

# Priddis Men's Breakfast Talk by David Marquardt, ALS October 18, 2008

## Preliminaries

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**Hunter Fitzgerald:** First, I have our E-Mail addresses here, and I will circulate this list to make sure we have your correct postal and E-Mail addresses as well as your phone number. Would you have a look, and if you see anything missing or that we should correct, please make the necessary changes. Would you also please put a check mark beside your name so that we know everything is OK? I am going to send it around with a pencil.

Q: Do you want the pencil back? A: Yes.

**Hunter:** Another very important item today is for anyone knows Pat Langlois, the Reverend Pat who is our minister over there [in three Anglican churches in the area]. If you see her, you can tell her that Allan, her husband, had only one pancake for breakfast this morning. (General laughter.)<sup>[1]</sup>

Another event is about to take place and is very important to me. On Friday, October 24, right in this hall will be the graduation of Lazaro ("Lalo") from Teen Challenge. Everybody is welcome to come. These graduations are great experiences to attend. [General applause] This one is very dear to me, so I will E-Mail the information to you for you have the time and date. I urge you to come to it.

## Introduction of David Marquardt

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David Marquardt, ALS. Everybody asks what is "ALS"? Well, it stands for "Alberta Land Surveyor." David is a land surveyor. I sent you his résumé by E-Mail and hope you have read it. It is quite a good one. I am not going to read you the whole thing, but one thing really struck me in it.

We met in Tim Horton's in Okotoks the other day, and David said, "What do you want me to talk about?" I said, "Well, talk about whatever is on your heart, as long as you tell us something about your experiences in Rwanda. What I am particularly interested in is the last line of your biography." He asked, "What's that?" "Well, it said that on the night of October 10, 1997, you came back to God on a stretch of Highway 22, just north of Turner Valley. That's interesting, and we would like to know about that."

David has had incredible experiences as God has led him, and who knows where he is going from here? I would really like you to welcome David Marquardt.

[Applause]

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<sup>[1]</sup> The pancake was about a foot in diameter. A picture of Allen appears below on page 4.



*David Marquardt*

**D**avid Marquardt: Thank you very much, Hunter. My good friend, Andy Read, said you know you had better get out to these Priddis breakfasts. It's a great group to be associated with. He said he had asked me to go five or six years ago. I said, "Well, you know, I would love to, but Saturday morning is usually my golf time. In summer, I like to play golf, and in winter I like to sleep in after a hard week.

But then I kind of thought about it, and I kept bumping into Andy. He said, "Well, we'll get you sometime." Then he sent me an E-Mail a couple of months ago. He asked "How would you like to go out to Priddis for breakfast in October?" I said, "Fine, that's great. It's good." He said, "There's just one catch: you'll be the speaker." [Laughter.]

So, thank you. This whole week has been really, really, really busy for me. and I prayed, and I prayed, and I asked God to "Give me some inspiration; I don't know what to talk about." You know, I've experienced a tremendous amount of things since the last few years, after that date that Hunter mentioned, and I'll tell you a little about that, but I really have no idea of what I'm going to talk about. No agenda.

So, take my speech in bits and pieces and put it all together so that it makes sense to you, because I might just jump here and there and everywhere. I did come across this, which is a bit of foreshadowing when coming to do something like this: We sometimes get in a hurry and become careless. (Well, that's been my whole week, this week here). Many times it happens just before we meet our goal. It looks as though we have been successful. The obstacles have been overcome. The sweet smell of victory permeates the air, but then sometimes inexperience causes us to fail. Sometimes lack of preparation is a problem. Maybe the problem is overconfidence. Anyway, it's one of those things that is so fitting for this week.

Going back to this thing, coming back to God in October, 1997. I want to talk a bit about the position I was in. I was a senior land surveyor for a surveying and engineering firm in Calgary and my mentor at the time was a fellow who was extremely successful financially, a very, very good businessman. He knew how to make money. He wasn't the greatest surveyor nor was he a good teacher with regard to the

ethics and methods of what we do. But he was an extremely successful businessman. And what I was getting into was a lot of greed. And greed is an addiction. I could get up here and say that greed, alcohol, and drugs all run the same course, always have the same symptoms. You get a little bit of success, and if you are not God-centered or balanced, it is quite easy to become diverted by this kind of addiction trap. You want more, you want better, and these things that greed eventually leads to, are material things. They stay here on earth. You can't take them with you. Once you're done, they're done. It's not something that you can pass on with any degree of appreciation.

