

# **WE ALL GO EVERYWHERE TO EVERYONE**

## **Introduction:**

Whenever Tim and I share an up-front time, he always makes me share some of my language “blapses” mistakes - as we call them in South Africa! So sit back, enjoy your coffee while I entertain you with 1 of my most recent and worst blapses:

Before coming to Amercia, we lived In Tanzania and learnt the language of the country Kiswahili. Some words are terribly similar, but horribly different in meaning. And one has to be careful to use the correct words, or you give disastrous messages....

For example: The word “uji” is the liquid porridge that many families will drink for breakfast, if they can afford it. the word “Uchi” means naked! Now, when we first got to Tanzania, our son, Daniel was 2 and our daughter, Samantha was 5. I was a bit worried what they would eat, especially for breakfast: (not toast, no breakfast cereals available on the little island we were on) But to my great relief, I discovered that if I made the porridge a bit thicker and we ate it with sugar and milk, the kids loved it. So that first week I joined the circle of women around the fire (kitchen) at the back of the house, on an old woven palm mat and very loudly, slowly and clearly told them (in Kiswahili)how happy I was that my children liked eating naked. In fact, I said, the whole family had eaten naked every morning since we had arrived. But it was when I asked all the women if THEY ate naked, that I began to see the horrified looks and realised something was not well!

Well, coming to America, I have had to learn that you do indeed speak a different language: and now my children are fully fluent in the nuances and finer points of Americanese! Now heading to North Africa, we have begun to learn Arabic, with many strange guttural sounds: Gh, jhgh.... but whatever language, whatever people, whatever place, there are many bridges that we can use to walk across to those who are different to us: laughter, food, friendship and of most importantly, Jesus as we call Him, Yesu (in Afrikaans) Bwana Yesu (Kiswahili), Isa (Arabic).

**Tim** - We make mistakes in what we say, but Jesus sayings are no mistake, these sayings are radical even outrageous at times. Last week: Love your enemies, being the first of many. The saying for this evening is another one of those outrageous sayings, especially when you look at his audience - his 11 out of 12 disciples, recent deserters to him as he went to the cross, adult Jewish men, mostly poor, and with no work. All, all that they had was this Jesus, this risen Jesus, telling them all to go everywhere and to everyone..... and they did just that.....

## **SLIDE #1: Matthew 28:16-20**

(open your Bibles, some here too...)

This “great commission”, this well known saying, has reached us here in Columbus Ohio, 1/2 way round the world from where it was spoken some 2000 years later... what exactly did he say...? What does it mean for us - you and Ingrid and I today....?

**Let's pray** - welcome HS as our guide and teacher and energizer. Make Jesus' words clear to each of us this evening. Draw us to yourself and then to those around us. For your sake Jesus and the growth of your Kingdom here on earth.... Amen  
**(slides inspired by our 10 year old son: Daniel)**

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**SLIDE #2: v16** “Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.”

**SLIDE #3:** **Come to the risen Jesus**

**Disciples** - Context - 3 year process.... Gospel my favorite literature - 4 perspectives, 3 been with Jesus, 1 a thorough and detailed investigator..... Stories of men and women- JUST LIKE ALL OF US- people who had come to Jesus...

**Tim** - my coming to Jesus began to happen when I was 14, non-churched, no-God upbringing, England since 11 from Africa, father no work all that time, lived in govt. housing, poor, grey days. Good friends but empty inside, medicated pain in many wrong ways. Cried out to whatever, whoever was up there.... “Oh God if you exist please take us out of here” He did... I forgot. He didn't. And at 17, then moved to SA, I was invited to a Baptist Youth Group at the church my mom had just come to faith and I also got involved with a YFC adventure program. From my friends and leaders and even myself, I began to hear Jesus' words above the din of this world and I knew I had to come to him, I knew he wanted me just as I was.....

