

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT:

On August 9th, we left dear old Kerrville behind to return to South Africa. Kerrville, by the way, can easily be found on a map. One tourist brochure explains that in Kerrville a river runs through it. And if you trace the Guadalupe River on the map with your finger, you will see that when the river gets to Kerrville, it curves gently down and then back up. Or, to put it another way, "Where the Guadalupe smiles, you will find the charming little town of Kerrville." No wonder then that we found it such a pleasure to headquarter there while in America again this time. During our last month there, we were busy with the following: Al preached both at Bandera and at Comfort and he taught his *Thursday Night Open Bible Study Class* at Riverside every week. He also performed two baptisms at Riverside. In addition, he was asked to speak at the funeral service in Kerrville of our dear friend and SABC supporter, Jane Murray. We did some hospital visiting as well as visitation at the River Hills Rehab Center. We also entertained our three American children and their mates who came to tell us goodbye: Steve (and Erin and kids), Lisa (and Des), and Stacey (and John and two daughters). Before we knew it, it was time to fly out into the wild blue yonder and wouldn't you know it, the very day before was the day that Delta was hacked! When they grounded every single plane of theirs throughout the world and all flights were cancelled, we wondered if our Delta flight the following morning to Atlanta and on to Johannesburg would take off after all. We finished up our packing, however, and to our surprise, Delta had somehow managed, overnight, to struggle to its feet and both our flights were virtually problem free. In fact, it was noteworthy that our plane from Atlanta to South Africa took off an hour late but got to Oliver Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg 10 minutes early!

AFRICA IS NOT JUST A PLACE:

Arriving at the Oliver Tambo Airport in Johannesburg on August 10th, the following bit of prose came to mind: "*Africa is not just a place, it is a feeling. Africa is the heart of the world and there are only a few of us who have been touched by her.*" Beautiful words! We had been up packing our suitcases the night before leaving Kerrville until 2 AM and 4 AM respectively, but when the alarm sounded at six, we were "up and at 'em". Two of our best friends from the Riverside congregation – Martha McDuffie (whom we dubbed "Sweet Tomato") and Virginia Worley (whom we call "Sweet Potato") picked us up right on time and off we went to the San Antonio Airport. Both there and at the Atlanta Airport, different passengers related to us their own personal stories of Delta's ominous shut-down. Some had been fortunate to get a hotel room the night before at Delta's expense but others whose flights were also cancelled were stranded having to sleep on the airport floor. When we boarded at Atlanta, it was for a 16-hour non-stop flight on to Africa and already we were tired!! Nevertheless, when our fellow-missionaries (Ann and Jerry Hogg) met us at the airport at the end of our journey, they hurried us on to the Benoni church building just in time for the Midweek Bible Study. It's a good thing we were not sitting in a window there because Eutychus (Acts 20) would not have been the only one to go down in history as falling asleep during a sermon and falling out of the window to his death below!

WEATHER OR NOT:

The following morning back here in Benoni, we scrambled for our warm winter clothing to wear since Old Man Winter was still in residence here. Christians back in America are always asking how cold our African winters are. Well, the worst of winter was already behind when we got here, but we still had

nights that dipped down to temperatures in the low thirties or early forties. That doesn't sound too bad, but remember houses here are not centrally heated. Tell you what – just set your own thermostat tonight for those low temperatures we have here now and you will understand. But never mind, as a friend told us, *“Suddenly it will be spring in South Africa and then it will seem like the most modest bushes will be blooming their little heads off!”* Personally, we can't wait! Although it is enough that when it comes to the only Weather Forecast that really counts, *“GOD reigns and the SON continues to shine.”*

BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN:

Meanwhile, Al preached that first Sunday we were back and continues to be Benoni's pulpit preacher with its Sunday and sundry (!) duties. Already, by the second weekend, one of our 83-year-old members passed and Al was asked to do the funeral. As it turns out, the deceased was the one in whose home the Benoni church of Christ first met in 1957. Of course, that was before the church met in a school hall, eventually bought a piece of farm property and architecturally redesigned a good sized milking barn into an attractive worship hall. On the second Sunday we were here, a special curry lunch was enjoyed by the congregation in the Fellowship Hall. As you would imagine, there is nothing finer to warm you up on a cold winter's day than a plateful of delicious curry and rice! (One of the brethren who had the misfortune of eating one of the “warmer” or more hotly-seasoned curries commented, *“Some of the curry I've eaten here at lunch today made me more determined than ever not to go to Hell!”*)

ONLY IN AFRICA:

The minute I saw it, I knew we were back in South Africa! Seen on the door of a Johannesburg shop was a sign as follows: *“NOTIS: This stor is not open today be cos it is closed. By: Meneja.”*

The sign on the door gave us a smile but it also caused us to think. Africa may have closed shops like that one but Africa also has many open hearts and that is why we are here. To find those souls who have open hearts and let them hear the gospel. And the great thing about it is that the students of *Southern Africa Bible College* will help us do just that. We are grateful for the students and we are grateful for those of you who help support them in their work at the college which prepares them to be both teachers and preachers of the Word. We are thankful to partner with you! Thank you again for your interest in SABC, for your prayers, and for your financial support for the college. Please help us further by mentioning SABC to your friends and to your congregation, requesting that they too become supporters of this college of Biblical knowledge. Please send contributions to Southern Africa Bible College as follows: SABC, c/o Memorial Church of Christ, 900 Echo Lane, Houston, TX 77024. Your contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Yours for saving souls in Africa,

Al and Donna Horne,
Your Missionaries to South Africa