

Marisa looks on as David Thomas holds her three-month-old brother (*above*). Marisa stands with her parents in front of their house (*below*).



Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people
who will be able to pass them on to others.
(2 Timothy 2:2(b) NLT)

Week 1

Discipling for Development

As a child grows up she matures, learning to do things that her parents did for her when she was young. For example, while we are young our parents drive us to places, but as we grow up, they will teach us to drive, we will get our license, and we will one day drive ourselves.

Evangelical Friends Mission started the Friends churches in Rwanda and is kind of like the parents who are helping their children mature and grow. The “children” they are helping are the churches. In Rwanda our fellow Christians are learning to depend on God to provide for their needs.

We are going to do a skit that looks at a problem with maturing.

The River Crossing

(On the ground draw a wide river with a small island in the middle. If you’re outdoors you can draw with a stick in the dirt, or chalk on cement. Indoors you can use string or rope.)

One student comes up to the river and says, “I want to get to the other side.” He swims over and swims back.

Another student then comes up and says to the first student, “I want to

get to the other side, but I don’t know how to swim. Would you carry me?”

The first student says, “I could teach you to swim, but it will take a while.”

Second student responds, “I’m in a hurry; just carry me across.”

First student, “OK, I’ll try.” He puts the second student on his back and struggles across and stops at the island exhausted. He says, “I can’t carry you any farther; I’m too tired,” and drops off the second student at the island. The first student then swims back to the shore. The second student is upset, but still unwilling to learn, and he stays on the island.

A third student then comes up and says, “I want to get to the other side, but I don’t know how to swim. Would you carry me across?”

The first student answers, “It is very hard to carry someone across. It would be better if you learned to swim yourself. I could teach you.”

The third student responds, “OK, teach me.”

The first student says, “Here is how you swim. Move your arms like this and kick your legs like this, and breathe like this.” He demonstrates this and the third student copies him. Then they swim slowly across together.

The third student exclaims, “I did it, I did it!”

While standing there, ask your students, **What did you see and hear in this skit? What is the main problem?** (It's easier to have someone do the hard work—like swimming to the other side—for us).

Do we have this problem?

(Sometimes we just want to get to the other side without having to do all the work of learning to swim and getting there ourselves. We can relate to this because sometimes we just want our parents to do things for us like cooking our food or washing our clothes, instead of letting us learn to do it ourselves.)

Why do we have this problem?

(It's easier to let someone else do everything for us than it is to learn how to do it ourselves. That's a lot of hard work.)

In Rwanda we see this problem when people think and feel that they can't do the work of the church without missionary help. Some say of themselves, "We are too poor, we can't build our church buildings, we can't reach out, we can't educate our leaders, we can't solve our problems without a foreigner and their money helping us." Many people think, "I'm poor. I will always be poor. I cannot get out of my poverty. I cannot get to the other side unless someone carries me."

This skit helps us see that it is better to teach a person to swim than to just do it for them. In Rwanda missionaries are teaching leaders to depend more on God and less on the missionaries for the

support and leadership needed to run the church. Like learning to swim, the Rwandan leaders are learning to depend on God for their needs.

Poverty in Rwanda

Rwanda has a big problem called poverty. Many Rwandans have very little money. Some people can work hard all day and only make two or three dollars. Many others have no work at all. In the city of Kigali many people eat only one meal a day. Many parents do not have enough money to send their kids to school.

Jesus taught us to pray to God, saying, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10 NIV). God is not pleased with poverty that doesn't let kids go to school and doesn't let people eat enough food. God wants to see Rwandans come into God's kingdom, accepting Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and we want to see their lives changed as they learn to depend on him. A vital part of Jesus' good news, his gospel of the kingdom, is seeing a change that touches every area of people's lives, including poverty. This means we want to see the people of Rwanda learn to move out of poverty.

With this goal in mind, the Rwandan Friends Church is working with a program called Discipling for Development (D4D) in which trained church leaders work with small groups in communities, using Bible

studies and skits like the river-crossing skit to help people see how they can have changed lives and move out of poverty.

Read 1 Kings 17:7-16

Who is this story about? What did they do? What is the main problem?