So I was being led down that path, and I was becoming very, very good at it. But the problem with success, and the way that we were acquiring work, the way we were doing it, the clients we were getting, it put me into some pretty compromising situations with the clients that we had at the time. Some of them were female, and it got to a point, you know, one client meeting after another client meeting, and they started to get into an area where I was getting really, really uncomfortable.

And I found out more about this mentor that I had, the fact that, as I said, he was very, very successful in what he did, but he had many affairs. He had a wonderful family, but he had things about his character that were like a chameleon and I could see that I was going down that exact same path.

I was working late hours, and I was getting up at four in the morning. I was working everything out, I was doing the schedule planning down to the very second. My kids were in a dance class down in Turner Valley, and each and every day for about three/four days a week I would time it so that I would leave the office in Calgary at seven-thirty pm— if you can imagine the road back then: Highway 22 was torn up. There was still a little bridge at Fish Creek — and I would rip from Calgary down to Turner Valley in about thirty minutes. That's about 120, 130, ... 140 km/hr on these roads just so that I could pick up my kids, spend about fifteen minutes with them before I brought them home and put them to bed, and then I'd get up early in the morning and do it all over again.

For what? For whom was I working? I was working for him, my mentor, supposedly, and down the line it was supposed to make me very rich? And I kept doing this thing, day after day, and year after year. Finally, one night I was driving down that highway, so tired. I was so very tired, and I got to the wicked big S bends just North of Turner Valley, and pulled off just beside the road. I just said I want to lay my head on the steering wheel for a couple of minutes. And I laid my head down, and a second or two later, I hear this knocking at my window. It was my daughter, knocking on my window, and I was in the parking lot at the dance studio in Turner Valley. I have no idea what happened during the last four or five miles of that drive. None, whatsoever. It's just one of those things. There's a block, a memory loss in there for a little while.

So I woke up and shook my head and had to figure out what had happened. I think this was a sign, it was God's sign for me to do something different: what you are doing is not right. And the next day, October 10, 1997, I went out down to Christian Publications and I bought a Bible. I said to myself, from now on, this is the book that I am going to follow. There are rules and regulations that were made for man to follow for life on earth, but I want life everlasting. So this is the book that I choose.

Now when you come to a decision like that, well, I was a neophyte. I had no idea. I didn't really have a Christian mentor at that time. My wife and I went to St. Peter's Church, in Okotoks, and we were getting all the right messages, but there wasn't anything connecting them. I wasn't quite sure: OK, I'm here, and God has accepted me for all my sins, and my misdeeds, and my misgivings. OK, what do You want me to do?

And for years we went through doing the hokey-pokey. You know, like we're in on this, we're out on this, and in on this, and I couldn't figure it out: What was it that God really wanted me to do? I watched people come to God, I watched others get their marching orders and everything like that, but it was frustrating for me. If there was any one time that I could have stepped out of the Christian life, it was then.

But I stuck in there. God granted me patience, and I am so thankful for that. I stuck in there, and I think that the most important thing that I can say is — and I heard these words before — “If you want to find out what God wants you to do, get in the face of Christianity.” It's a big steamroller. But “get in the face of Christianity.” Somebody, something, some group will appear. Just volunteer, here there, every-

where. Find out what Hunter is doing, what Andy is doing. Just go there and be around these people, because you never know when or where the moment is going to happen. God knows, because he has had it all the time, but you don't.

So that's what we did. We volunteered for things. I went through Cursillo <sup>[1]</sup> a first time and then a second time. And I said, you know the kitchen crew had a blast when I was at Cursillo. I want to do the kitchen crew thing. So Allen [Langlois] and I were on the same kitchen team and we ran this thing called *The Roadkill Café*, and it was a blast. I never had so much fun in my life. It was so much fun being around these guys.



*Allen Langlois in the "Allen" corner (where John Robin Allen also sits)*

My wife home schooled our kids. She met with Allan Burney and introduced me to him. He was the director of YWAM, <sup>[2]</sup> a really fun character. He likes what I like: he likes to bike on a pedal bike. We haven't actually got out for a ride together, but he's just one of those guys you can relate to in everything like that. So I've known Allan for quite a while, even though we have not had much in the way of interaction. Then, sometime around 2004, Allan received a call from Steve Ulrich, a fellow who is now a good friend of mine. Steve is the head of Engineering Ministries International Canada and they had just opened the Canadian office in Calgary. Based out of Colorado Springs, Colorado, they are a group of profession-

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<sup>[1]</sup> Cursillo is a Spanish word meaning 'short course'. It was started in the Roman Catholic Church in Spain in an attempt to train and encourage lay people to become Christian leaders in their communities. It became so successful that it spread to other denominations worldwide.

