



Introductions



Good morning to you!

I've been asked to introduce our Team Jesus team members who work together to prepare and send the weekly Africa Posts. So let me start the New Year by telling you a little about us -- especially for those of you we haven't had a chance to meet yet.

Our Team began the Africa Posts about seven months ago. Our hope is that some of the things we have learned in life, studies, and ministry over the years might be of benefit to you. Presently more than 500 Christian leaders receive the Africa Post weekly.

There are four of us on the Team. I'm Doug Van Devender. I write the Posts in English. Richard Cazzell prepares the Posts for publication and coordinates with our Swahili translator "JK" in Kenya. Our translator in Rwanda, Noella, forwards the Posts in Kinyarwanda.

Richard and I have been working together in East Africa ministry since 1987. Starting on the coast of Kenya we gradually developed relationships throughout the country. About fifteen years ago we started working with the pastor friends in the Mara District of Tanzania. Last August Richard & I along with Dan Wessell, another Team Jesus officer, visited pastor friends in Kenya & Tanzania. And for the first time we also visited Rwanda to minister with pastor friends who lead the "We Go To Them" team based in Kigale.

Together Richard, Dan, and I oversee the training ministries of Team Jesus Ministries International.

About myself. My father was a World War II veteran. He and my mother married after the war and entered ministry immediately. I have one sister who loves and serves the Lord.

I answered God's call to ministry at age 18. After college I spent two years in Vietnam during the war in student ministry and refugee relief work in Danang and Hue.

Later my wife Betty and I married while ministering to Indochina refugees after the war. We pastored for two years then moved to Mombasa, Kenya where we gathered a small evangelism team and together planted eight new churches.

After returning to the U.S., Betty and I were filled with the Holy Spirit. We trained in Holy Spirit ministries with John Wimber in California then planted a church in Fort Smith, AR along with Richard and Kathy Cazzell. We pastored together for eight years

Later we developed a powerful prayer model called Transforming Prayer. In prayer, we facilitate a conversation between Jesus and the person in need. We pray until Jesus breaks through to accomplish one or more of the five aspects of his Luke 4:18-19 ministry. Permanent transformation commonly occurs in the person's life.

Betty is a retired science teacher and I have been bi-vocational in ministry since 1986 -- working in insurance services and sales. Betty and I have been married for 49 years and we have three adult children and three grandchildren.

Now from Richard: In my family, I was the oldest child and had 3 sisters. My mom was a Christian and she always took us kids to church (while my dad showed no interest). Through her influence I became born again at the age of 16.

At the University of Arkansas, I met Kathy Franklin and we were married 6 January, 1973, with a year and a half of university to finish. Last Monday was our 52nd wedding anniversary. God blessed us with 5 children (2 girls and 3 boys) who have all married a Christian spouse, and now we have 18 grandchildren.

My professional occupation was selling life and health insurance for 47 years, and I retired in 2021. During those working years, in my spiritual walk with God, I learned the importance of giving and “laying up your treasure in heaven”. Also during those years, God connected me with Doug and we decided to jump into the ministry of Jesus through the Holy Spirit per Jesus’ teaching in John 14:12a.

We have seen the Lord do great and mighty things, and are humbled to have been able to participate. We are now excited to see what more He is going to do.

Beginning in 1987 we have led many one to three-day training events throughout Kenya, later into Tanzania, and finally this year into Rwanda.

- Our purpose is to more fully activate and equip each of God’s leaders to better:
- Do the ministry of Jesus (John 14:12a; Luke 4:18-19)
 - Equip all God’s People to do the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 4:11-16)
 - Develop and maintain a deep, abiding relationship with God through Jesus via his Spirit (John 15:1-17)
 - Move ministry efforts from ‘addition’ to ‘multiplication’ in evangelism, leadership training, and church planting, and
 - Offer prayer cover for you in East Africa as you serve God faithfully in difficult and challenging circumstances.

We view your success in life and your productivity in ministry as our reward for our supporting your efforts from a distance.

- In 2025 our thoughts are to
- Continue the weekly Africa Post teachings
 - Open a website which will give you access to past Posts and other ministry and training resources (coming soon!)
 - Conduct training events via Zoom (and in person as God provides), and
 - Coordinate resources and efforts among a variety of Christian leaders and ministries to enhance everyone’s evangelism and church planting efforts.

Next year promises to be a year of great change, fresh opportunity, and serious danger in the world. We also expect 2025 to be a year when God breaks forth in fresh, powerful, and surprising ways. As we stay focused on God’s manifestations, we shall stand and we will prevail with what he puts in our hands to do.

I close by saying that Richard and I have been blessed beyond words by God and by many of you as we’ve had the opportunity to be a small part of your lives. We thank Jesus and we thank you for the precious privilege of being a part of what He is doing in East Africa.

Happy New Year!

<i>Douglas</i>	<i>Richard</i>
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Douglas & Richard
Team Jesus Ministries International

