



SOVEREIGN WORLD TRUST

News Update Summer 2016



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- Feedback and photos from recipients of our 2016 mailing programme
- A challenge from a pastor in Manipur, India
- Our July Open-Day

2016 so far

Dear friends and supporters of Sovereign World Trust.

Welcome to our news update for the first half of 2016.

Thanks to your help we are well on top of our regular mailings programme which we expect to complete before the end of September. All the pastors on our mailing list are receiving copies of David Pawson's magnum opus *Unlocking the Bible*. Many of you will know this book which is widely available in bookshops. It provides very clear and readable introductions to the books of the Bible. On page 4 you can see photos of some pastors proudly holding their copies. Accompanying this is a small booklet by Emmanuel Oladiipo, formerly international director of Scripture Union on the theme of *Tithes and Offerings*. We worked with Emmanuel on a special updated edition. It was chosen to bring some balanced teaching on the subject of giving which is much needed in the developing nations. The feedback we have received on both of these titles is very encouraging.



We have also been working on our infrastructure in order to support a more flexible approach to supplying books. As part of this we are reorganising our warehouse and our recipient database. We hope to complete this work by the end of the year.

Other developments during the first half of the year have been a trip to Malawi to follow up on the libraries (see page 3). As a result, we have a clearer understanding of how to move forward and we shall be planting 3 more libraries in the coming months. Progress has been made with a major publication project and we continue to develop laminated sheets of teaching for use in challenging climates. We have begun on a major new integrated website and work has just begun on a new fibre-optic broadband cable that will enable us to replace our aged IT equipment with state of the art cloud based systems. More on these in the next annual report.

Meanwhile we do value your prayers and continuing practical and financial support. God bless you. On behalf of the team and trustees.

Chris Moffett, Director Sovereign World Trust

malawi june 2016

In June, Chris Moffett and his wife Olga spent 10 days in Malawi visiting our partners in Starfish Malawi based in Salima. Bornwell Yona, one of the Salima pastors, (pictured second from the bottom) is now the library coordinator and he has been very active in taking things forward.



In 2014, Starfish Malawi established six satellite libraries round Salima to enable pastors to access books without the necessity of giving up virtually a whole day to travel there and back. Chris visited all six with Borwell and by talking to pastors and the librarians was able to get a good feel for how they are working, which books were being used and their future needs. The main conclusion was that there needs to be more books in their local language Chichewa, for those whose knowledge of English is not strong. This is a similar conclusion to that for Tanzania where the language is Swahili. Unfortunately there is a dearth of really appropriate material in Chichewa, so all this points to the need to work with pastors to develop or translate material specifically designed for their situation.



Libraries are located in churches and sometime pastors' homes, whichever provides the most secure location. In one of them, the Ikea bookcases that we provided had been severely damaged by hungry termites. So we'll be sending out replacements and arranging for termite proof paint to be provided. We also agreed that we would provide 3 more libraries for villages to the north.



The final two days were taken up with a pastors' training conference in Salima. This was held in an Assemblies of God church for around fifty leaders from a variety of churches and denominations. On the first day Chris gave them an overview of the book of Romans. Although there are now quite a lot of visitors going to Malawi offering training of various types, most of this focusses on practical issues such as church planting and evangelism. It's only in Bible Colleges that pastors experience systematic Biblical exposition. So this type of teaching was relatively new to most delegates. The second day was taken up with questions and answers on issues arising from the first day. The issues raised were all very practical, some relating to pastoral challenges resulting from divorce and remarriage, others concerning divided loyalties when one spouse is a Christian and the other not.



More in the 2016 annual report.....

in their own words...

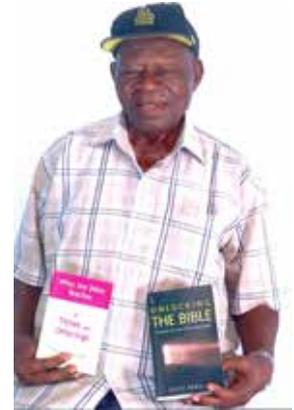
“These books have arrived at the right time and I have given them to one of our lay pastors.” (Zambia)



These books can only be read in our library office. Please send us more so that we can give them to people to read in their own homes. (Malawi)

I can find no words to thank you once again. You always remember me and this year, once again I have received two powerful teaching and inspiring and encouraging books. (Malawi)

Sovereign World Trust has brought a significant change in my Christian life. I have learned a lot from the books you have sent me. I have received spiritual food and I am growing spiritually. (Zimbabwe)



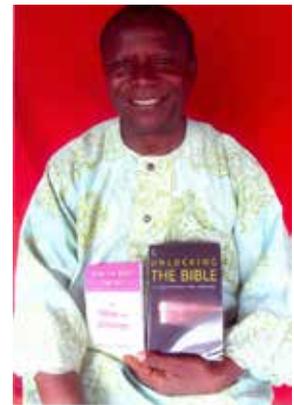
Lots of people have been blessed by reading the books you have supplied for our library. (Lagos, Nigeria)

Your material has been a source of encouragement to me and to others around me to study and to teach others the balanced word of God. The books are interesting to read and they strengthen our spirits in the righteousness of God. Hoping to year from your more. (Lagos Nigeria)



Your books have been a great blessing to us. We have used them for our studies and Sunday school programme. Please send us study Bibles for our newly trained leaders. Your materials are really useful to us in our rural outreach programmes. (Ghana)

The books are inspiring...motivating... encouraging.... They give balance to our message and teachings. My book library is growing by God's grace and the ministers that are using the books are blessed too. I am praying that the Lord strengthens you. (Lagos, Nigeria)



open afternoon july 2016

It was a quite a while since we held our last Open Day so our July event was well overdue.