<sup>[2]</sup> *Youth With A Mission* is an international movement of Christians drawn from many denominations and dedicated to serving Jesus throughout the world. Its calling is to know God and to make Him known. When they began in 1960, the main focus was to get youth into short-term mission work and to give them opportunities to reach out in Jesus' name. They still focus on youth but also involve people of almost every age, even people who choose to spend their "retirement" in active service.

als, much like myself: land surveyors, architects, engineers, who believe in God and who want to put their God-given talents for designing, for building, for surveying, whatever, in projects all over the third-world.

So Steve called Allan, just after I had just finished doing a survey on the YWAM property, basically at one third the price we would normally charge. I had said I would do it for free. I mean, it's just one of those things, you know. I've got these talents, and YWAM is a pretty good organization, I've heard. I read up a little about it, and I said "I'll come up there and I'll donate my time for free."

So Allan gets this call, and Steve says "Do you know any surveyors, Christian surveyors or surveyors who believe in God, who would want to come on a third-world project?" Allan says "Well yes. I've got this guy's name here."

So I get this call from Steve when I'm blasting down the Deerfoot Trail one day, and I get into my office and turn on my computer and, sure enough, there is this E-Mail message from Steve saying he got my name from Allan Burney. "Would you be interested in going on a project with us in a third-world country?" So I read the details and it says something about Trinidad. [General laughter]

That's what I said: "Why not?" [More laughter] Surely that's not a third-world country today. It's a resort area. It's crazy.

So I read the details and said "OK. I'll go."

It was probably one of the toughest, physically toughest, jobs I've ever been on. It was on the side of a mountain, and Trinidad does have mountains in the northern part. Twenty years earlier, it had been an orchard, but now was overgrown, with vegetation was probably as high as this roof. It took us five days to cut some sight-lines through it...in 38C heat and 100% humidity. It was only about four or five acres, a Bible camp for boys and girls.

The place where we stayed was a mission that had a rain-water fed pool. It was cushy. It was great, because I get to use my talents as a surveyor with all these architects and engineers, and we got this great place to stay in.

So that was the beginning of my involvement with Engineering Ministries International. I could see that if you get yourself in the face of Christianity, you make yourself available for these sorts of things. If I had not done that, I would never have gotten that call. I would never have met Allan Burney and would never have heard anything about YWAM or anything like that. Anyway, that's how it has played out since 2004.

In 2007, I was at a fund-raising dinner for a Haitian orphanage that my wife and I support, God's Littlest Angels,<sup>[1]</sup> from which we adopted two little girls. I was able to speak with the orphanage director there, and they were having some problems. They had almost 180 kids in three huge houses they were renting. He said that as far as the costs go, they would be further ahead to build their own complex, rather than pay the rent that they had to pay every single month.



<sup>[1]</sup> God's Littlest Angels (GLA; see picture) is an independent, non-denominational ministry founded to care for premature, malnourished, and abandoned children in Haiti. It is a faith mission that relies on God to provide funding and other needs through churches and donors in North America and Europe. It was incorporated in Illinois as a non-profit organization in April, 1997 and moved to Colorado in 2002. GLA Canada has charitable status in Canada.

I said, "You know, I'm involved with a bunch of guys that do these third-world projects. How about it if I just submit your name?" He said, "Well, we don't have the land yet." So I said, "Well you work on the land, and I'll work on these guys, and we'll see how it goes."

I hadn't a clue. I had had one mission trip under my belt, and it was a cushy one. Really. But to make a long story short, they raised the money for the land and they E-Mailed me to ask "What was the name of that group again?" I said it's Engineering Ministries International.

They put in their application at Christmas 2006, and in May 2007, eight years to the day that my wife and I first went to Haiti to adopt one of our daughters, our EMI team of ten, touched down in Port-au-Prince.

Haiti is poor. It is poorer than dirt. When we first went down there eight years earlier to pick up this little year-and-a-half-old kid, she weighed only thirteen pounds and was a couple weeks from death's doorstep, I could hold her in one hand, and she is now ten and a half. She is one of the most beautiful little girls — I'm biased — that you could ever come across.

Engineering Ministries International accepted the application of God's Littlest Angels, so there were about ten of us; surveyors, architects and engineers on the team that went down there to work on the beautiful parcel of land they have on a hilltop. Within a week or week and a half we had designed a beautiful orphanage that they started to build about four or five months ago.

