

# the sperling jerry can

*“...carrying Living Water in practical ways...”*

## Mentoring

One of the focal points of the work that we do here in Uganda is mentoring leaders within the sphere of Farming God’s Way. I suppose discipleship and mentoring are pretty close to the same thing; modeling a godly lifestyle and leadership through a day to day living out of the gospel. Although the gospel has been in Uganda for over a century, there is a great lack of examples of people who live out their Christian faith in an uncompromising manner. Due to a lack of conviction and syncretism with tribal pantheism, the power of the gospel is not often lived out for people to see. Instead, the popular, but false gospel of prosperity is preached, much to the demise of true Christianity. People run after riches instead of righteousness, yet we know it is the righteous who will see God!



Isaiah helping with the work at Infield Mentoring

Every year, if possible, I try to attend the Farming God’s Way Infield Mentoring event usually hosted in the southern African countries. This year the event was in the Seskei region of South Africa which the homeland of the Xsosa people. Farming God’s Way trainers and advocates came from all over the world to attend this week of outreach to the local people. The week has two focuses; reaching the local poor people with the gospel of the Kingdom through the tool of Farming God’s Way and mentoring our up and coming trainers in a rural training environment. We stayed for the better part of a week at the Seyakolwa training centre and had an amazing time of seeing people set free from the spiritual darkness that shrouds the people of the Keiskammahoeek valley. I had the privilege of leading a group where my American friend Ryan Boonstra was our primary mentee, looking to become accredited, and Zephania Mbuyisa was our secondary mentee looking to grow in his knowledge and skill as well as his heart for the poor. God did amazing things in our group which stayed at the main training centre! One lady gave her heart to the Lord after we shared about the need to turn away from ancestor worship and many of the group were so happy with the skills they gained and the freedom they saw that is in following God’s Ways. I enjoyed leading Zeph, a zulu, on his journey to excellence in caring for the poor farmers of Africa.



Sand dunes  
in Port Elizabeth

## Along for the ride

We have a tradition in our family that each year one of the children get to go with daddy to Infield Mentoring so that they can see firsthand how the message of Farming God’s Way is delivered in a different African setting as well as to enjoy another culture and see the amazing beauty of this continent. Kenneth has visited the mountain kingdom of Lesotho. Albert has visited the roaring Zambezi of Zambia and Isaiah got to visit the amazing country of South Africa this time. Isaiah was the only child at Infield Mentoring but that didn’t discourage him as he found a bike to ride countless miles on and a neighboring horse to

spend time with. After our time in the Seskei, Isaiah and I were hosted by friends in Port Elizabeth and got to do some amazing things like body surfing in the Indian Ocean, going to Addo Elephant Park and going to some massive sand dunes among other fun stuff. Isaiah thoroughly enjoyed the food and downed a number of big hamburgers and got to try seafood for the first time! I love such rich times with my kids. Ezra, who is next in line, is already asking where we will go next year.

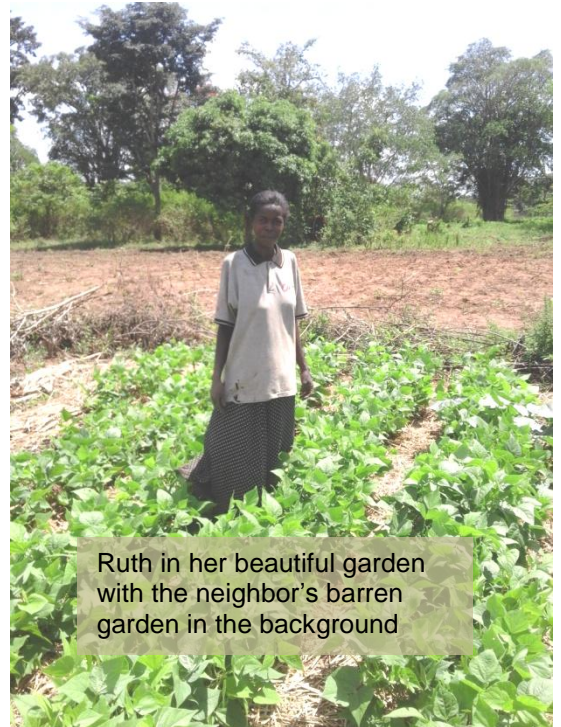
## We still need a teacher! Are you *that* teacher?