**Ings** - My background was totally different to Tim: I had been raised attending a nearby Methodist church, grew to love the whole “going to church” bit, the serving of tea and scones on a Saturday to help church funds, the singing in the choir, the playing of the piano for the “youth” service on a Sunday night, the prizes at the end of the year for record attendance (which I always got) the leading of the youth group, the making of hot dogs after the Sunday night service: I got stuck in doing as much as I could and loved it. But when I was 15, I was challenged by the verse: Matthew 7:23 “I never knew you”.... and then I realized that I was doing everything, but did not have an intimate relationship with Jesus: “Deeds First” was how I functioned. I came to understand that Jesus wanted me, not what I could do... I did not really understand that (thinking what I could do was better than what was left if I did not) and so submitted the “what was left” to Jesus, one night, alone in my bedroom. Jesus had called me to intimacy, communication, friendship and slowing down: stopping doing and I finally “got it” that this is my calling, my priority, my purpose, my goal. Many of us stress about “THE CALL” but our main call as followers of Jesus is to be with Him, sit at His feet, eat His word, drink in the Holy Spirit.. and from that, we go and do. Even in the scripture we are looking at tonight, I do not think it an accident that before Jesus says GO, he says COME. This coming to Jesus is something He calls us to do daily: before you DO, come to Him. Because when we come to Him, see Him face to face, we get our perspectives right!

**You** - Jesus is more than best friend, more than someone you hang out with, He is your Rescuer. He is your Lord. Chose to come here today - this place is all about Jesus. Whether you are a first time visitor or lead the worship.... You have chosen to come to Jesus. Remember the past. Even begin again this evening. There's so much more to this Jesus that you and I and the first disciples come to.....

**SLIDE #4: v17** “When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted”

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## **SLIDE #5: Worship Him (even if you doubt)**

**Disciples** - Why worship him.? Not a normal response to a fellow human being.! Jesus is human right.!? Yes... and more. He had recently been resurrected from the dead. Not normal!! It's not resurrection when John finally gets out of bed in the morning.!!! What happened with Lazarus was supernatural but it was Jesus who brought him back. No other human being called on God to bring Jesus back, everyone had given up hope... and yet here he was back in a body, in his new body with telling signs of the old. This was only meant to happen at the end of time... yet now. There. Some doubted. Not sure who (probably Thomas and some others?). Anyway later Jesus showed himself to Thomas and Thomas said "My Lord and my God.!" He meant it and so did these 11 disciples as they worshipped him...

**Tim** - over the last 26 years of being with Jesus I am often reminded that this is where all of life starts... in His presence, giving Him full attention (even if we don't have all the answers). Events of life ebb and flow, don't they..... early on in Tanzania a young man of 25 fluent in Swahili, a friend to many Tanzanians, following Jesus' call to go to unreached areas, tragically died in a car accident caused by someone else. It was wrong. Why.? I remember doubting a little yet came to God and felt him say "I know....". Somehow that was enough for me. Some months after that while on Mafia Island during a worship service - felt God say "let me in to this meeting". He came in like a wave. God's presence - so sweet. We all experience the ebbs and flows of life yet his presence was throughout. Here in Vineyard, be real, not real -ve though, but real +ve (i.e. keep looking to God despite doubts, keep worshipping Him despite questions, keep coming to Jesus despite our limited knowledge). He is with us, even here, even now.

**Ings** - At the end of July, we are heading out to a Muslim country: Muslim means "submitted one". That is what true worship is: submission, denying your SELF, the you, the flesh, the ME, the I. As we bend our knee, lower our heads to the ground, we begin to become more like the One we worship. We carry His likeness within us. One of the many highlights that we have had while being here in Columbus, was getting to spend an evening with a Syrian man, long time friend of Bill and Dotty, written about in "Pilgrim of Christ on Muslim Road". After sharing a meal with him, he gave a loud BELCH (as is custom in his country) settled his feet comfortably under him on a large couch, took out his prayer beads and began to discuss things with us. He challenged us about how to draw people to us as believers: he asked us: will they see Jesus' love in your eyes? Will they see the Kingdom of God in your life? Will they see peace in your face? He went on to say, quite unequivocally, that if we were not full of Jesus and his Holy Spirit, and if we were not motivated by love, then, please, would we rather not come!!! We also had a wonderful meal with a lovely Persian couple from this church, and they talked about the treasure that we, as followers of Christ, carry within, and as people see this treasure we bear, they will be drawn to us. It is like a gift that we have to share with everyone we meet. They were excited and passionate about their Messiah. Sharing and witnessing was not something that they did: it was what they were, this Jesus flowed out of them.

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**You** - This comes about if we live a life of worship.... not just singing of songs, but true submission to Jesus, all day, all the time. What you are full of will spill out: you will reproduce what you are.... Our home church pastor in South Africa used to say: people will not remember what you teach, preach or say: they will remember you life. Be challenged like we have been: live a life that flows out of submission and worship: see Jesus, fresh and new every day. And that is what people will see in you: love, peace, joy, self-control.... and all the rest, and they will be drawn to the Jesus in you.