They have challenges thrown at them left, right, and centre, but it's wonderful to see. The directors of the orphanage, John and Dixie Bickel, are amazing people. <sup>[1]</sup> They are not special. If you met John, ... he is a mid-west U.S. country hick. I mean, he talks ... like ... he's ... just ... right out of the boonies. But I mean, he's a guy's guy: one of those persons you want to hear out and do things with. And that's the kind of attitude our team had. It was a very successful project.

I want to tell you a little story about how we came to adopt the two little girls we have. Just after 1997, when we decided that the Christian life is what we want to do, we said, "OK, well what does God want us to do as a family?" We had been tossing around the idea of adoption for years.

When I married Dana, one of the things I asked her was how many kids she wanted to have. She said, "Well, I wouldn't mind having a few."

I was an only child, and I hated being an only child. I wanted brothers and sisters, and I vowed that the girl I wanted to marry would want to have at least more than three. So I said, "Well, if we had enough guys to ice a hockey line-up, I mean like five ..., and maybe even a goalie, how would that sit with you?" She said, not bad, but how about a baseball infield?" I said "You're on. You're mine."



<sup>[1]</sup> John and Dixie Bickel, along with their children, came to Haiti in 1991. The Bickels are originally from Illinois, USA. In 1995, the Bickels adopted Steeve and Markenson, two of the babies from their nursery. Before serving in Haiti, John worked for the GTE phone company. Today, John serves as Field Director for the mission. With his knowledge in electronics and maintenance, he also performs the much needed task of equipment maintenance and repair. Dixie is a registered nurse and has 30 years of experience in pediatrics and intensive care nursing. She serves as the Orphanage Director. They have five children and six grandchildren. (From the GLA web site, which also provided the photo of the Bickel family.)

But as it turned out, God had different plans. When our third child was born, nine pounds fourteen ounces, it took fifty minutes. It was just one of those situations, when the doctor came in to me and said "You know, I know you guys wanted lots of kids, but this isn't going to happen. You guys are done with having children naturally." Because my last son came so big and so fast.

So that's the situation that we were in. Around 1997 or 1998, this adoption thing came up. So we hemmed and hawed about it for a little while. We did some research and found some of the agencies that we wanted to go through, and Dana wanted to adopt from Haiti. Why Haiti? Well, she said because it is the poorest country in the western hemisphere, and the girls there really, really don't have a chance.

It's one of those things when you go to the third world. The family concept is usually that the oldest boy or the oldest boys are the ones that carry on the family. If it's a poor family, they are the ones who get fed first. It's the youngest children and the girls that kind of get neglected.

So I was all for that. It was kind of an interesting scenario when we let the rest of our family know what we wanted to do. Of all our in-laws, my mom was the only one who thought that this is really a cool idea. This is great, just as long as you can put up with a black baby in a white society. That was an issue for some of our in-laws, and it still is to this day, but they're getting over it.

But anyway, we made that decision. We wanted to adopt. Things were going well with the company I was with, as I told you, and we had the money to do it. International adoptions are fairly expensive. Haiti was one of the cheapest, at about \$10,000 or something like that.

But then we ran into some financial problems and didn't have the money to adopt this little girl. As it so happened, at the same time my mom got cancer. She had cancer, and it took her very, very, very quickly.

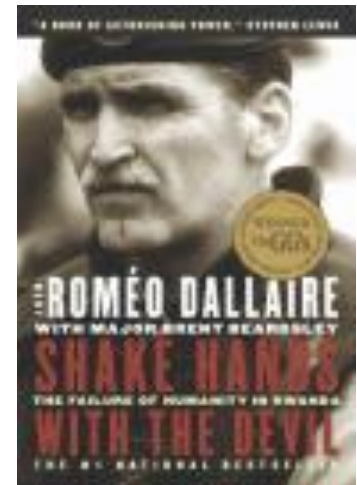
One of the things that came out of that was that once my mom found out that we were going to do this adoption from Haiti, she started putting some money aside. Then, when everything all finally settled and my mom passed away, there was enough for us to do the adoption. That kind told me something.

You know, sometimes when you plan things meticulously, it's your plan, but it's not God's plan. Sometimes God's plan hurts. We have to understand that. We have to trust in Him and say that this is God's plan. We understand. And it's hard sometimes. So as it turned out — and this is the beauty of the thing — this money that my mom had set aside paid for the adoption very well.

The original name of the little girl we adopted was Christine-Hélène, and my mom's middle name was Helen. Now the coincidences did not stop there. We were able to keep some of the money we had for the original adoption to use for another adoption, and when we went to adopt a second time, the little girl's given Haitian name was Violène. Well, my mother's first name was Violet. It's a beautiful thing. It's wonderful.

