



## WHY A BIBLE COLLEGE?

Bible schools train Christian leaders. Jesus said he is building his church. He called us to go to every nation, making disciples, teaching them to observe all the things he taught us. Paul explains that he has committed to us this ministry of reconciliation, leading people to God. It is amazing that Jesus could give us such an important job. You would think he would send angels to do it, or at least smarter and more able people than we are. But as Paul also explains, God prefers to take the foolish of this world to achieve his purposes. The wise will think they did it themselves, but when God chooses us everyone knows it must be God. But he uses us as vessels – we get to share in the task.

So the church is to make disciples - people who know and love and obey God. For this to happen they need able leaders, men of integrity, able to teach. It was early in the book of Acts that the apostles gave themselves to prayer and teaching the word. The word is able to transform. The apostles committed this task to faithful men, able to teach. That is what a bible school is for, to enable men and women who know God has called them, a time of concentrated study of the word of God, providing a solid foundation as well as the tools to access further study of the word for the future.

But that is not all. Disciples are disciplined. They learn by work, developing study habits, imbibing a lifestyle of integrity, of brotherly love and of teamwork. A good bible school will provide the leadership and facilities where this can be achieved. It is the immersion in the word that transforms lives, opens hearts and develops Godly character. These men and women have a foundation, equipping them to go back to their own towns, cities and villages, evangelising, starting churches, and teaching believers the word and by example.

*A Mosque*



## WHY IN JOS?

Jos is in part a Christian enclave in the Moslem north of Nigeria. Moslems are being saved. God is speaking directly to many, some by visions, some through the Koran, and some through the courageous witness of Christians who live near them. The Islamic world is the largest segment of the earth that has little living witness to Christ. Those who acknowledge Christ are systematically persecuted for their faith. When someone is saved from a Moslem background they have little choice but to run. Many flee to the church. Many of these people have been intercepted by God for a task, like Paul on the road to Damascus. Churches send them to us. Jos is accessible to frontline churches. We undertake the responsibility of training these called out ones, so these churches can continue the rescue mission.



## WHAT IS IT WE DO?

1. We lead the team. God has amazingly raised up an excellent team, men with whom we have worked for many years, firstly in Benin under Benson Idahosa, and now in Jos. These men, with their wives and families form the nucleus of the community God is raising up to nurture church leaders.

God has brought us together with a common vision to teach and train. Many of them are Moslem converts themselves, all are northerners, so have a rich understanding of the challenges at hand. We work together, in consultation and teamwork.

2. We raise finance to run the college and oversee its use, accounting to our supporting churches for it. This comes mostly from churches and individuals in Australia, and more recently from England also. The expenses are many. Every day the students have to be fed. All pay some fees, but to include many who have been cut off from their families and communities we keep the fees low and offer scholarships to those in greatest need. The staffs need salaries to support their families. The salaries are not much. Staff need to continue their education themselves so they are fully equipped to teach. They need houses, school fees for their children's schools, medical needs, etc. We rent a building that houses the students, lecture rooms, library and offices, as well as renting staff houses. All are very basic, electricity intermittent, water carried from a central storage tank, as the supply is intermittent as well and cooking is with kerosene or fire wood. We have a computer library and a growing library for the students to access important reference material.

3. We encourage the church, Jesus body from every nation. The persecuted churches are not alone. Those of the church in more affluent places have not forgotten but love them, pray and help. We have Pastors Seminars to equip those in ministry. We teach and share the word of God all over Nigeria, especially interacting with graduates of former years now in ministry, many doing outstanding work. Some of their testimonies are on the website, [www.cfaithministries.org](http://www.cfaithministries.org)



## DOES THIS WORK?

Since first arriving in Nigeria in 1986 we have seen thousands of lives turned around by the impact of their time in Bible College. The submersion in the word sorts them out. Some leave: they can't take it. Most continue and go on to pastor churches, frequently in areas where the church had not existed before. For almost 23 years we have been involved in equipping ministers for the massive task at hand: preaching the gospel. Many have been trained on scholarship. In fact all our leadership team at CFI Jos are graduates of the school in Benin, where we served for 20 years. All were trained during our time there on scholarships, fund for which came from the Australian church. Australia has invested in the African harvest and the investment is paying off. Our current team are just a few of the thousands trained and now having a very significant

impact on their communities. We, and many guest who come from Australia, meet hundreds of these graduates now pastoring churches all over Africa.



## **WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES?**

Last December Jos was rocked with riots. The Moslem party lost all but one seat in the local government elections and were infuriated. Two churches were burned but were mercifully empty at the time. The army was called in and ten soldiers were killed attempting to quell the violence. The military retaliated, killing 300 rioters. Attempts to escalate events by spreading unrest throughout Moslem regions were frustrated. Curfews and roadblocks were imposed to contain the situation, which is stabilised but still a little uncertain. Thank God the government was able to restore peace. None of our people were hurt.

Food was hard to find for most of December, with traders being unable to access their normal markets due to travel restrictions. Prices rose steeply. Our students were unable to travel to get money from their supporting churches and relatives. This placed greater demand on school finances. Difficult economic times are not unusual for us. The Nigerian economy has grown steadily worse since our arrival in 1986. This teaches us to look to God. He always gets his people through. We don't back off in fear.

The instability has also delayed our attempts to buy land to build. We have some funds set aside but obtaining land in Nigeria can be a delicate business, with a lot of investigation required to assure the validity of any claims to title of land, and the permission of not only government authorities but also traditional rulers. All this negotiation takes time, and in the difficult political climate, a matter of to be handled with due care and caution.



## **WHAT ARE OUR GOALS THIS YEAR?**

God is building the Bible school. The student body is growing numerically, completing our second year last December with 120 students. Some will graduate with their diploma in March. Most are part way through the diploma. Some will continue for a further 2 years to gain a bachelors degree. We do not expect the instability to affect a strong intake of new students starting this week. Many have contacted the school expressing interest. We have been planning towards God's faithfulness, building the library with over 300 excellent new volumes, preparing further classrooms, making a new ladies hostel. We would love to build this year but await events there. Our priority is building people first.

One of our main goals is to teach, getting the Word of God out every where and every way we can. This means church planting, outdoor crusade preaching, house to house witness, village evangelism, outreach to isolated people groups, printing books, preaching on television and above all equipping God's people for all of these tasks. This is what we have done in 2008 and pray to continue and grow in them. Our goal is to walk in love with all God's people, discovering how we can serve them. We have a great God. There is no reason to bury our talents when such great things are ahead. We encourage you to have God's faith because it is he who brings us through faithfully.

We encourage you to continue to pray and to support this work. In channelling our energy and resources into the lives of others bearing fruit in the Kingdom of God is the most rewarding thing we can ever do. See our website, [www.cfaithministries.org](http://www.cfaithministries.org) for details.

Love from Kent and Ruth