(There is not enough food for everyone to eat.) **Do we have this problem?** (People in Rwanda often have this problem—not having enough resources to meet all their needs.) **What did this mean to Elijah and the widow?** (They had to trust God to provide for their needs. The widow also had to act in faith using the small amount of food she had. As she was obedient, God provided for her needs.) **What does this mean to us and to poor Rwandans? What can we do to follow God's Word?** (Trust him to supply our needs, and in faith use the little that we have as he leads us.)

Can you think of other Bible stories in which people used what they had in their hands and God did amazing things with it? (Moses' staff; five loaves and two fish).

Here is the story of fifteen-year-old Marisa (not her real name) whose family lives close to the town of Kirambo. Her parents attend the Kirambo church. Last year Marisa's parents went to a D4D seminar taught by Evangelical Friends Mission missionary Debby Thomas, Superintendent Augustine Simparinka, and Marisa's own pastor Teturien. They studied using skits like the river-crossing skit and

Bible stories like the one about the widow who trusted God to take care of her. Marisa's parents were excited when they got back from the seminar. They asked themselves, "What do we have that we can use to honor God?" They learned to save money in a group where each month everyone contributes money, and they take turns receiving that money for doing something that will make a difference in their lives. When it was Marisa's parents' turn, they were able to buy metal roofing and doors and windows for their house.

Marisa also tells us, "Our pastor loaned us a female goat to take care of. The goat gave birth to triplets! Once the three baby goats are older we will give the mother goat back to our pastor, who will probably loan her out to someone else. I have also been helping raise our rabbits. This last year I was able to sell some rabbits to help buy my school uniform, notebooks, and pencils." Marisa is starting to see that there is hope for her and her family to move out of the poverty she has lived in since she was born.



Above: Aren and Gwen with a big moth. *Below:* David and Debby Thomas and their children—Alandra (*front*), Breanna (*right*), Gwen (*back*), and Aren (*left*).



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Week 2

The Thomases *a missionary family*

An important way we support missions work in other countries is by supporting Evangelical Friends Mission missionaries.

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Romans 10: 13-15 NIV)

David Thomas says:

I am excited about the good news God has allowed our family to bring to the Friends churches in Rwanda. The churches are learning to trust in God to meet their needs. We are beginning to see how God wants to move people out of poverty. We especially see progress in this through Discipling for Development (D4D) and through Ubuzima Moringa, a kingdom business my wife, Debby, started.

Let me introduce you to my family. Debby and I have four kids. Our

oldest, Breanna, is thirteen; our son, Aren, is twelve; Gwen is ten; and Alandra is seven.

This next summer we will have been in Rwanda 12 years, which means our kids have spent most of their lives here. They love living in Rwanda, and consider it their home. Since we have not had a good school here for our kids to study in, we started a homeschool co-op seven years ago. At one point we had five missionary families and 14 students studying in our little home school.

Three teachers have served here besides Debby. Chrissy Muhr (from Idaho and Oregon) and Michelle Carpenter (from Kansas) are two of the teachers supported by Friends churches in the United States. Michelle served from August 2006 until July 2008. We hope to have two more teachers come out later this year—Liz Wine (from Kansas) and Molly Black (from Texas).

Breanna (age thirteen) is no longer studying in our school. She is studying at a boarding school in Kenya called Rift Valley Academy.

Bree says, “I’m so glad my parents allowed me to come and study here [at Rift Valley Academy]. We have great teachers and I am challenged to work really hard. I have made some good friends, and I really like my dorm parents. The food is great. I realize that when I was at home I tended to depend on my parents’ relationship with God. But I’ve found this year that school is

Chrissy Muhr talks about teaching in Rwanda

Teaching in a missionary school in Rwanda is quite different from any other experience.

Our class is in the main room of a house and we use the “bedrooms” for a library, a computer room, and a work room. Sometimes the city turns off the water and we have to use water from the rain barrels to flush toilets and wash hands. Other times the electricity goes out for half of the day—especially frustrating when students are using computers for research or typing papers. Sometimes,

when it rains very hard, our windows leak, and we have little rivers of water running across the floor. A hard rain on the tin roof is so loud we have to shout to be heard.

However, there are many good things about being in such a small school. Since there aren't very many students, I can help each one with whatever they have trouble with. Because we have so many grades and only one teacher, each student has a unique schedule. Some students do French and typing on the computers

while others do workbooks. At the same time some work on research and still others do math or writing. One Friday a month we have a parent day; all the students' parents come for the last hour of the day, and students read pieces they've written or present projects they've worked on.

