me to enjoy. This have come just a week to my 14th wedding anniversary. He is a God of perfection.” – Florence



The conference was held in Turkey due to security concerns in North Africa and on our final day together, we took an excursion to Ephesus. There we explored the ancient streets and structures of this once magnificent city. It was in Ephesus that Paul taught for two years in the Hall of Tyrannus, likely located in what would become one of the most important libraries of the ancient world. From that strategic location, all Asia heard the redeeming story of Messiah Jesus. Paul's life example and methodology of discipling is an encouragement and inspiration for us all. He truly finished the race set before him well.



The people we have been training are committed to being dangerous to their environment with the Good News of the Kingdom of God and we look forward to partnering with them in the future. As a result of our time together we received invitations to host a Shepherds' Support conference in 13 African nations over the coming years to strengthen the marriages of church leaders, grow a relational network of church leaders and deepen relationships between sports and church leaders for partnering purposes.

"I am a special creation, beautifully and wonderfully made to worship him (God) through my obedience. He wants to use me as his instrument to project his love, share in his power of creation, bring light to the world where there is none."



On April 28 – May 7, we pivot and focus our attention on pastors and spouses in Armenia, where we will build on the strong foundation built by Steve and Connie during the last decade of SSI. We will be accompanied by Bob and Chris Burrows, and will focus on our “Identity in Christ” and what this means in our marriages and ministries. To follow our next trip you can go to: shepherdssupport.org/ministry-trips/

We want to thank you again for all of your support for this trip and for Shepherds’ Support. You make this possible. Thank you!

Rick and Diana Lowe

And the Shepherds’ Support Board; Steve and Connie Troxel, David and Beth Butler, Stuart Hendry, Lannie and Melba Green, Jack and Nancy Shirley, Sid and Zane Williams