

Hidden With Christ Ministries
September/October 2023

*A Kingdom
Investment*
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Victory
magazine

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To demonstrate the love of God through mercy ministries and by freely teaching God's Word around the world.

OUR MISSION:

To care for orphans and abandoned children and other needy persons through practical outreaches and by producing free Bible materials and training.

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Hidden With Christ Ministries
P.O. Box 745
Forest, VA 24551
USA

Hidden With Christ Ministries
P.O. Box 383
Moshi
TANZANIA

We would love to hear from you!

Please email us at:
info@hiddenwithchrist.org

Or call our U.S. Office Phone:
(434) 849-7967

A page from my African Journal

by Rita Langeland



As I write these words, I am sitting at my desk in Moshi, Tanzania, marveling at the goodness and faithfulness of God - and His people.

For fifteen years we prayed and believed God for provision for the children of Treasures of Africa Children's Home, and we saw the goodness of God care for them so greatly.

When we moved the children to Christian foster families so they could experience what God originally intended - life in a family setting (rather than an institution) we still had to trust God for money to supply their educational and medical needs. We have continued to educate all the TOA KIDZ in private English schools in an effort to prepare them for higher education which requires proficiency in English. Plus, we added other children to the TOA KIDZ Education program. Some of them are children of the foster families and some are orphans or vulnerable children who never lived at TOA. With those additions, our Education expenses are higher than ever!

The photo to the right is one I took while sitting at my desk counting out the millions of Tanzanian shillings needed to pay all the school fees for a single semester. I stared at the pile of twenty-eight million shillings - which was just the first batch of school fee payments - (almost \$12,000) and thought of all the people God used to provide that money to keep the children in school. I prayed for every giver to be BLESSED abundantly. They are surely changing the trajectory of the lives of the TOA KIDZ!



This is a process repeated every semester. Cash must be deposited into each of the schools' bank accounts for each individual student. We have children attending more than 20 different schools! It is a grueling process to prepare so many different deposit slips and count out the cash for so many different schools and students. Yet we are GRATEFUL each and every time we have the money to make those deposits!

The faithfulness of God NEVER ceases to amaze me even though I have witnessed it over and over again in my walk with God for more than 40 years. May His goodness and faithfulness never cease to amaze you as well!

Great and beyond measure is Your faithfulness!

Lamentations 3:23b Amplified Bible



♥ FOR THE CHURCH IN

AFRICA

Hidden with Christ Ministries has had a heart for the African Church since 2003 when this ministry first began to sow into indigenous churches on the African continent. Tanzania became the major focus for HWCM in those early years, and God has had us continue to bless and help native churches through our CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS as He has provided the means.

Recently, some practical assistance projects were undertaken at a Maasai church near Lake Manyara. These projects included 1) repair of the church's outdoor Baptismal which had degraded due to harsh weather conditions and could no longer hold water, 2) building of an outdoor stage to be used for Crusades and other large meetings, and 3) repair of their outdoor bathrooms (latrines). The completion of these projects was timed to coincide with an upcoming crusade and food distribution project that was planned in collaboration with Freedom Church of Wesley Chapel, Florida.



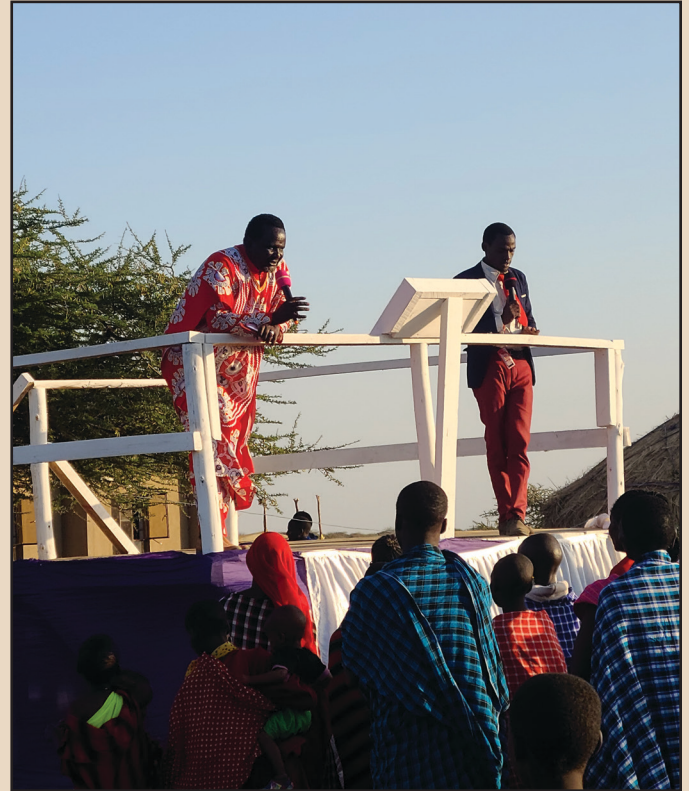
Repair work underway on existing baptismal with addition of cement steps



Baptismal being filled with water after repairs completed



Construction of outdoor crusade stand for Maasai church nearly completed



The Crusade stage in full use

Hidden with Christ Ministries invests in the African church through its "Church Development Projects." Some of these projects are practical in nature such as the ones described in this article and others are accomplished through leadership conferences for pastors and church leaders. If you have a heart for the African church, you can donate through our website www.hiddenwithchrist.org/donate and choose CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS on the dropdown menu.