On a blustery but sunny Saturday around forty of our friends and supporters gathered to see and experience first-hand our progress, catch up on news and to enjoy the customary strawberries and cream.

Perhaps the most noticeable change from before is the change of venue. Now our offices and warehouse are combined which makes books much more accessible as well as reducing our costs.

Bridget organised a packing session so that visitors could literally get a feel for what we do. This also provided an opportunity to send a personal greeting to some of the pastors. (see the first two photos).

Chris, freshly back from Malawi with Olga, gave an update on the ministry with feedback on the trip. And we were grateful to have our friends Dan and Joy with us to sing some of their scripture put to music.

Strawberries and cream, scones and jam followed with an opportunity to catch up with old friends as well as some new.

Those who came may remember the demise of the gazebo, which succumbed to the wind and had to be dismantled before it became a kite! You will be encouraged to know that we received a donation to replace it. This was definitely an example of “*before you call I will answer*” for which we do thank God.

Picking a date for an open-day that suits everyone is well nigh impossible and we had several people leave messages to say they could not come. So we’re planning to arrange some Open-Mornings and Evenings throughout the year. If you would like to have details do drop us a line, an email or a phone message.



from manipur - a challenge

Although churches are growing in many parts of the southern hemisphere it would be wrong to assume that everything everywhere is rosy. In some parts of the world where missions and churches were planted several decades ago, the problems of nominalism are considerable. In a survey questionnaire back in 2010 we asked pastors to tell us some of the challenges they face.



Recently we received a very late reply. The pastor concerned is from Manipur in India, an area first evangelised under colonial rule in 1910. He noted 13 points, as follows:

- Lack of transparency between church administrators and the public
- Financial stewardship causing major rifts in church communities
- Lack of respect for God's money
- Lack of grasp of church policies
- Big gaps between church committees and the general public
- Indifference in the church
- Too much emphasis of money by church committees
- Mismanagement of money
- Over-centralisation in church governance
- Local churches are under-resourced
- Youth activities limited to choir presentations and yearly conferences
- Sunday school without resources including suitable buildings
- Lack of church libraries, so less knowledge and understanding of the faith.



His diagnosis of the problem, in a word, was **nominalism** and he paints a pretty depressing picture. It is striking that these are all symptoms. He did not mention any underlying spiritual causes.

What he tells us confirms the need for the type of books that we send: books that are faithful to scripture and open to the work of the Holy Spirit; books that emphasise the development of Christian character and discipleship; books about leadership and practical ministry, books on the importance and practicalities of prayer.



So although many of the books we send are directed towards conserving the fruit of evangelism and helping converts grow into mature disciples, in other places the aim is to stem the tide of nominalism and help the church re-ignite its "first love". In this situation biographies can be very helpful in opening eyes to see how things can be. This pastor has been receiving books since 2008 and has started a library from SWT books which he says are particularly helpful.

40,000 books in stock



With the help of Ellie, visiting from Hong Kong, we have made a great start with reorganising our warehouse. This will make it so much easier to pick books. Together with a new stock database we'll be able to offer our pastors a degree of choice. Currently we hold around 40,000 mint condition new books, some 150 different titles. In addition we have a growing collection of second hand (or pre-loved titles).



Second hand books, (currently we have around 1000), are very useful for leaders engaged in more advanced or specialist studies. We have been able to send books to a bishop in the Seychelles for his research project, a senior leader in Tanzania for his Master's degree studies and a number of libraries in other nations where students are studying upto degree level. In such cases we consult in detail about titles and authors before dispatching. We also use second hand books to top-up library collections.



So we are always pleased to hear from retiring ministers or others downsizing, who would like to find a good home for commentaries and more specialist titles that would be too stretching for the general reader. Our aim is to carefully match the needs of the reader with the content of the book.

the writing on the wall...

We ask the recipients of our books to send us a photo, where possible, confirming their safe arrival. Some are sent as prints. Others are taken using mobile phones and sent via email. The photo below, specially taken, had a note attached reading...*"This elderly couple from the church are holding hands, glorifying God for the gift of the books. Thank you Sovereign World Trust."* You may be able to make out their message written on the wall!



Sometimes the letters we receive are handwritten on pages torn from a school exercise book. Others, from larger churches are written or typed on official letterhead - sometimes with authorised seals. Some letters are succinct and to the point, others more formal. Sometimes they wax lyrical for several pages (like the letter in the middle which is the first of four sides!



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