**SLIDE #6 v18** “Then Jesus came to them and said: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

## **SLIDE #7** All authority in heaven and on earth

**Disciples** - All - how about that for an outrageous claim.!? He was something special (miracles, healing blind, leper, Lazarus) and his own resurrection. What he said and did proved his authority.... those around him often commented on his authority....

**Tim** - why All Authority.? I reckon it has to do with the major issues of life and death. He had done both life and death and come out the other side for these disciples to see. No-one in all of history, on all the earth and in heaven HAD or HAS done that. No-one. Maybe our favorite sportsmen and women can bring a game back from the dead. Remember Liverpool v AC Milan in Turkey (no maybe you don't). Anyway, Steven Gerrard walks on water, though some claim! But Jesus... he was living proof, he held the keys to both life and death. He holds all authority. Working out from God's authority is serious business, no game. Remember Shad, Mish, Abn - fire. Early church... Jesus vs Religious authorities - James lost his head yet Peter was freed from prison. Don't just come up with your ideas and ask Jesus to bless it. Come to him and listen to Him. Because it will cost your life... even earlier than intended. Recently in ME country team of 20 remote areas, 11 kidnapped, 3 found dead, others probably dead too. Our friend on that team is 1 of 9 still alive. Got to get it right: come to Jesus, worship Him, come under his authority whatever the consequences....

**Ings** - One of the fun things about fund-raising (and yes, we are almost there, but not quite) is that as we have gone to certain small groups, we have had wonderful times of prayer and ministry to us. Several times we have been given a cautionary word: do not run ahead of God: stay behind Jesus: do nothing if you do not hear from the Holy spirit. Reflecting on these words gave me a better handle on this whole authority thing: it comes from Jesus to us. But we are to stay behind Him, in his shadow, under his wings. We are to serve and love, in humility, not bombastic arrogance and superiority. Frontiers , the organization we are partnering with as we head to North Africa, describes how we should reach people: “With love and respect, invite all people to meet the True Jesus”. There is a paradigm shifting book, Cross-cultural Servanthood, by Duane Elmer, which highlights the servant role we have: Jesus is our Master, our Lord....

**You** - It is important to remember that this Christian walk is NOT about ME (I know I have to keep being reminded about this: I would like to think it is all about me....). But

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we need to know our place, our power and authority..... it is from Jesus: the one we come to, the one we worship, the one who equips us: HE is our source.

**SLIDE #8 v19 “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,”**

**Go to everyone everywhere and make disciples**

**Disciples** - “all nations” all ethnic groups, they didn’t really understand.... neither had Israel for all its history either. I say this because sometime after Jesus had left for heaven, it took a clear vision from God himself to get Peter to take the Good News to Cornelius, a Gentile (a Roman centurion) and later it also took a direct encounter between Jesus and Paul for Paul to begin to understand that the message of Jesus and his kingdom is for all nations. Then Peter and Paul leading the early churches mission did their best with their near and far neighbours....

**SLIDE #9 Everyone: TIM READ .....**

**Acts 10:35 Then Peter began to speak: “I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism, but accepts those from every nation who fear Him and do what is right.”**

**SLIDE #10 Everywhere: INGS READ....**

**Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

**Disciples** - all go to everyone, everywhere. BUT...What are we to do...? Those 11 disciples knew what it was to be a disciple of Jesus. Tzn Kiswahili: wanafunzi (students - learners). We need to learn many things from Jesus, but not just knowledge which puffs up, but to do what we learn just like Jesus did...

**Tim** - people who had walked with me since coming to Jesus, mentored, disciple one another. Over coffee, over lunch, over walks in park, in the city, in the mountains. Trying to make sense of Jesus and his teaching and commands. That takes a lifetime to learn... how about starting today... looking out for one other Jesus person whom you can encounter Jesus with in all of life.

Baptism is in water, an important rite of passage into full ID with Jesus (like Rich says, like a wedding ring - our public ID of an inner reality)... Here at VC fully immerse... because baptize means to immerse (greek- word used for sinking ship-fully immersed in the sea, or for a cloth fully immersed in a dyed). I also like to apply this verse as you and I continuing to be immersed into God as Father - Son - HS.... learn all you can about them (esp. from the Scriptures) and apply that knowledge to your life (e.g, prodigal love of Father, serving attitude like Jesus, controlling inner presence and power of HS). In my 26 years of Jesus, not one person who has immersed themselves in God

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falls away..Not one.... those of us who chose to come to him, worship him, and go out to others (near and far) with the intention of making students of Jesus just like us...experience a full and abundant life with him!