Repairman working on Church bathroom



Church Bathroom repairs completed

UNDER THE AFRICAN SKY

by Pastor Eric Lehmann
Freedom Church
Wesley Chapel, Florida

I raised the Massai sword high in the air and then brought it down with force. It sliced through the humid air and the crowd erupted in praise. I looked across the savannah choking back the tears. Hundreds of people were standing and shouting in victory. I glanced down off the platform and met the gaze of Zablon Laizer. This Massai warrior, who is now a pastor, nodded his head in firm resolution. Then he shot his hand up in the air and erupted in what can only be described as a war cry for the Lord.



**Pastor Eric Lehmann Preaching at the
Crusade in Esilalei, Tanzania**

The Massai are a beautiful people group. Semi-nomadic, they have held on to their dearly loved traditions of dress, unique dance, and cattle raising. But many traditions are painful and heartbreaking. Daughters are sold off at a young age to be married, and immorality often accompanies the traditional dances. Witchcraft is pervasive and witchdoctors control tribal members through demonic curses and fear.

How do you reach people steeped in customs that are contrary to God's way of living? Only with a genuine demonstration of the love of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. This is exactly what Dave and Rita Langeland are doing through Hidden With Christ Ministries and Treasures of Africa in Tanzania. I have known the Langelands for twenty-five years, and I had the privilege of being with them in Tanzania right before they opened Treasures of Africa Children's Home in 2007. I have been deeply impressed with their faithfulness, long suffering perseverance, and their uncompromising devotion to serve the Lord in Africa. And the fruit is amazing!



TOA KIDZ and siblings - Witness and Samweli (now in college) after sharing their testimonies with the Freedom Church Mission Team

I led a team from our church to join Dave and Rita and their amazing team in Tanzania. We started out in Moshi, where we had a very special time with some Treasures of Africa kids and staff members. We met little Rose, whom our church has been helping to support since she was a baby. Now six years old, she has the most beautiful smile and such a wonderful and engaging personality. We also spent time with Samweli and Witness, who shared their testimonies with our team. Seeing these kids, now in their twenties, bursting with excitement and vision for the Lord, just left me speechless.

The next day we piled into three vehicles and began to make our way out to Mto wa Mbu. One of our vehicles was a truck full of food for the Massai widows in that region. I was so happy to see that Innocent, one of the Treasures of Africa kids, was driving the truck. I remember him as a young boy, and now to see him serving the Lord as a young man? Well, let's just say it brought a huge smile to my face.

Slowly making our way through small towns, the landscape eventually opened to sweeping savannahs and dusty plains. By nightfall, after passing the occasional ostrich and antelope, we finally reached our destination.

The next day was spent preparing bags of food for the widows in the region. This was quite a chore, and our team jumped in with hearts to serve. Food was weighed and measured, and each bag was lovingly prayed over. I watched as our team from the States worked with our Tanzanian brothers and sisters. Lots of hand motions and smiles, laughter, and then even singing as they



Freedom Church mission Team preparing food bags for widows



discovered that some songs were sung in both Swahili and English, and even Massai. Now **that** is the family of God. Word had gone out across the savannahs, and the next day, the widows and their families came. Eighty widows had signed up to receive food, each one carefully registering their name in a book for clear accountability. These precious women were given chairs to sit on under a couple of acacia trees. And then we brought out the bags of food.

I watched as Pastor Rita spoke to everyone on receiving these

gifts of God's love. Then she shared that we can all receive God's greatest gift, salvation through Christ. She said, "Why wait? You can receive Jesus now." And before she could give an altar call, a woman jumped up and started running to Pastor Rita exclaiming, "I'm not waiting!" Others stood up and quickly made their way to Pastor Rita. It was such a beautiful scene to see these precious women pressing around her as they prayed to receive Christ. Our team, along with local church leaders, gathered around these forty-eight women to encourage and pray for them.



Rita Langeland sharing the Gospel with Maasai widows

That afternoon, the meeting in the open air began. Praise and worship filled the air and the dancing began. Moving in rhythm, the Maasai began to circle the plain, bobbing back and forth. Every once in a while, a warrior would leap high into the air straining his head to jump as high as he could. The Presence of the Lord was strong.

I stood on the platform and preached on the love of Christ. Before I could even give a clear call for salvation, people began streaming to the front. Now **that** is revival. **That** is the harvest.

I don't even have the words to articulate what is what like hearing so many people on the plains of Africa praying to receive Christ. It was deeply moving, and it seemed like time had stopped.

That night, my heart was stirred. I knew the Lord wanted me to preach about the devastating curses that still plague much of the Maasai. The answer is in the power of the Cross, our identity in Christ, and the power of God's Word. I knew in my heart that the imagery of God's Word being like a sword would resonate with the Maasai.

When I took the pulpit the next day, the atmosphere was electric. I could feel God's power and anointing. Suddenly I was in the moment. Everything about being a missionary kid and growing up in Africa came together in a deep connection with the Maasai. I could sense Pastor Zablon's encouragement as we began to pray to cut off curses. I led the people in a strong prayer of deliverance, and you could hear the Maasai as one voice thunder across plains, "In the Name of Jesus, we cut off every curse!" People were touched, and we saw God's delivering power manifest. Some were set free from demonic control, just like the Bible describes it. Foaming at the mouth, eyes rolled back, bodies contorted in violence, but then the peaceful release as Jesus set them free.