We are still in great need of a teacher for the children. I (Chris) am trying to teach the kids but obviously teaching 5 children and having a full time job won't be a long term solution. Please take time to pray for this need and let us know of anyone who may be able to help us out with this need.

## There's hope in following God's ways

I had been quite disappointed with my farmers recently with their failure to be convinced with the value of God's blanket (mulch) which is of such great value, especially when rainfall is insufficient and infrequent, which is the case here so often. So, when I visited my farmers in Kamuli I was discouraged to find very poor mulching yet if they would have mulched they would not have been affected by the current drought so badly. The farmers have been trained and shown the value of mulch both theoretically and practically yet they remain unconvinced and thus don't benefit from its great value in protecting their land from erosion, the baking of the sun and helping to build up the organic matter among many other things. So, sadly, my Farming God's Way farmers were suffering from the drought the same way many of the locals were even though they were shown how they can protect their land during extreme weather by applying crop residues, dry grass or reeds as God's blanket.

So when I went to visit my next group of farmers a couple days later I was bracing myself for similar poor results. My first farmer, Pastor James, had not mulched very but there was at least more than my Kamuli farmers but his germination had been poor as a result. Then we went to see Ruth, one of James' church members. I had heard that her garden was good from one of the pastors so I was expectant. We reached her garden and found that it was an amazing contrast to her neighbours'. Her beans were lush and beautiful and her maize was looking good except goats had eaten away at it. Although her garden was small it was to a high standard which was very encouraging. What stood out in stark contrast was the fact that neighbouring plot was almost completely void of vegetation: having been dried out by the drought. Not only that, but the neighbours had tried to replant the field three times with almost no success! Tears welled up in my eyes as a spontaneous feeling of joy came over me. I was so blessed to see how Ruth was benefiting from putting into practice all she had learned. Her fellow farmers from the group congratulated her heartily and she shared how people were asking her how to implement Farming God's Way. Her garden shone the glory of God clearly. She has big plans to expand her garden.



Ruth in her beautiful garden with the neighbor's barren garden in the background

This made me think how people suffer – how I suffer – because we simply fail to implement what God has told us to do. Our joy and pleasure is locked up in obedience to Christ! Lord help us to trust your ways!

### Proverbs 3:5-6 New English Translation (NET Bible)

<sup>5</sup> *Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and do not rely on your own understanding.*

<sup>6</sup> *Acknowledge him in all your ways,  
and he will make your paths straight.*

## Financial Needs:

- Ongoing expenses like our salary and ministry costs (mostly related to rural travel and internet costs). We are currently well below our target level for monthly support and are now left with almost no reserves for coming months. Please consider giving monthly and praying for more monthly supporters.
- Money for a newer vehicle; our current vehicle is becoming old (21 years), small for us (it seats 7 -- we need 10 seats now) and beat up from all the years of banging around the Ugandan roads. Cost:\$20,000 (there is about 75% import tax on used vehicles here)
- Money for a small plot of land (2 acres) to act as a nearby training site for training local farmers and a money making venture to have some sustainable income here. Cost:\$10,000
- Finances for our flights home for furlough next year.
- *\*To contribute to the Sperling's needs please see the addresses and links at the end of the letter*

## Prayer requests and praises!

Please continue to pray with us in the following areas:

- Pray for **effectiveness** in our ministry; that many will come to know Christ and become His disciple in a manner that glorifies God and His Kingdom.
- Pray for our **safety and health** with our crazy roads and the many tropical diseases around.
- Pray that **our hearts will be ready** for God to work anew in and through us in Uganda.
- Pray that **God will give us heart's willing to give sacrificially** to those He calls us to.
- Pray for **Andrew** to make the right choices right now so that he will walk in God's ways and not the ways of the world which he finds so attractive. Pray for Tugume also away at boarding school
- **Praise** for good house help. The girls we have right now are doing well with the work. Your prayers were answered!
- **Praise** for at least three people who came to salvation at the recent Infield Mentoring and for the amazing time we had with the Xsosa people.
- **Praise** for the slow but steady adoption of Farming God's Way in Kamuli and Wante.
- Pray for provision for the work God has called us to.
- Thanks for all your prayers! They are essential to our life here!

Love from Chris and Jane, Andrew, Tugume, Kenny, Albert, Isaiah, Ezra, Anna and Alin

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