

Church elder confesses his ignorance

By Bosten Kathanga Nkhoma, elder of Chikuluti CCAP, Lilongwe

Before going through module one of Veritas College, I was reading the Bible like a novel or newspaper. I could preach when I was given a chance to do so. But I was not preaching from the Bible but from my own thinking. I followed my grandfather's way of preaching, whereby he could read verses from the Bible and preach something different. This was so just because he did not learn how to understand, apply and communicate the gospel to others.

Veritas has indeed helped me to preach the truth from the Bible. I will no longer add or subtract from the Word of God. In fact, I have been totally transformed, I am no longer the



Bosten Kathanga, Church elder Chikuluti CCAP

same. You know, being a church elder, you think and feel that you know the Word of God more than others. But now I realize that I still need to learn more from Veritas, so that I become well equipped. It is my wish therefore, that module two must start soon before we relax. Let me sincerely thank our facilitator, Rev Davidson Chifungo for his dedication to teach us such important things. It has been so wonderful. May the good Lord bless him so much so that many people should come to know the truth of the Word of God. Waiting for module two to start soon!



VERITAS NEWS

Praise and Prayer

We thank God for

- all the encouragement, prayer and financial support for the growing work
- Julia Etter's recovery and the 'all clear' after her first post-treatment check-up in February
- new staff members Rosina Issa and Bonface Gauti
- growing number of Pastors who are committed to disciple and train other leaders

Pray with us for

- training and administrative staff in Zambia
- God's guidance in ministry priorities and his blessing and strength for service; good team work
- growing relationship with Christ and character growth amongst of participants
- land and finance to build offices in Lilongwe

Enabled to equip others

By Patrick Chapola

Veritas College has been an eye opener in the field of Bible Interpretation to me personally as well as to my family. Before I had been trained by Veritas College, I was a theologian who would boast with religious jargon, though without understanding its meaning. I could not even bother to apply them to my daily life nor did I spare the time to communicate the little knowledge I had acquired from a theological school to other people, and if I did, it was with a wrong motive. I would do it to show to them how much theological knowledge I had acquired. This is because much of the learning I had gone through was theoretical in nature. However things completely changed in my life after I attended module 1 Facilitator Training Course (FTC) in 2005. A new chapter now opened in my spiritual life and I immediately started to look for someone to share the Bible's absolutes with.



Patrick Chapola, IBCB, assist VCM with facilitator training

The Berea Bible College, where I lecture, has included Veritas subjects in its curriculum. Our students benefit a lot from these materials. There is a visible change in their lives. As the facilitator who usually accompanies our students to different churches for preaching practice, I have a number of good testimonies from church members about how they now understand the Bible.

Pastors, who graduated from our college before Veritas lessons were introduced, have been requesting to be allowed to come back just to learn Veritas materials. This alone is a testimony to show that Veritas College has some hidden treasure in terms of Bible interpretation - revealed only to those who have undergone the training! (Patrick Chapola is a lecturer in theology at the International Bible College Berea, Blantyre, Malawi. Amongst other subjects, he teaches Bible interpretation to IBCB students who come from various Pentecostal churches)

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Dear Friends...

It is with gratitude to our Lord Jesus Christ that we look back over the past year. The apostle Peter encourages his readers with the words, 'Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you' (1 Pet 5:7). The knowledge that He cares deeply for each one of us, has given us courage to persevere in anxious and stressful times. It is our prayer that you would find comfort and encouragement in Christ's love. Your support in prayer and finance has encouraged us and been a source of rich blessing to the many that have been touched by it! Thank you for your continued partnership in the gospel.

Over the past years, thousands of Christians have gone through our biblical training, and if we believe the statistics, millions of Africans are Christians. What concerns me is this: in today's world numbers impress. But what is of ultimate value in God's eyes when it comes to the Christian life? 2 Pet 1:3-9 gives us a

ready answer. The apostle Peter puts it this way. God's plan for each one of us is to 'participate in the divine nature and escape

the corruption in the world caused by evil desires'. The verses following bring into focus what this means. God is looking for growth in character - towards the divine nature and away from sin. The qualities of faith, goodness,

knowledge of God, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love should sprout like mushrooms. If they do, Peter goes on to say, these qualities 'will keep you from being unproductive and ineffective' as believers in Christ. There is an immense need in the church and in the world for leaders of character, leaders who are like Christ. Man looks for better methods to be productive but God looks for better men and women! Join us in praying that God will raise up a generation of Africans who will lead by Christ's example.