Crowd responds to Pastor Eric's preaching about breaking off curses in the name of Jesus



Final church service in Esilalei on Sunday morning



Pastor David Langeland (l) and Pastor Eric Lehmann baptizing new converts after the crusade in Esilalei village

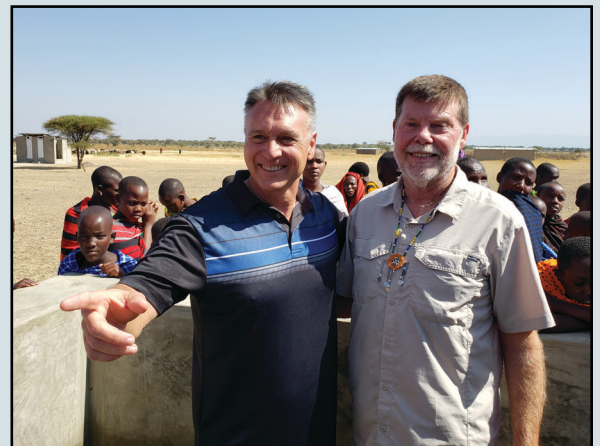
Interspersed with these open-air meetings were some discipleship meetings and a final Sunday church service. During the Sunday morning service, Pastor Zablon called up the young ladies in the church to receive prayer so that their families wouldn't sell them off to be married instead of sending them to school. We wept and wept as we interceded for these girls. Many of them were kneeling down praying, and when they got up, you could see pools of tears on the ground. I believe the Lord released miracles that day for these princesses.

And the exclamation point of this incredible time of ministry? A water baptism in the middle of Africa! What a joy to be in the water with my fellow missionary kid from Africa, Pastor Dave. There was only enough water to fill the baptismal half full, but here we were on the dusty plains being refreshed as we celebrated new life in Christ with our brothers and sisters in Massai land.

People were packed around the baptismal, laughing and celebrating. A herd of cattle was passing by, and it seemed like you could see forever in the distance. I could feel the sun burning on my back and I couldn't stop smiling. I love the weather in Africa. I suppose it reminds me of playing outside and running free as a kid in Africa. I felt the warmth, but more than that, I felt God's presence, and I knew Jesus was smiling.

We said goodbye to our wonderful brothers and sisters at the church. Every handshake, every smile, every hug was a reflection of the love of Christ crossing cultures and transcending language barriers.

There is nothing like preaching and ministering under the African sky.



Pastor Eric and Pastor Dave after completing the baptism of many Maasai at the church in Esilalei village



Florida Church Blesses Widows in Tanzania

*I have loved you with an everlasting love;
Therefore, with lovingkindness I have drawn you.*

Jeremiah 31:3 NKJV

The widows came from surrounding villages, some nearby and some quite far away. The word had reached them through the Maasai tribal grapevine that widows would receive a gift of food if they came to a meeting at the church in Esilalei village. Some traveled by foot, others by bus, and those who came the farthest caught a ride in the back of a four-wheel drive pick-up truck. By the time they had gathered at the church, the sun was high in the morning sky, so they pulled the church’s plastic chairs into the only available shade, under the branches of several large thorn trees. The lovingkindness of God had drawn them to that place.

The word “reHEMA” in Kiswahili means “mercy.” Hidden with Christ Ministries’ **REHEMA PROJECTS** are acts of compassion that address the needs of hurting people in Tanzania. One Rehema Project which is dear to our hearts is what we have called the Widow’s Blessing – preparing and distributing food parcels to widows from the Maasai tribe. Maasai widows are among the most vulnerable members of society because they are quite destitute when the head of the family dies. The male members of the family will come and take the dead man’s wealth (cattle, goats, sheep and donkeys) and distribute it among his brothers, leaving nothing for the widow and children.

A Missions Team from Freedom Church in Wesley Chapel, Florida, jumped at the opportunity to bless and serve these precious widows. Not only did the church contribute the funds to purchase more than 3500 pounds of food, but their Mission Team spent many long, hot hours measuring and weighing out the beans and maize flour into 80 gift parcels. Each widow would be presented with a parcel containing 22 pounds (10kg) of maize flour, 22 pounds of beans and 5 liters of sunflower oil to take home. These food staples would last for many weeks (and some for a month or two) depending on the size of their family.

Prior to the food distribution, Pastor Rita Langeland shared a message with the widows about God’s love for them. That day, 48 widows gave their hearts to Christ, enabling them to take home both physical and spiritual food.



Freedom Church team members Shawn Cullen (L) & Andy Morey (R) move 220 lb bags of beans purchased for widows food distribution

If you have a heart of mercy and compassion for the most vulnerable members of society, you can make a donation to Hidden with Christ Ministries on our website at www.hiddenwithchrist.org and choose REHEMA PROJECTS from the dropdown menu.

OR we have a brand-new option - You can now donate easily by VENMO - Venmo username @HWCMIn



Surrounded by completed widows gift bags of food - Joy Morey measures out soy beans

Right - Andy Morey examines the beans being prepared for the widows



Above - Mission Team members measure out soybeans for Widow's food packages Marla Mensch (l) and Shelly Matt (r)



Above - Shawn Cullen secures food bags for distribution to widows



Freedom Church team member Claudia Mammah fills widows food bags with beans



Right - Loring Hammond prays with widow receiving food



Maasai warriors carry food bags to staging area for food distribution



Preparing food distribution to widows

A KINGDOM INVESTMENT

BY PASTOR DAVID LANGELAND

And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word, and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted.