Now going back a little bit, before the EMI team went to work on the Haitian orphanage, I passed a bookstore and thought I should probably pick up a book. I knew I was going to be busy with the orphanage and stuff like that, but I was also going to have some spare time. So I picked up a book, *Shake Hands with the Devil*.<sup>[1]</sup>

It is General Roméo Dallaire's account of his tour in Rwanda. And so when I had some time in Haiti, I started getting into Dallaire's book about his experiences in Rwanda, and I just could not put the book down. One of the things that I said to my teammates at that time during our trip was that if ever



<sup>[1]</sup> *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* (ISBN 0-7867-1510-3 / ISBN 0-7867-1487-5) is a book by Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire of the Canadian Forces, with help from Major Brent Beardsley. It was first published by Knopf Canada in September 2003. The book chronicles the fateful months of Dallaire's tour as Force Commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in 1993-1994, during which he witnessed the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. This book won the 2003 Shaughnessy Cohen Award for Political Writing, and 2004 Governor General's Award for nonfiction. The French edition is entitled *J'ai serré la main du diable: La faillite de l'humanité au Rwanda*. The award-winning documentary film *Shake Hands With the Devil: The Journey of Roméo Dallaire* (2004) and a 2007 dramatic feature film are inspired by and in part based on the book. Dallaire was consulted in the making of both films.

there was a trip to Rwanda, I want to go. You sign me up right now. Just wait for the trip to come in. Here's my name on the dotted line.

Well, it was not two months later that we got a call for this trip to Rwanda, and it was probably the most intense experience that I have ever had. I do not know if you are familiar with the situation that happened in Rwanda fourteen years ago. A lot of it was from European influence from years and years before, when the Belgians and the Germans were as colonizers. Now colonizing at that time in Africa was basically just a legal term to rape and pillage a country for its resources. That's what I basically found out during trips to Haiti and trips to Rwanda.

So back in the thirties and forties, Belgium was the colonizer, the landlord. In order to bring a population under their control, one of the things that colonizers do is to divide and conquer. They find a way to divide a country and keep factions ill at ease with one another, so they come back to the landlord and say, "Well, you know, could you help us with this problem, could you help us with this problem?" And each of the two factions in Rwanda, the Hutus and the Tutsis, did the same thing.

Belgium favoured the Tutsis, who were the ruling power at that time. Then sometime along the line in the forties and fifties, Belgium turned tables, because they figured, well, this is not really good; the Tutsis account for only about fifteen percent of the population of Rwanda. The Hutus account for eighty-five percent. We're going to start favouring the Hutus. I have no idea what brought that on, but that's what happened. They would propagandize this stuff to the point that the Hutus were better than the Tutsis, and all that kind of stuff.

For hundreds of years, these two groups in Rwanda, Hutus and Tutsis, had intermarried. They lived right next door to each other. It was just like a group like this [the Priddis Men's Breakfast Club]. How many of you people have English backgrounds? [Persons raised their hands.] How many people have German or Ukrainian backgrounds? [Others raised hands.] Do you see any difference? It's just the same thing. I mean, I have an Arabic-German background. Maybe you can see the Arab in me. I don't know, but definitely not German. But that's the whole point. The Hutus and the Tutsis did the same things. They associated with each other. They intermarried. You cannot tell a Hutu from a Tutsi.

Yet it was there. They divided them up by identity cards, stamped "Hutu" or "Tutsi." So as a result, when all these things started to work out, come 1990, 1994, this propaganda machine just kicked into high gear, and the Tutsis were being killed at a phenomenal rate, and in 1994 it was basically an all-out civil war and genocide.



*Two Rwandan girls our first project south of Kigali, Rwanda*

Now I have it documented in the article I wrote out for my profession's survey magazine. <sup>[1]</sup> If you could picture an area between Calgary, Fort Macleod, and Medicine Hat, that's about the size of Rwanda. It's very rugged there, very beautiful, there are huge mountains and eight million people. So figure it out. Eight million people in a little triangle like that. And in a hundred days in April 1994, the Hutus and the extremist government troops, which were Hutus, would wipe out in excess of one million people, 10,000 a day. As many as the whole city of Calgary. 10,000 a day, mostly by machete. And that is the horror that they suffered there.

So our first project there, in February, was a church that a fellow wanted to build, a church of peace and reconciliation. During those one hundred days of slaughter, neighbours were slaughtering neighbours, brothers and sisters were slaughtering brothers and sisters. Some of the stories I heard were incredible. Neighbours living right next door, just on the other side of a wall. And that's whom they were killing.

