

Zambia Pastors Pedal for Jesus

How long would you pedal to share the gospel?

The question begs an answer after hearing about pastors in Zambia who ride their bicycles around town, and sometimes farther, to spread the love of Jesus Christ.

Pastor John Tembo has long used a bicycle to navigate the roads of Petauke in the Eastern Province city where he pastors Petauke Central Baptist Church.

But it hasn't always been easy.

"Sometimes because of bad roads, the chain comes off or the tires go flat," said pastor Tembo, whose church is about 60 miles north of the Mozambique border.

But that doesn't stop him. Pastor Tembo hops right back on after messing with the chain or pumping up a tire. He commonly rides 20 kilometers a day sharing Christ and visiting members of his his congregation.

"It gives me a lot of energy," he said, "and makes my body strong."

But the 53-year-old bicycle pastor recognizes his limits. He has been using a two-wheeler to minister since 1988 and a 50-kilometer day was not uncommon when he was younger. But now pastor Tembo admits he "can't cover some of the areas. I am 53, and my energy has gone down."

But he still has plenty of energy to tell people about the *My Hope Zambia* World Evangelism Through Television program which airs nationwide on Dec. 1-3. During this weekend, Matthew hosts will invite their friends, family and neighbors over for a 30-minute broadcast featuring music videos, testimonies and

a classic message by Billy Graham or Franklin Graham, then they'll share their own stories and give an invitation to receive Christ.

Pastor Tembo has been faithfully spreading the *My Hope* Zambia word through his 150-member congregation as well as through the Fellowship of Pastors, which includes more than 30 area ministers.

"This is bringing souls to know Jesus Christ, at least that's my prayer and hope," he said. "People are excited. They want to know more."

Pastor Tembo, one of 43 regional coordinators, which are key to spreading the *My Hope* message all over this country the size of Texas.

"Even nonbelievers know me," he said.

In a country where traveling from city to city, or even around town, can be a huge challenge with many lacking automobiles, another district coordinator has found help in the form of two wheels.

Rev. Evaristo Kabwe, the mobilization coordinator, recognized that one particular coordinator lacked transportation and was severely limited in his *My Hope* effectiveness.

"We saw his potential and wanted to encourage him to go all out," said Joe Mott, the deputy country director for *My Hope* Zambia. "The bike will extend his range in the area he's training to 50 kilometers out from his home town of Mumbwa (western Zambia)."

The coordinator had trained 71 churches with *My Hope* materials before getting the bike and is already up to 108.

"We believed he will exceed the 115 church goal," Mott said.

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