Mark 4:20

Hidden With Christ Ministries joined with Pastor Eric Lehmann and a missions team from Freedom Church of Wesley Chapel, Florida, to host an evangelistic crusade in a Maasai tribal area of Tanzania. The crusade was held on the church grounds of Treasures of Faith Temple, pastored by Zablon Laizer, which is located in the village of Esilalei.

As you can see from the pictures in this article, the landscape surrounding the church grounds is quite arid – it is definitely located in “a land and climate having little or no rain; too dry or barren to support vegetation” (arid as defined by Oxford Dictionary). There is very little farming done in this region of Tanzania. The idea that this region might contain “good soil” that could produce a harvest is not easily entertained.



Photo circa 2007 – When Pastor Zablon's Maasai Church meeting was held under a thorn tree in Esilalei village

However, our intention was not to look for a natural harvest out of the physical soil, but to build on the over 20 years of investing in the Maasai people in this region of Tanzania. In 2003, HWCM Executive Director Rita Langeland first came to Tanzania to speak at a Pastor's Conference where she met Zablon Laizer, a Maasai pastor, who was attending the conference. From that first meeting, a strong and lasting partnership developed between HWCM and Pastor Zablon. Through this partnership we have been able to invest in a number of significant projects to benefit the local Maasai community and to demonstrate Christ's love to these precious people. One very tangible project has been the construction and maintenance of the Treasures of Faith Temple building and grounds.

In 2007, Pastor Zablon was led by the Lord to return to his home village to plant a church and establish a ministry center. Before moving, he received a prophetic word from Andy Langeland that broke through his reluctance to return to live among his family and tribe, who had been very angry when he became a disciple of Jesus Christ. When Pastor Zablon made the decision to move back to Esilalei village, HWCM provided the resources that made it possible for land to be acquired and a church building to be constructed. It has since become a center for evangelism and discipleship. Prior to the construction of the church building, Pastor Zablon was holding meetings under a tree, which limited his efforts to gather and teach new disciples.



*Pastor David Langeland
in Esilalei village*

There are many challenges that new Maasai believers face as they grow in their faith. Many of the people are not able to read the Bible for themselves, due to illiteracy. The process of discipleship can also be slowed because of cultural obstacles and resistance by family members who have not yet given their hearts to the Lord. The harsh living conditions and lack of food security make it difficult for the Maasai to consistently gather for Bible studies and church meetings.

Sowing and reaping is a process that is not instant, and without eyes of faith, it may be missed all together. As we began the three-day crusade, I was curious to see what type of harvest would come forth from the long-term investment of HWCM. During the three days of indoor and open-air meetings, many people responded to the invitation to receive Christ. There were dramatic deliverances and physical healings. Food was distributed to over 80 widows. Times of worship were joyful with the Maasai singing and praising the Lord in their own unique style. I rejoice over all these things!

There is one more thing I feel prompted to share, because it became so obvious to me as I spent time observing the church. The Maasai believers have been gaining depth in their understanding of the scriptures and their faith in Christ. As we were teaching the church members, we were able to teach deeper concepts than had been possible in past meetings. The consistent investment in teaching leaders was filtering across the whole church. The local church leaders have been taking up the responsibility of discipling the people and the people have been growing in their faith and freedom in Christ. The physical land may be arid, but the Maasai people are good soil and God is bringing forth a harvest - thirty, sixty, and even a hundred-fold of what has been planted.

While I was watching the people giving their hearts to the Lord at the crusade meetings and then coming to learn at the seminars, I was touched by their hunger for the truth from God's Word. There is a need to provide the Maasai believers with audio Bibles in their own language. There is a solar powered Maasai Talking Bible that

can be purchased for about \$60, which we have successfully distributed in the past. You can make a donation towards the purchase of a Maasai Talking Bible on our website -

www.hiddenwithchrist.org/donate.

We will distribute the Bibles on our next trip to Tanzania.

Rita and I are overjoyed at the progress we are seeing in the outreach to the Maasai people. We are so grateful to all of you who have invested prayers and financial donations to the work of Hidden With Christ Ministries in Tanzania.



Pastor David Langeland preaching in the Maasai church in Esilalei

STEPPING ON TANZANIAN SOIL ONCE AGAIN

by Jesca Soka

It had been 18 months, one week and six days since I had stepped on the soil of my homeland, Tanzania. After being in the U.S. this long, I feel familiar with American culture and comfortable speaking English rather than Kiswahili. Now I was headed back to the country of my birth after being in school in the United States for one and a half years. I knew my brain was going to have to switch over to thinking in Swahili!

I remembered when I first got off the plane in America in December of 2021. I was shocked at the cold weather. I felt so tired after the long journey on several planes that took me first to Amsterdam and then on to Roanoke, Virginia. When I walked off the plane, I was amazed at how bright everything looked in the airport and thought it was different than what I expected. But now I feel comfortable in the United States.

On this trip to Tanzania, we flew through Paris instead of Amsterdam which I thought was wonderful as I always wanted to see Paris. In the Paris airport they had several French bakeries, and we ate real French croissants which tasted amazing.

When we finally arrived at the Kilimanjaro airport, I felt excited as I got off the plane. When I saw the sign that read, "KILIMANJARO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT" I felt happy to be in my home country.