At the end of a hundred days, what happens? Well, if you look at Rwanda, you see tiny little plots of land right close together, very populated. Everybody goes back to living on these same little plots of land, almost as if nothing had happened. I mean, it's something that we can't fathom. An incredibly horrific genocide. When you see a beautiful woman walking down the street, and then she turns this way and she has a scar from her forehead, all the way down back of her ears and it comes out at her calf, you know that something horrible has happened.

We saw that, at the main Genocide Memorial in Gisozi. Because of a hearing problem, I tried to get very close to our guide at the Memorial, where this genocide is graphically depicted in ways that no matter how much you read to prepare for this... it slams you. We came into this one room where there is a whole wall with just nothing but photographs. Survivors come in there and they put up pictures of their

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<sup>[1]</sup> David N. Marquardt, ALS, "Surveying in Rwanda ... 14 A.G. (After Genocide)" *ALS News* (September 2008), pp. 40-44.

families that have been killed, raped and murdered,. Our guide pointed out her family and then turned to me like this, and I saw the scar on her face. And she told me it comes all the way down her body, and she walks with a limp. The killers cut her Achilles tendons so she couldn't walk. She was left there to die, to bleed to death. But she somehow survived.

I mean, there are stories like that, all over the place. But as we worked on our project, we found some good stories, of people who were Hutus who said "This is just crazy. These people (Tutsis) are our neighbours. We're going to save them, we're going to rescue them." Good stories like that.

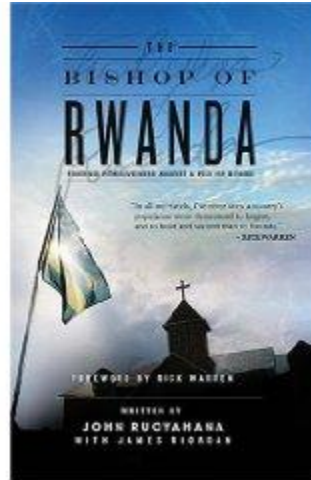
So it was just an incredibly intense experience. This peace and reconciliation project that we were doing for this Church and counselling centre was a kind of place where both Hutus and Tutsis can get together and work out their differences in a Biblical way. Because, the number of people who actually did the killing there, if you wanted to put it through the justice system, it would take three hundred years of 24-7 work to process them all.

They have a little local system in the villages there: people come together, both killers and victims, and before the whole village they discussed their crimes and asked for forgiveness, and all that sort of stuff. It's amazing. I have never been to one of those sessions, but I hope that on my next trip to Rwanda I'll get to witness that. The peace and reconciliation centre that my teammates designed and I helped survey, is basically going to do that on a fairly big scale, so it's an interesting project.



*A girl and boy from Sunrise*

The second project I went on in Rwanda was this past year, was for a University, and again I read a book before going entitled, *The Bishop of Rwanda* [1]. It's a very, very interesting book by Bishop John Rucyahana, an absolutely incredible guy. He stands about five feet one and is very, very well built, just a little fireball of faith. He walks into a room, and he has this look of intense, uncompromising faith. He so believing. He probably has more faith in his little finger than probably most of us have in our whole bodies. He started Sonrise Orphanage and School not long after the genocide, because the genocide left a half million orphans in Rwanda. He started Sonrise primarily to give a Christian education to just a handful of orphans in one particular Rwandan village, Start from the roots and build up.



Well now there are about a thousand kids in Sonrise Orphanage and School and many are of high school age. Our project was to design and build a university on twenty-five acres of land that was donated by President Paul Kagame [pictured] <sup>[2]</sup> and the Rwandan government. It was just one of the most intense projects I have ever been on. It seems like every project that I go on gets more and more intense.




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<sup>[1]</sup> John Rucyahana, with James Riordan. *The Bishop of Rwanda: Finding Forgiveness Amidst a Pile of Bones*. Thomas Nelson Publishers-Business (Feb 15 2007). 264 pp. Bishop John Rucyahana was elected Bishop of the Shyira diocese of Rwanda in 1997. During his term, he often escaped death, even as many pastors, friends, and family members were killed in the ongoing genocide. Bishop John works tirelessly for spiritual renewal in Rwanda. He founded the Sonrise orphanage for children orphaned in the genocide, and ministers in prisons to its perpetrators. He and his wife, Harriet, have five children.

<sup>[2]</sup> Paul Kagame (b. October 23, 1957) came to prominence as the leader of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), whose invasion of Rwanda is often cited as the primary reason the Rwandan Genocide came to a close. The RPF's victory over the incumbent government in July 1994 effectively ended the genocide. In 2003, he became the first democratically elected President of Rwanda following the genocide.



