

# MFUSIS UPDATE – WEEK 36-38

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## 1 REZOLUTION CONFERENCE

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This conference was held in Johannesburg from 2-4 Sept. Day 1 focused on the false teachings perpetrated by the prosperity movement. Its growth and presence is felt throughout the African continent. Speakers Conrad Mbewe and Phil Johnson exposed the ways in which the movement intentionally falsify the Scriptures, causing the Bible to say what it doesn't actually say. Newspaper headlines exposing some of their practices in which they instructed members of their congregations to, for instance, drink fuel, eat snakes and grass, were stuck onto the walls (Fig.1.) Mbewe alluded to a real pastoral experience where a female congregant was sexually abused by the preacher as a way of exorcising the indwelling evil spirit which caused her husband to abandon her for another woman.

Dr. Lawson (Fig. 2) concluded with a challenging message from II Tim 4:1-6, exhorting us to faithfully preach the Word as the only viable means to expose these heresies.

Day 2 & 3 were dedicated to expository preaching, how to exegete and package the talks. Drawing from a wealth of knowledge from RC Sproul and John MacArthur, Lawson challenged us saying *'one day God will demand an account for each and every single sermon we ever preached...'*

It was also great to catch-up with old friends (Fig. 3) and to meet younger men aspiring to enter full-time ministry (Fig. 4).

## 2 DEATHS

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Since returning from the States, we've been flooded with funerals. A leader at Estcourt Community Church lost his Dad aged 90. I attended his funeral on FRID morning.

On FRID evening, we travelled the opposite direction to attend another funeral where the Zionist pastor had died from lung cancer. The Zionist high leadership was present (Fig. 5) Bishop Zondi and Michael (Lungi's grandfather who's Arch-Bishop of the Zionist Church). The (night vigil) service began around 11pm on FRID. This service goes through the night, it's an open platform to anyone who want to express their condolences and reflect on the life of the deceased. It concluded on SAT morning around 6am.

A few hours later, the funeral service began. Unlike the night vigil, this service is not open to all. It's controlled with a program, containing pre-selected speakers. About 300-mourners were gathered. All the speakers spoke well of the deceased. Out of nearly 40-people who preached at both services, it was heart-warming to hear two preachers exult the name of Christ instead of focusing on the deceased. One of them was Sanele Majola, a Zionist evangelist who's supportive and works closely with me. He is a part of the church planting effort we began on 20 Sept. Sanele is standing next to Lungi on Fig. 6.

### 3 DEVOTIONS

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On invite from the local primary school, I started doing the morning devotions as of last THUR. For a start, these will only happen once per month. The make-up of the school body is very diverse. Most of the children do not only come from nominal Christian homes, and where ancestry worship is practiced but from single homes with no male headship. Others are orphans under the care of their grannies. A smaller percentage comes from unchurched backgrounds. One can just imagine their behavior and the frustrations the teachers go through trying to install discipline and good conduct into these kids. There are two boys in particular who are unruly and the biggest instigators the school has asked me to reach out to.

Also started doing the same at a local grocery store called Spar. Spar is a chain grocery store like Target in America. The make-up of the staff is also diverse, consisting mainly of the charismatics and Zionists. The devotions started last week and will continue monthly for two consecutive Fridays (as predetermined by management) from 6:15 – 6:50am. I will meet with staff from two different departments for 15-minutes each.

I plan to teach from the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20:3-17) at both places. In our context, many would know a portion of or all of the Ten Commandments by heart. Yet, the way in which it gets misinterpreted is overwhelming. For instance, v.15 ***you shall not steal*** has been misinterpreted to prohibit stealing from one's own race. There are black South Africans who, still to this day, wouldn't consider this prohibition to include also include stealing from a white person. They'd say it 'taking'. So, during the apartheid era, blacks (me included) were '*taking*' from their white employers. They weren't stealing. (And the stolen/'*taken*' goods were called 'igwinya' (fat-cake made from dough and then dipped it into the boiling oil. It's usually taken in the morning with tea/coffee). Stealing was when a black person violated the property of another black person. Surprisingly, even after 21-years into the democracy, this mentality still exists.

There is also a lot of misunderstandings concerning the other commandments, which I trust the Lord will use to instruct, teach and ultimately convict people of their indwelling sin.

## 4 FAMILY

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We had three family celebrations over the last few weeks. My daughter, Pearl, celebrated her 28<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Mum's on the 9<sup>th</sup> and our eleventh wedding anniversary on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Due to other commitments, we didn't celebrate any of these events. Though culturally, it's no big deal if we didn't. But we hope to get together and do something, especially for Mum's 69<sup>th</sup> at some stage.

## 5 PRAISE

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- a. We found Bishop Zondi's vestments and the venue.
- b. Sanele Majola has finally made a decision to the EXPLORE Course with me.

## 6 PRAYER

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- a. Still a lot more minor tasks to do in terms of Bishop Zondi's ordination. Please pray for grace to be diligent, that nothing would be overlooked.
- b. Grace to understand the Ten Commandments and to preach it clearly and lovingly at the school and at Spar.
- c. Please pray for the Lord's blessing on the church plant we started on 20 Sept, that Spar employees on duty on Sundays would join us. And that we'd be able to reach the locals through this effort
- d. Lungi runs the Bible Club every FRID afternoon during the school term. An average of 30-kids from the local township (Wembezi) and rural village (Zwelisha) attend each week. We also have the Holiday Club (called 'The VBS' - Vacation Bible School in the States) from 5-8 Oct, please pray for the preparations and fruit.



Fig. 1: Recent media reports exposing some of the practices of the prosperity movement



Fig. 2: Dr. Steve Lawson chatting with one of the conference delegates



Fig. 3: With Gustav, former CHBC intern now pastoring a Baptist Church in Johannesburg. It was great to catch-up with him.



Fig. 4: Trainee pastor I met at the conference from a friend's church in Johannesburg



Fig. 5: Bishop Zondi (on left) and Michael Khanyile (holding the staff), Lungi's grandfather who's Arch-Bishop of the Zionist Church



Fig. 6: Evangelist Sanele Majola (next to Lungi).



Fig. 7: Procession from the home of the deceased to the community hall where the funeral service was held.