The first thing we had to do when we arrived in Tanzania was go to the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam to renew my student visa. I would not be able to return to America or go back to school at Liberty Christian Academy without it. My appointment was for the very next morning, and I was excited to get my new visa. I wasn't worried at all.

When we went to the Embassy there were a lot of other people lined up for their appointments. We had to wait and wait and wait. When my name was finally called, I felt sure that I was going to get my visa.



*Jesca upon arrival at the
Kilimanjaro airport in June 2023*

We presented all the documents and answered questions. The Embassy officer was nice and friendly. He looked over everything we gave him and said, "Approved."

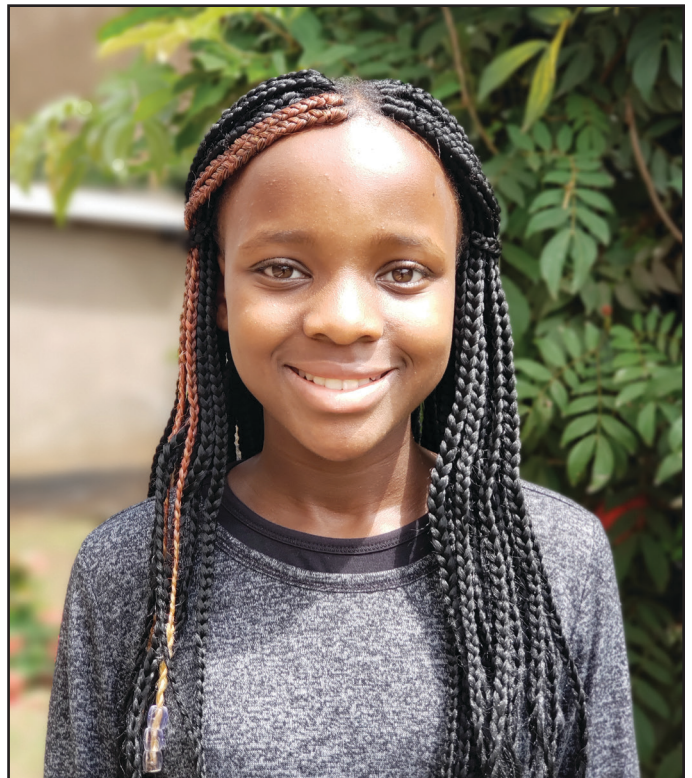
After getting my visa approved, I was so happy. Now I could focus on the reason I came back to Tanzania. The first thing I wanted to do was visit some friends. I was happy to see them, and I got to do something I had never been able to do when I lived there – get my hair done by a Tanzanian hairdresser! When I was in school in Tanzania, we were forced to shave our heads, so I never got to grow my hair out and have braids. So together with two of my friends, I went to the hair salon and spent all day getting new braids!

The main reason I had to return to Tanzania was to visit some family members. They had required this of me in order to sign an agreement that allowed me to go to school in America. I had never lived with them, so I didn't know them very well. I felt very weird and uncomfortable when I was told I had to visit them. But I knew I had to do it if I was going to be allowed to continue to attend school in the United States. We prayed about it and I was determined to make the best of it.

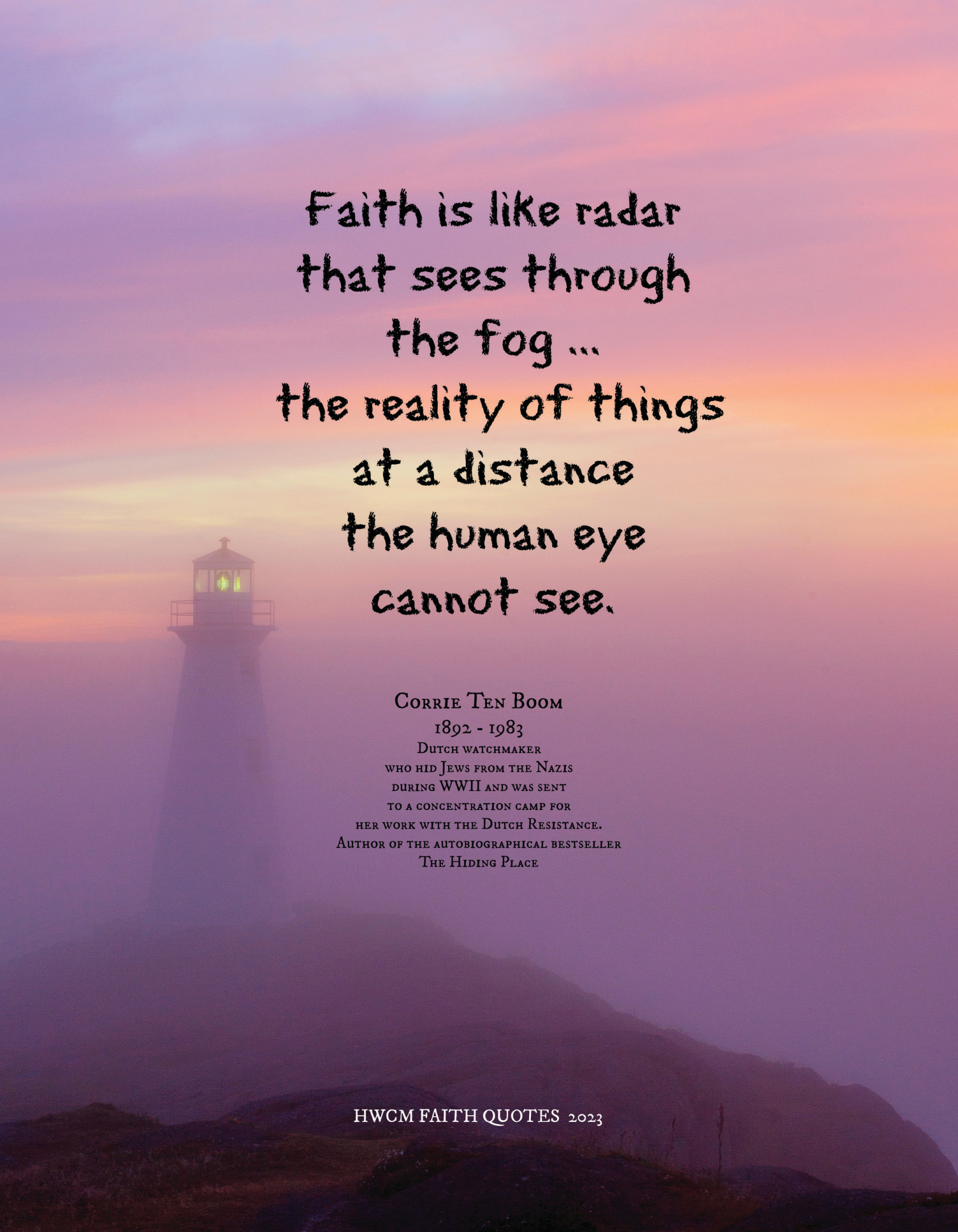
I stayed with my relatives for 1½ weeks. I thank God that it went ok. After my required visit was over, I was able to stay with Mama Faith for a few days and go to church at our old church in Moshi that we used to attend with the Treasures of Africa KIDZ. I saw my friends and it felt great.