Teaching in Rwanda has certainly been a great experience. I'm glad God has called me to this ministry of supporting missionaries through educating their children.

hard work and I have to really depend on God to help me through each day. I love growing closer to God. I understand him speaking to me as I read my Bible. I love the freedom to study hard and make new friends. I do miss my parents, but I think they miss me more. I love coming home for our month-long breaks between trimesters.”

For Debby and me, the best thing about being missionaries is being able to work with some really great people—people like Augustine Simparinka, our superintendent. He and Debby are working together to help people move out of poverty through Discipling for Development (D4D). We also have a good relationship with Francoise and

Mudenge. Francoise helps us with some of our kitchen work. With Debby's help, Francoise and her husband have been able to start up a small business where they make and sell tortillas, peanut butter, and some fruit juices including passion fruit juice. This small business supports Francoise's family, as well as gives their employee a good job. We enjoy empowering people to take care of themselves. Helping them start a business is a good way to do that.

Have you heard of the moringa tree? The leaves provide an excellent source of nutrition for people in Rwanda. Debby is starting a business called Ubuzima Moringa, which means “health from the moringa tree.” This is a kingdom business, which means it must make a profit like all businesses; it must have a social benefit (making the vitamin-rich moringa powder available to the poor, and creating jobs); and it must have a kingdom purpose (seeing Christ's love and grace transform the lives of Ubuzima Moringa employees and others).

Our theme is “teach these truths.” God has used Friends missionaries to teach important truths into the life of the Rwandan Friends churches. The key truths for this time have been that God can be trusted and that if people are willing, God can move them out of being dependent on the mission. (Remember, being dependent on

the mission is like being carried across the river in the river-crossing skit.) Our work in D4D is teaching people to apply the gospel to their lives and to move out of poverty. It is like teaching them to swim.

Debby's kingdom business, Ubuzima Moringa, is also important in helping people move out of poverty through affordable, nutritious Moringa leaf powder; through jobs; and through the example of a kingdom business that can transform lives.

We've seen that God gives missionaries various gifts, skills, abilities, and unique visions for the future. As they minister—teaching the specific truths that God has laid on their hearts—they can bring tremendous blessing to the people and churches they serve.

EFM has great missionaries all over the world. They need your prayers for wisdom, blessing, and protection. They also need your financial support. When Friends churches in America give money to support EFM and their yearly meetings' missions programs, excellent missionaries whom God uses to share the truths of the gospel can go out and serve.

This year's Easter offering will go toward supporting the ministry of the Evangelical Friends Church in Rwanda, and the Friends missionaries there.

Week 3

The church

An important part of the work in discipling Rwanda is helping this nation learn how to move out of poverty. Two weeks ago we did a skit about some people wanting to cross a river. We saw that it is better for people to learn how to swim so that they can swim across for themselves than for people to need someone to carry them across. This helps us see that we can't just give money to help people move out of poverty; we need to *teach* them how to move out of poverty. Missionaries from Evangelical Friends Mission are doing exactly this teaching through the Discipling for Development (D4D) program.

This week we will do a project to see how important it is for a community of people to take ownership and leadership of their move out of poverty. We can't move them out of poverty ourselves.

On the ground draw three separate circles in a row (use a stick in the

dirt, chalk on cement, or a string/rope on carpet, and make the circles about two feet in diameter). Gather 45 small (one inch in size) rocks or pieces of gravel, and three different rocks, like three pieces of brick (two large and one small piece).

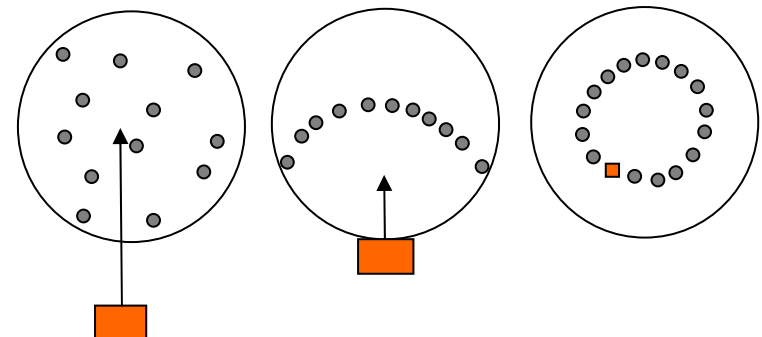
In the first circle randomly scatter 15 of the small rocks. Place one large rock outside the circle.

