

Chin Up

“Chin up, Daniel.” I didn’t see the person encouraging me. The voice from the crowd lifted my spirits.

I was nearing the end of a *long race* in Cape Town, South Africa. So sore. So weary.

But the person who spied my name on my running bib gave me new energy. He or she used my name.



It was hearing *Daniel*. That spurred me on. Likewise, I want to encourage you to run with perseverance the race marked out for you and to encourage others in Christ.

Can you hear me calling out your name? Across the ocean, a voice urges you, “Chin up, _____.” Insert your name. I am praying God re-energizes you by the Spirit of his risen Son.

So how does it work these days to be a missionary on the WELS One Africa Team? You never know. Here are a few recent stories.

Joseph

First, picture Joseph, a black South African. He was my Uber driver the day before the race. Besides driving people around Cape Town, South Africa, he is an administrator and evangelist at his church.

I asked Joseph, “Would you like free training in God’s Word so that you can teach others better?”

“Yes!” he said.

I shared a few details about the TELL network. While in the car I sent him a quick WhatsApp message: “Tellnetwork.org ... Free Bible teaching classes.”

(In the States, you may text friends. Your One Africa Team missionaries usually WhatsApp others. About 2.5 billion people use WhatsApp worldwide. It is Africa’s main messaging platform.)

Ten hours later, Joseph replied back on WhatsApp about TELL, “I communicated to these people and am busy answering some questions.”

“Is really very nice teachings.”



Lovemore

Next comes Lovemore. Not joking. That's his name. He's my barber in Lusaka, Zambia.

When I was in Pretoria, South Africa after the race, trying to get a visa to Cameroon, Lovemore wrote me on WhatsApp.

"Hi Sir good morning. I saw the link you sent me but am having difficulty to login."

He meant the link I had sent him on his phone to start TELL Network classes before I left for South Africa.

TELL starts with self-guided courses. It goes on to live Zoom-based classes. It's about learning God's Word so you or a friend can teach it to others.

You can tell friends about TELL too. Tell the person who cuts your hair about TELL. Who knows where it will lead?

(By God's Spirit: *Love. More!*)



We are called TELL. We teach the good news of Jesus to people around the world. Go to our website, or download our app to study the bible on your own. After you finish TELL beginner courses, you can sign up to continue to study with an online instructor. We tell you God's Word, so you can tell others!

TRAINING LEADERS FOR CHRIST

Anonymous

That same Monday morning I also entered the High Commission of the Republic of Cameroon in Pretoria. There another man encouraged me. I wish I asked him his name.

Here is what happened. I found out at the consular services window that I had not brought enough Rand, the South African currency. I had R2500, per a recent email from the High Commission.

The fee, though, had just gone up to R2750. They do not take card payments.

I apologized to the official at the window. I promised I would come back with the needed money the same morning. My plan was to walk to an ATM 20 minutes away.

Then a tall Cameroonian man who never met me before took a second look at me and my clerical collar. He paid the difference (about \$14).

"Merci beaucoup," I said over and over. "Thank you very much."



Embassy of Cameroon in Pretoria, South Africa

Mike

That night I had supper at a local pizza restaurant. The waiter recognized me from the previous time I had been there in 2022.

Was it my clerical collar again? Mike said, “Oh, yeah, you told me about those TELL classes.”

“Did you try them?”

“Yes, I took several.”

Mike is outgoing, so I took a chance to probe. “Can I ask you a question?” I said. “Do you have a suggestion how to make TELL classes better?”

He thought hard. “No,” he said, “I can’t think of anything. They’re just perfect for me.”

Joseph, Lovemore, the anonymous man at the embassy, and Mike: All four encouraged me in the Lord so much.

“Chin up, Daniel!”

Innocent and Happy

As I got to the airport for the last leg of the trip, my waitress at the coffee shop had her name on a tag: Innocent.

The flight back was on a small plane with one attendant. Her name was Happy. She took the time to ask me about which church I’m from. (Was it the collar, a third time?) She told me her grandmother goes to a Lutheran church I visit now and then in Lusaka.

“Chin up, Daniel!”

Jesus is Innocent, and he took your place on the cross, so your name is Innocent too.

Jesus rose from the dead on the third day, and he was happy to tell women that his scared disciples were his brothers.

Happy? In Jesus, you will be so delighted when he reappears and judges you innocent by his blood. You will reign with him on the new earth. Our joy in Him and in all who love Him will only grow.

Joseph, Lovemore, the anonymous donor, Mike, Innocent, Happy. Do you hear what they are saying to you from far away?

Don’t quit now. The finish line is close. Keep witnessing, keep encouraging, and keep praying. Jesus is coming soon. “Chin up, _____.”



Missionary Dan Witte lives in Lusaka, Zambia

Please pray for those working in fields that are ripe for harvest. Share their story, engage with future news and receive updates. Learn more about our mission fields in Africa and how the Holy Spirit is working faith in people's hearts at <https://wels.net/serving-others/missions/africa>