Going on this trip made me very aware of how hard life is in Tanzania and very thankful for the opportunity to receive the education I am getting. I am grateful to God and everyone who has helped sponsor my schooling in America. I will never stop praising God for what He has done for my life and one day I hope to go back to Tanzania and help other people as much as I can.

Editor's Note: Jesca came to live at Treasures of Africa Children's Home at the age of five years, when she aged out of a local "baby orphanage." She remained at Treasures of Africa until she was 12. Then she was given the opportunity to come to the U.S. for school, sponsored by the generous donors of Hidden with Christ Ministries. She is now 14, and just started 8th grade in Lynchburg, Virginia at Liberty Christian Academy. She is a bright and hardworking student, and her education has been fully sponsored through the Education Fund of TREASURES OF AFRICA KIDZ - a project of Hidden with Christ Ministries. You can assist students from Tanzania like Jesca, by making a donation to the Education Fund on one of our websites: www.treasuresofafrica.org or www.hiddenwithchrist.org. Or make a donation through VENMO - just search the charities for HIDDEN WITH CHRIST MINISTRIES or our Venmo username @HWCMIn



Jesca after her first visit to a Tanzanian hair braiding salon



Faith is like radar
that sees through
the fog ...
the reality of things
at a distance
the human eye
cannot see.

CORRIE TEN BOOM

1892 - 1983

DUTCH WATCHMAKER

WHO HID JEWS FROM THE NAZIS

DURING WWII AND WAS SENT

TO A CONCENTRATION CAMP FOR

HER WORK WITH THE DUTCH RESISTANCE.

AUTHOR OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL BESTSELLER

THE HIDING PLACE

Understanding the Times

by Rita Langeland



From Issachar's descendants there were 200 leaders who understood the times and knew what Israel should do.

1 Chronicles 12:32

Biblical historical records recounting names and numbers may seem to be boring reading material and often Bible readers skip over them, hoping to find a juicier part of the story. However, amid such Biblical records, there are often spiritual nuggets that can give us important insights.

We find such a historical record in the twelfth chapter of the book of First Chronicles. There we read a long list of the numbers of soldiers who came from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to support David, the son of Jesse, and make him the new king over Israel after the death of Saul. What is fascinating about this list, is the few words of commentary about the different groups made by the Biblical author. To me, the most interesting is the observation made about the descendants of Issachar. They were said to be leaders who ***"understood the times and knew what Israel should do."*** These would be people you want on your leadership team!

We live in a day when it is vital that we as the body of Christ have **understanding of the times** we live in. We know that the Bible is full of prophecy, some that has been fulfilled – like the birth of Christ – and others yet to be fulfilled, such as the return of Christ to the earth. We cannot be indifferent or careless about the times in which we live. We need to be diligent to seek out God's timetable as laid out in scripture and to be alert as signs of the times are appearing all around us.

In the New Testament, which was first recorded in the Greek language, we find two different words used for "time" – which are very revealing. It is important to understand the meaning of both kinds of time. The first is the word **CHRONOS** which means a certain duration of time such as one minute, three days, five weeks, ten years. The second is the word **KAIROS** which means an opportune season or appointed time for something to happen. In Biblical usage it often refers to a specified time set aside by God for certain events to occur.

The Greek word used for time in the following scripture is KAIROS. ***For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*** (Romans 5:6) That was a KAIROS moment – a time or season set aside by God for that specific prophetic event to occur. But what is amazing is that the Jewish religious leaders of the day who were waiting for the appearance of the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament missed the KAIROS moment of Jesus walking in their midst!