Martin Etter
National Director



First Module 4 class to graduate, Kwawerawera CCAP with facilitator Rev Chitheka

No Farming No Life: The Difference Integrated Leadership Development (ILD) Makes

Mr Shadreck Chisale, a farmer and lay church leader, has made a difference in his village by his Christ like life, both spiritually and practically. Having participated in ILD, he has become a model for his church, Kasitu prayer house in Mpando congregation (Church of Central Africa Presbyterian). Over the past few years, VC Malawi has worked alongside the church in holistic development, encouraging biblical training and application to the daily life of a farming community.

VC: Can you give me a background of yourself?
SC: I was born some 54 years ago and got married in 1978 after failing to continue with school due to financial problems. I have six children.

VC: When did you become a Christian?

SC: From my early childhood church going was a regular part of my life. I became so used to it that Christianity did not have meaning at all.

VC: How has Veritas College training helped you spiritually?

SC: The ILD training which Veritas College is offering has helped me quite a lot. I saw myself growing in my walk with the Lord because through studying the Bible I began to know who God is and what

Christ has done for me. I have done Module 1, 2, 3 and Christianity makes more sense for me now.

VC: What about in your farming life, in terms of food security and the like?

SC: Firstly I would say after God changed my life, I began to have a right attitude towards God, friends and life in general. This transformation helped me to begin to look for better ways of looking after my family.

VC: Did Veritas College training offer any help in terms of practical help?

SC: Yes, when Martin Etter visited us some years ago, He told us about cassava growing. He explained that cassava is a food security crop, but we told him that it was difficult

because village goats, which normally just roam free, would eat it. But after encouraging us we acquired stems with money that VCM gave us and then we started growing cassava. I was the first in my village to grow it. In the next growing season I had enough seedlings to distribute to other families.

VC: How did you distribute the cassava seedlings?

SC: Because Martin had told us that we should share the seedlings free in my village, I



Shadreck Chisale, participant and facilitator of Kasitu farmers' group



Renewed zeal to study the Scriptures amongst Zambian pastors

By Frederick Bwalya, Zambian National Coordinator
Veritas College Zambia is taking root in churches in Zambia. We are overwhelmed by what is taking place. The Lord has been so gracious to give us a great number of leaders and pastors who desire to be trained. We come from a culture of "depending upon the Holy Spirit to give us a message on a Sunday morning". This phrase is frequently heard in our Pentecostal circles where some pastors refuse training. They say, "training

quenches the Spirit of God in our lives" and wrongly quote verses such as "...the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say" (Lk 12:12). Of course this has nothing to say about preparing and preaching the Word of God. However, after involvement with Veritas, pastors have come to recognize their need for preparation to improve their preaching. They now see that the Spirit of God helps them to understand Scripture as they go through all the steps of interpretation. One confession that I constantly hear from those we train is that they previously lied to people through their preaching. Now, we see a drastic change. Most of the facilitators we have trained have gone back to their congregations with an ignited passion to train their leaders and correct things.

The growth in the number of participating churches has meant that we are very often on the road, visiting and encouraging churches to implement the biblical training. The response has been overwhelming. We now have churches training leaders in the northern, central and southern provinces and we are in the process of translating the modules into Bemba, a language spoken by ??????



Jane & Frederick Bwalya (National Coordinator VC Zambia) with Nathan and Natasha

Open Doors for rural ministry in Mumbwa District

Mumbwa district is about 150km west of Lusaka. Andrew and Gloria Chimalanga minister in a rural setting. Subsistence farming is the way of life here. They have joined up with Veritas to train their church leaders. At Kwempa Mission 24 leaders are enjoying the training and other places are also in real need of it.