**Ings** - This verse begins with a “therefore”. Love that word, has such a Shakespearean touch to it. Therefore means as a result of, as a consequence of.... again, a reminder of what must go before! As a result of our: coming to Jesus AND our worship of him AND his giving us his power and authority..... only now, as a result of all of this.... it must come after..... only now do we GO! Where to go and what to do? Before and after getting married, I (and then we) have always tried to ask God where do you want me to be? What do you want me to do? A simple question, but when He answers you have to be prepared to obey!! You know, I am horrified by many believers who still hold to the sacred myth that so-called “missionaries” are super-spiritual, just about perfect, people who raise others from the dead before their first cup of coffee. But there is no difference between us and you: a few geographic boundaries, but that is it. Your boundary may be to cross into your neighbour's garden, or to move across to the other side of the building into the community centre, it may be to go to the person across the room from you at work. We are ALL missionaries. We are ALL asked to COME and GO! If you do not know that where you are now and what you are doing is exactly what God wants for you at this moment, then get on your knees! But watch out: it may be different to what you think. When I first finished my university studies, I was so excited that I was finally going to get to do the real stuff: full-time christian work! But God led me (not very happily I might add, initially) to 8 years in the secular world: retail! That was my Jerusalem for that time. Much earlier on in my life, at a missions weekend, they had put flags all over the hall, and we were told to go and stand under the flag of the country that God had placed on our hearts. Everyone else rushed to a flag... and I was left in the middle of the hall: alone! I prayed hard.... but nothing came, so I stayed all alone, condemned and judged by the others! Years later I asked God why that was..... realized that He calls me to be the same to whoever is in front of me... whatever the country. So here, there, anywhere, everywhere, does not really matter! Same Jesus that I come to and worship and are equipped by. Different food and language, but people are everywhere, people who need Jesus.

**You** - Look around you, who is in front of you, behind you, next to you... at school, at work, at home. Rich, poor, hungry, fit, old and young, every tribe and tongue... and there are many even along Cooper road, across the street where you live, in your suburb (across the railway line), in your college, gym class: start with the one in front of you, with love and respect.

**SLIDE #11 v20 “and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age”**

**Disciples** - lots of lessons there for his disciples (e.g. wait for HS, keep preaching despite opposition, gentiles). Teaching is more than a chat but intentional to grow. Maybe you don't love school, I agree that some schools are really bad.... but love learning, those who follow Jesus love to learn. Learn from your mistakes. We

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continually see that in the Scriptures (e.g. Peter 3 denials of Jesus to Jesus receiving him back even as a leader of his church).

## **SLIDE #12 Teach them to Obey**

**Tim** - Still learning there. Can listen fairly well. Do I obey... well, most of the time. Walked with Jesus since I was 17 and only 2 years ago mid-2007 did I come face-to-face with my brokenness sexually. Jesus wanted me to obey him as he healed my heart - right into the pain medicating habits I brought in from my time before Jesus. I had not dealt with lust to its root. My eyes and my hands were following my heart, and it was away from God. Learn to obey from Jesus and my wife and church leaders and close friends. But that is another story....

Obedience not easy but he is present through all the challenges.... even our heading for North Africa... many exciting things about going, new language, new culture, new life promised for many.... yet it is a hard place, where many are veiled to the liberating truth of the Good News of Jesus. But I know I heard from Him... and I know his being with me and my family and the team until the end, is a promise worth living for, even a promise worth dying for.....

**Ings** - and the wonderful ending of this “great commission”: surely I am with you always.. until the very end of the age. What reassuring and empowering words. He calls us, draws us, equips us, sends us... and then HE comes with us. We are not alone. What an awesome God. Here is the last ALL for the night: all-ways with us, all the time. This is our Jesus, Emmanuel: He is God with us... here, there, everywhere. The one we worship, submit to , honour and obey and then GO and BE and DO as He leads.

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### **MINISTRY:**

#### **Ezekiel 37:10**

“So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet - a vast army.”

#### **John 20:21,22**

“Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me. I am sending you.”  
And with that he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

***Stand up and come out of your seats and come to Jesus and welcome His breath,  
His Holy Spirit.....***

(play song *Breathe* - Marie Barnett so everyone gets to respond to Jesus, even leaders)

After 6 minutes Tim close meeting with prayer