People can miss the KAIROS moment God has sent into their lives if they are not sensitive to the Spirit of God but instead judge things in the flesh. The Jewish leaders made that mistake. Jesus didn't look like the Messiah they were expecting. He wasn't a soldier or a political leader ready to help them overthrow the occupying Roman army, so they rejected him. If you are not careful, you can dismiss the KAIROS moment – the opportune time – the appointed season - God has sent to you because the circumstances don't look desirable, comfortable, convenient, or exactly what you were expecting.

Not recognizing God's appointed times can have devastating repercussions personally and corporately as a society. Jesus told those in the city of Jerusalem that the penalty for missing God's KAIROS season of His presence among them was nothing less than destruction of the city and their beloved Temple. His prophetic words were fulfilled in A.D. 70.

For the days will come upon you when your enemies will put up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground, and throw down your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.

Luke 19:43-44 NASB

We don't want to miss the signs of the times we are living in as those did who were alive at the time Jesus walked on this earth. One sign that we are seeing appear with increasing frequency is the rush toward a cashless society. Many people no longer carry or use cash at all. The convenience of debit and credit cards as well as other digital forms of money such as Apple Pay and many others is grooming society to accept the convenience of purchases being made via some cashless format. Why is this a sign of the end times?

The book of Revelation warns us that the day will come when an evil world ruler - The Anti-Christ – will require a mark to be placed on the forehead or the right hand in order to permit a person to buy or sell.

And he causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, to be given a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, and he decrees that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name.

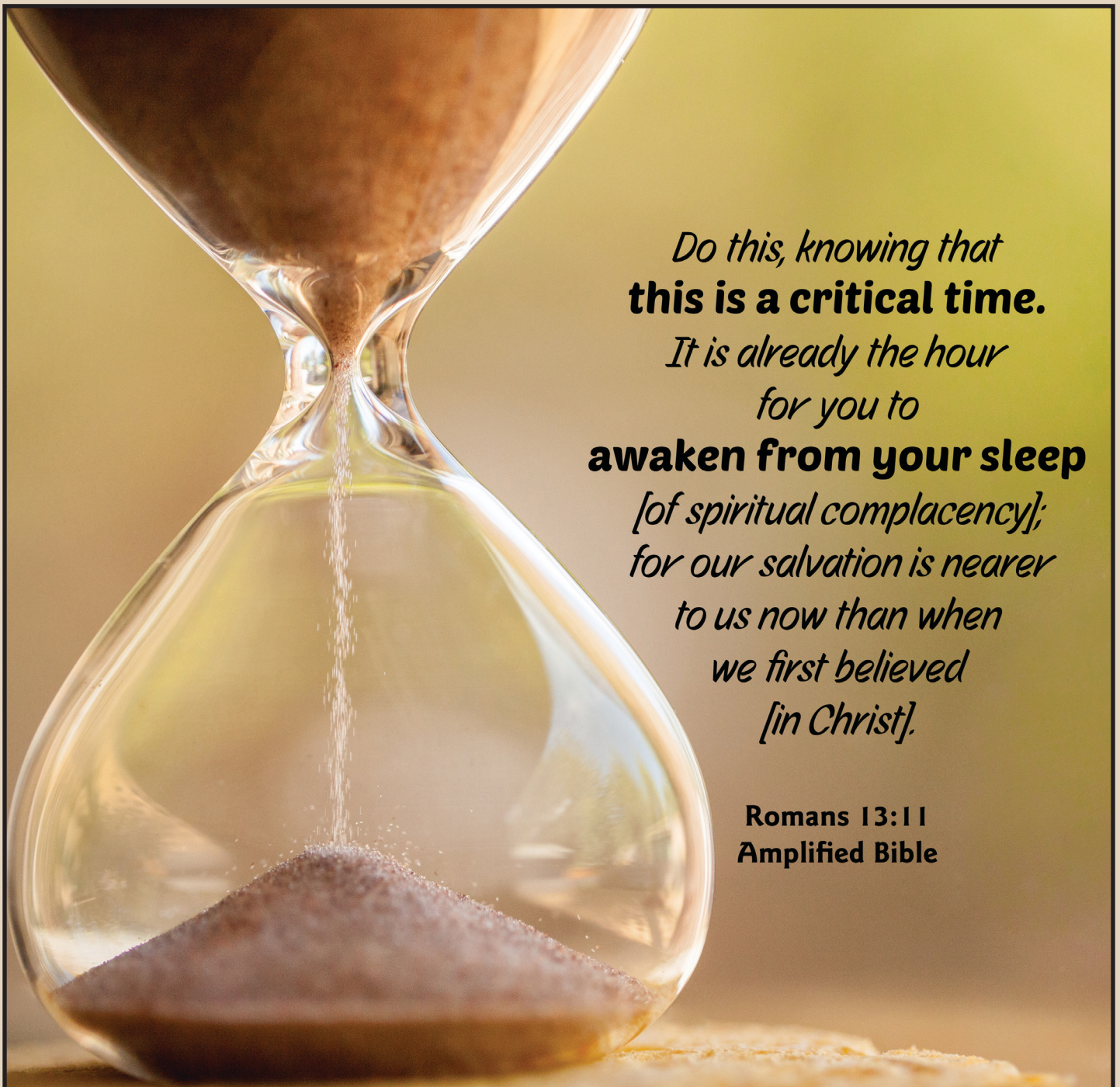
Revelation 13:16-17 NASB

We don't know what that mark will look like, but we do know that current microchip technology is already sophisticated enough to hold an enormous amount of data including financial and identity information that could easily be accessed with a simple swipe at a store counter. It is the perfect picture of a cashless society. This has already been tested and touted as an answer to the increasing problem of theft of credit card numbers.