Place a large rock on the edge of the second circle with 15 of the small rocks inside in a semicircle facing this large rock.

In the third circle place 15 of the small rocks in a circle in the middle and place the different small rock in the circle with the 15 others.

The circles represent three communities, and the small rocks represent the native people in them.

Focus on the first circle and show the students how the foreign missionary or development worker (represented by the large rock) wants to help these people move out of poverty. Let's say the missionary decides the Rwandan people need clean water to drink, so he or she digs them a well. Ask



Right:
Three circles are used to teach community-based Christian development.

Below:
A sunny outdoor evangelistic service.



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Make Disciples

We know that Jesus died and rose again to save us from dying because of our sins, and to set us free from the power of sin over our lives. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross paid the price to buy back **all** that Satan has stolen. He told us, "**All** authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28: 18-20 NIV). He also told us, "I have given you authority to...overcome **all** the power of the enemy" (Luke 10: 19 NIV). Part of our job as Christians is to extend Jesus' kingdom of light in dark areas.

your students, **Do you think the well project will work in this community? Why or why not?** (When the community doesn't dig the well themselves, they will see it as the outsider's project and they will not take care of the well. This actually happened: An organization dug some wells costing \$10,000 in the Bugesera region without any community involvement. Community people used the hole in one of the wells to throw away their trash, and now the well is completely ruined.)

Next focus on the second circle and say to the kids, **Describe the relationship of the people in the community (represented by the small rocks) with the foreign worker (represented by the large rock on the edge of the circle).** You can see that they are working together to come up with solutions to their community's problems. Let's say they also decide to do a project for clean water. **It has a much better**

chance of being successful, doesn't it? But what if the foreign worker (large rock) moves on to help in another community? The people don't know what to do because they are still dependent on him or her to solve their problems. When the water project falls into disrepair, they will still be dependent on the foreigner to fix it. This is a much better situation than in the first community, but the people are still dependent on the foreign worker.

Then focus on the third circle and ask the kids, **What is happening in this community that is different from what is happening in the other two circles? How are people in this community behaving toward one another? How are they relating to the foreign community worker?** (They are equal to each other; they are listening to each other; they respect each other. The foreign worker's ideas are not dominant; rather decisions are made by the community.)

Let's say this community decides they need a project to get clean water. They go and get advice from organizations who do this kind of work. Then they get their water project completed, doing work themselves, and making sure that they have their own community experts who can maintain it and fix it when it breaks. They own this water project because it was theirs from the beginning. This process is clearly centered in the community with the community fully in control of all aspects.

As we help disciple poor communities we make sure to empower them to own and initiate their move out of poverty. Through this process the communities come to learn that they can do all things through Christ who gives them strength (Philippians 4: 13). They also learn to faithfully use the little that they have, and then see God multiply it and bless them.

The Rwandan Friends Church is like the third community from our circles project. In the minds of the Rwandans, the church is theirs; they own it and they are the ones leading. This is what the missionaries have been hoping for from the time the church was founded 20 years ago. In the beginning you could describe the missionaries as parents and the growing church as children. Now, however, missionaries are seen as equals and not as parents in the eyes of Rwandan leaders.

The community of Butandi provides an example of Rwandan leaders building their own church. (The picture of the outdoor evangelistic service is from there.) The leader of a small church group that met in a house was trained on how to reach out to his friends and community. As his small group shared about Jesus they also talked about the problems in their community and worked to help each other overcome some of these problems. More and more people started coming to the small group, and the group multiplied into three small groups. The people of these groups plan to continue multiplying small groups and hope to have 200 people in their church community by next year. As their community grows, they would like to build a church on the land they purchased. This community is an example of the third circle. They're taking what they've learned and using it to bring people to Christ; they're organizing their church themselves; and as a church they're becoming a light in their larger community.

One of the key parts of the Rwandan church's vision is the phrase "*Nitwe Tubikora*," or "We are the ones to do it!" This shows their strong sense of ownership in working hard to pursue God's vision of shining Christ's light into dark areas in Rwanda.

The money raised in this year's Easter offering will be used to support this growing church.