

Spring Sees Christians Cycle Thousands of Miles for Good Causes

Springtime is seeing more Christians hop on bicycles and trek thousands of miles for their favorite cause. From Florida to Columbia to Israel, Good Samaritans are setting out on their bikes backed by gospel power.

A group of eight college students and recent grads will set off from Daytona Beach, Fla., on Friday morning and pedal their way north to New York City.

Along the way, they will stop at churches in 10 states to raise awareness of and support for the women of the Congo dealing with unimaginable circumstances as part of the She's My Sister bike tour.

"The Congo has been called the rape capital of the world," says cyclist Gordon Brown. "I committed to spend my summer helping to raise awareness of the terror these women have survived and provide others with a way to help. It is the least I can do."

Brown, who participated in the inaugural She's My Sister bike tour last year, sees the ride as symbolic of the journey that the women of the Congo are on to overcome trauma. The centerpiece of the She's My Sister initiative is Scripture-based trauma healing.

"Scripture not only offers these Congolese women an encounter with God's healing power," project director John Walter says, "it is a source of desperately needed hope amid horrific circumstances."

But these college students aren't the only ones cycling for a

cause.

Kent Pierce of Columbia, Mo., just set out from Anacortes, Wash., on a coast-to-coast bicycle trip. As a pastor serving the campus community at the University of Missouri, Pierce plans to use the 3,500-mile trek to tell people about another passion: sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with college and university students.

“As a pastor, I can think of nothing more rewarding than sharing the redeeming love of Jesus Christ in the campus mission field—where maybe upwards of 80 percent of students are living some of their most formative years without a connection to the body of Christ,” he says. “I call this pedaling with purpose.”

Meanwhile, the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem is holding a three-day charitable bike ride that covers the length of the nation of Israel from Metulla to Eilat to raise funds for the Disabled Sports Center in Ramat Gan.

“The 477 Quest” kicked off from Metulla early on Thursday morning and will traverse the Hula and Jordan Valleys, skirt the Dead Sea, down through the Arava and end up in Eilat on Saturday afternoon, a total distance of 477 kilometers.

There are three members of the Christian Embassy staff making the trek: Herbert Kelly from South Africa, Jani Salokangas from Finland and Emanuel Mfoukou from Sweden/Congo.

Each cyclist has Christian sponsors from around the world who have pledged donation amounts per kilometer. The funds will be used for facility upgrades at the national center for disabled athletes in Ramat Gan and sponsorship of disabled Israeli athletes training for the next Paralympics slated for Brazil in summer 2016.