A news report in 2022 announced that a British-Polish owned company called Walletmor created an implantable RFID chip about the size of a grain of rice. It is able to hold all the financial information needed to allow you to swipe your hand over a card reader to pay for your groceries.

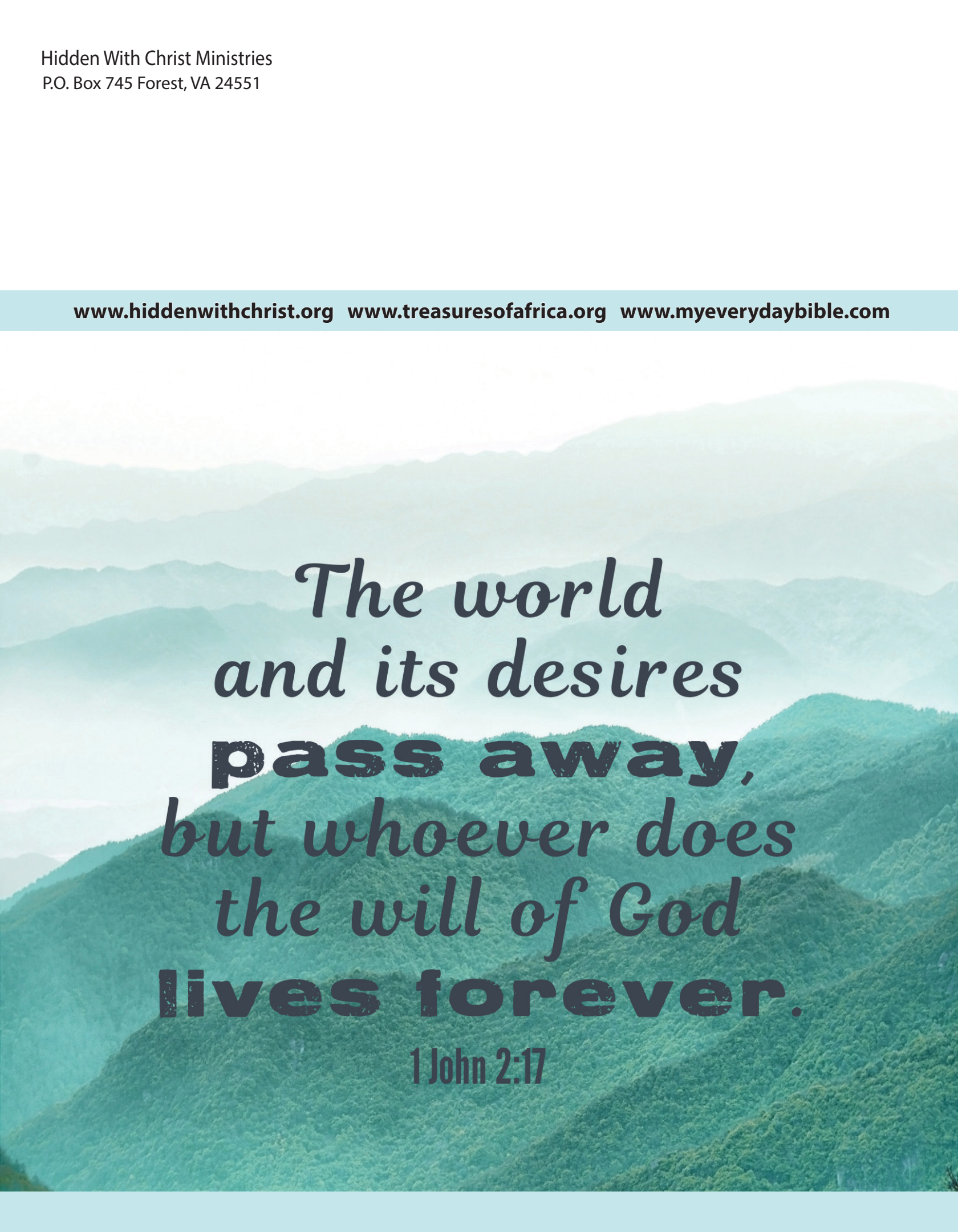
Decades ago, it may have been hard to imagine how people who read the Bible (and believe it) would be willing to go along with this kind of system. It is clearly stated in Revelation 14:9-10 that anyone who takes the mark will experience the wrath of God and be tormented with fire. Yet today, the momentary convenience of not carrying cash or credit cards along with the appearance of being "safe" from thieves may very well be the draw that woos people to blindly get in line without considering the eternal ramifications.

It is time for us to have the same spirit the sons of Issachar possessed – an understanding of the times and a knowledge of what we should do. Let us be very watchful for the signs of the times and be wise as to what we choose to agree with - and what we resist.



*Do this, knowing that
this is a critical time.
It is already the hour
for you to
awaken from your sleep
[of spiritual complacency];
for our salvation is nearer
to us now than when
we first believed
[in Christ].*

**Romans 13:11
Amplified Bible**



*The world
and its desires
pass away,
but whoever does
the will of God
lives forever.*

1 John 2:17