Andrew and Gloria Chimalanga, overseers of Lamb of God Mission, have appreciated getting to know Veritas in Zambia. Andrew says, "My wife and I have been to different Bible Schools, but when we came to Veritas College there was a big change in our spiritual lives and ministry. The materials and knowledge we have received from Veritas College are so interesting and so good for our ministry. We have been revived in the areas of equipping leaders, evangelism and establishing churches. Veritas is all about the truth and how to interpret the Bible. This has become clear to us through the modules. The leaders of our churches are willing to be

trained by Veritas so that they can be better leaders who ably explain the truth from Scriptures the way it is supposed to be. We are willing to partner and extend this school to the rest of Central Province of Zambia'.



Kwempa Mission Participants

The Veritas Training Modules

The modules are often mentioned in testimonies. So here is a brief overview of the main skills covered.

Module 1:
Introduction and basic skills to interpret the Bible
How to interpret the Epistles
How to lead a Bible study group
How to preach

Module 2:
Skills to interpret the Pentateuch and OT historical books
How to communicate a biblical message with children

Module 3:
Skills to interpret the Wisdom and Prophetic books
How to counsel from Scripture
Module 4:
Skills to interpret the Gospels, Acts and Revelation
How to develop a strategy for church life

There are many other subjects linked with these skills. The emphasis of the training is to enable people to handle the Word of God accurately and give them the skills to understand, apply and communicate the message of Bible.

Opening up God's Word for everyone

By Rev Token Katsulukuta, Masintha CCAP, Lilongwe

My Old Testament teacher, a scholar of respect in South Africa, would warn our class as he entered, "I will confuse you in the next forty five minutes". True to his word, the class came out confused at the end of his lessons. I had been made to believe that theology could not be easily understood by everyone. I went to attend the Veritas facilitator training course wondering whether this course would really offer something new. But during that first week I spent with Martin Etter and Willem Wiid, I discovered why the Veritas training is unique. I can now pride myself upon enabling the 'common' Christian to love, understand and share the truth of God's Word just as I do.

It took sometime until I started the training in my congregation at Kongwe CCAP. I realised that Veritas is God's programme - I prayed and thought about it. As I waited for God's timing to start, I also read the Veritas teaching manual in order to master the lessons. When I got the conviction that God's time had come, I took every opportunity to sensitize the congregation about the course and the date we would start. I was expecting to see a good number of would-be participants on that first day. Contrary to my aspirations, only five people turned up. I reminded myself that this was God's programme. My duty was to start and teach diligently. God would do the rest.

The participants were excited when the lessons began. Midway through the lessons someone exclaimed, "Pastor, where was

Veritas all these years? We've been preaching lies to God's people'. They wished they could withdraw all their past sermons from people's memories and start all over again. Like the Samaritan women at the well, they went out telling everyone about the goodness of Veritas. Their testimonies were more effective than all the publicity I had made in council meetings and in the pulpit. And more people came wanting to start.

I had initially planned to finish with this class first before starting another one. But pressure, especially from a daughter church in Dowa Town, was persistent. I started a class there and we met on Tuesdays and Thursday evening as most people there were employed. This class was the first to graduate and three new classes opened afterwards, making a total of five classes. And for the first time we had women in the classes. The workload was becoming too much and Mr Kaimfa was identified as FAT (Faithful, Available, Teachable) to be trained through the facilitator apprenticeship programme to assist with teaching. Later on Rev Katundu also assisted.



Rev Token Kasulukuta, Mazintha CCAP

The Veritas lessons when taught diligently will bring great change in individual member's lives and also in the life of the church. For example, elders at our church, Masintha CCAP, agreed that no one should be put on the preaching rota unless he attends preaching lessons. Another participant was sent by his office to a remote area in the Lilongwe district. He shared the Word of God with a family there and soon the whole village gathered. A Bible study group was born, people abandoned a heretical group which had dominated the area and as the Bible study group ministered to the sick, God did wonders. The Veritas training enables Christian's to understand the Word and be effective witnesses.



Davidson Chifungo, Bonface Gauti, Martin & Julia Etter, Rosina Issa, VC Malawi team

Total Student Numbers by May 2007

In Malawi & Mozambique	
Participant Module units completed	2359
Participant Module units in progress	2023
In Zambia	
Participant Module units completed	352
Participant Module units in progress	507