*Architect's design of the future Muhabura University*

It was beautiful actually to meet one of the most influential Anglican bishops of Africa. Just fabulous. We had the final presentation upstairs in the Convention Room of the real Hotel Rwanda. I was up there, and it's beautiful. I looked at the buffet and food that we had. Everybody who was anybody was there, a Who's Who from the Rwandan government. There was the minister of defence, minister of education, minister of internal affairs, minister of trade, a couple of Belgian ambassadors. It was kind of a big gala affair, and we did our presentation, what we had been working on during the last ten days to make this Muhabura University come to life.

It was so realistic, because ... Our team leader [Glen Woodruff], who was actually the C.E.O. of EMI International (Engineering Ministries International) quit his job to become president of this university. That's how much faith he has in this project.

So we did this presentation, and I was standing there with a bird's-eye view of Kigali, at dusk, at sunset, and I was looking out over the city, and it was just as if I were travelling back in time, thinking of different passages in Dallaire's book, and how he talked about the Hotel Rwanda. I looked out and could almost envision the piles of corpses and all the screaming and killing that was going on. It was an incredible view from up there. And I thought, "Thank you God. Thank you. Really. We are so lucky to have it so good back home."



*Rwanda: The lands of a thousand hills*

I mean, you guys from Teen Challenge think you have got problems or that you are overcoming some hardships. I want to throw something at you. No matter how hard you've got, there is always someone in the world who is going to have it harder than you.

Our host, from our first trip to Rwanda, the fellow with the vision of a Peace and Reconciliation Ministry that we were working for there, asked me to talk to this group of kids. He and I had felt a bonding and he said "You know, out of all the group of your teammates, I think that you are the best person to speak to these guys." So I said, "OK."

One of the hardest things I've ever done in my whole life ... [voice breaking]

... was that I spoke to this group of about thirty kids, ages from sixteen to twenty-four, so that would have put them about anywhere from two to ten years old at the time of the Rwandan massacre. Most of these kids lost their whole family.

Then I began to figure out this whole Rwandan thing. I asked our host: "Let me get this straight. I am going to go in to speak to this youth group here ... Are they Hutu? Are they Tutsi?" He said, "They're a mixture. They're both." I said, "OK. Well, are some of them orphans?" He says "Yeah." "And they lost family members because of the genocide?" and he said "Yeah. Not only that. I want you to go in and talk to them, you being a relatively successful business person from the western world in the ways of God. I want you to go in there and tell them, basically, some of the stories that you have been telling us."

To go into a group like that and tell them how important it is to believe in and follow God, how important it is to find a mentor here on earth. Somebody that you can relate to, somebody that you can trust, to talk to these kids who have been through the most horrific thing. And understand one thing, any surviving orphan in Rwanda, there is a ninety-five percent chance that they saw their parents being killed or their family being killed. That's the stigma that these kids and youths have got to live with, these boys and girls.



*David Marquardt ALS and the EMI team in Rwanda with Bishop Rucyahana*

I had about a day and a half to prepare, so I prayed a lot. When I finally went in there, I took this book with me. I talked to those kids, and one of the things I expanded on was that “Your talents are not an accident. You are special in God’s eyes. You have distinct gifts and talents. You have shoes to fill that no one else can wear.”

I don’t know what it was. To be quite honest with you, I can’t even remember my speech, but I know one thing: you could have heard a pin drop. I had everybody’s attention. I hope I said the right things. “Inside you is an enormous potential, just waiting to be developed, to be put to use. Since God created you for a purpose, it is only with God that you can become all that He intends you to become.”

Jeremiah 29:11 says “ ‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’ ”

And the most important thing I think I tried to get across to these kids is that God’s gift to you is your potential. What you do with it is your gift to God. He is concerned not only about what you are, but about what you can become.

At the end of it, I know I broke down. I cried. There were fifteen or twenty kids who were crying as well. Talented kids. They did some singing and some dancing.

The hardest part, when I got home, is that I got a half a dozen E-Mails from these kids asking me to be their mentor here on earth. And that probably hit me harder than anything. I just sat in front of my computer and gave the keyboard a good washing down with my tears.

So it’s been a blessing, these trips that I do, because it puts me in contact with a lot of kids, and a lot of people that I think that I end up influencing in some way, shape, or form, through His help. What I get in return, money can’t buy anywhere.

You know, when you look at this mentoring thing, we should think, as older guys, that we have a duty ... to you younger guys, you know find a mentor to honour, that you can follow and trust. Think a little about the reverse situation, me as an older fellow, well I need to go out and search and find a young fellow that I can mentor. That's kind of the goal that I talk to older fellows about, because we have so much experience in our bodies and in our lifetime, and to pass this experience on to younger kids is such a great thing to do.

I was told once that the two best jobs in the world are being a carpenter and being a teacher. And when you can be both, there is a lot of opportunity for you out there.

I don't know what else to say. Thank you, Hunter, for having me speak. This article that is about to be published in the *Alberta Land Surveyors News Magazine* talks about my two trips to Rwanda, and I have about twelve copies of it. Hunter's got the stuff and can E-Mail it out. If you want to pick up something and read about it, that's great. Thanks for listening to me. I am sorry to have taken up so much of your time.

[Extended applause in a standing ovation.]

**Hunter:** That was an awesome talk. Thank you David. I have an electronic copy of the article David wrote, so if anybody wants to have it, let me know and I can send it out.

Wow. That was just a great talk. Thank you for coming.

I just heard about this today: Our friend Andy [Read] has been a pillar of strength in the Christian community, in our breakfast team, in Cursillo and other places. I just marvel at his dedication. He is having a meeting right now, so he had to run away after breakfast. His biggest regret was that he could not hear David's talk, because he is having a meeting to commence being ordained, a long and tough process for him.



*Andy Read and Hunter Fitzgerald*

Colin [Rumary] suggested that all of us have a prayer for him. Colin, would you lead us in that for Andy?

**Colin:** Many of you know Andy. He has a guiding spirit that makes him a mentor to many people. He has been a mentor to me. He has been a rock to many people along the way. His heart is truly with God, as many of you know. And now this man, about four years ago, got a call from the Lord to follow the path into the ministry. Three years ago he put in his application, but it got stymied and stifled, the usual thing. And then all the nonsense that is going on with the Anglican church right now, a topsy-turvy thing. It's very trying times.



*Andy Read*

But the minute we got ... We preach at Saint Peter's ... we determined immediately that that we should release this man and get right behind him to seek his calling from the Lord. And so we did. We released him from being the rector's warden. We got right behind him We made a sermon committee, which I am on, and he has now gone through the steps of approaching the diocese. That's where he is today, in the process of going through determining whether he is good for the job.

Well, I think most persons in this room would say "He's probably good for the job." Unfortunately there are a few hoops you have to jump through. They have also changed the process a bit by which this goes on. To many of us at the church and his friends in the covenant community, this is all new to us, because this is not something that happens every day. So, as I said to Hunter, we would be remiss if we did not come to the group of men that are a part of his life. He is such a part of our life that if we can't get you to pray, then .... He doesn't have a degree, which is one of the main things you're supposed to have to minister to God's kingdom. It's not in the Bible. I can't find it. [Laughter.]

But anyway, we don't think that need stand in he way. As David has quite remarkably shown this morning that the plans of God are not the plans of men. And if he has truly been called by God, then his way will be made clear. But we are told, in this Book, that we need to pray. If we do pray, then the Gates of Heaven are opened, and the blessings and the pathways that Andy needs he will get. There is nothing more powerful on this earth than the prayers of Christian men.

And so I would ask you right now to join me and pray for Andy and for his committees and that the way is made clear, and swift, and that he can become a mighty person for God, because, as you know, there are far and few between: people who stand up for the truth of what's in here.

And so, let's pray. Father, we have heard of Your might and Your power in the remarkable way that You land on people and cause them to find Your path and Your direction. I am thinking of Dave, and how you cleared his mind and his pathway to do wonderful things and there's other people in this room too. You've already started that process where it's part of their life as well.

And now we bring to you Andy, who at this time in life ... Father this is an incredible 180° turn. But he felt that you had called him, and so he is honouring that. So we now honour him and You by praying that Your will be done in Andy Read's life, that you will open the doors, that you will clearly mark the path, that you will infect the lives of people, that he has to brush up against in the sermon process, and that you would give the people on his committee wisdom and insight so that your will will be done through this man. And that all men in this group say Amen.

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The meeting closed as the group formed a circle and Don Wilson led the final prayer.

Note: Those who wish to learn more about David Marquardt's two trips to Rwanda should look at the following PowerPoint links:

- [www.midwestsurveys.com/alsa\\_emi\\_trip\\_5450-rwanda.htm](http://www.midwestsurveys.com/alsa_emi_trip_5450-rwanda.htm) (ca. 20 min.)
- [www.midwestsurveys.com/alsa\\_emi\\_trip\\_5464-rwanda.htm](http://www.midwestsurveys.com/alsa_emi_trip_5464-rwanda.htm) (ca. 7 min.)

Notes edited by John Robin Allen  
allen@cc.umanitoba.ca