



*Remembering*  
Dr. Stephen Gibson

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"I am increasingly burdened that global pastors, who may not need or desire a formal degree, would also be trained."

- Dr. Ed Smither





## *Remembering* Dr. Stephen Gibson



On January 31, after a two-month battle with pancreatic cancer, Dr. Stephen Gibson, one of SGC's founding board members and its most prolific authors, went to be with the Lord. His life was marked by Christlike compassion, the kind that refuses comfort and demands action in the face of real need. Nowhere was this more evident than in his burden for the unreached.

Steve often opened mission services with sobering realities: nearly three billion people live in hard-to-reach regions where they may never hear the gospel. He would remind us each day, 100,000 people slip into eternity, 60,000 of them from unreached people groups. These statistics were not abstract to Steve; they compelled him forward. Echoing Robert Moffat's challenge to David Livingstone, Steve would not sit in "lazy contentment," but go to the "unoccupied districts", hard-to-reach places where the gospel had yet to take root.

Like Jesus, Steve's compassion was both heartfelt and strategic. He believed the indigenous church was essential to fulfilling the Great Commission. While he valued western missionaries, he urged the church to recognize a sobering truth: countless lives would live and die long before outside help could arrive. The solution, he insisted, was to mobilize and equip local church leaders, those already among the people.

Steve trusted the work of the Holy Spirit in the global church. He respected global leaders, loved serving them, and genuinely enjoyed being with them. That conviction shaped his work across Ukraine, Georgia, Liberia, and beyond. Through translation efforts and local partnerships, hundreds of churches and thousands of pastors received training in their own languages. Initiatives like the Shepherds Institute of Liberia and a school for children continue to bear fruit across multiple continents.

In his final weeks, even as his strength faded, Steve labored to complete a missions course aimed at empowering churches to send missionaries of their own. His legacy lives on through his writing, his vision, and the countless leaders he equipped. Steve loved and served Jesus by serving the church, and the world is changed because of it. SGC is committed to preserving Dr. Stephen Gibson's legacy!

**Tim Keep**

Founder & President

From my perspective, Dr Gibson was a “10-talent” kind of man (Matthew 25:14-21), especially gifted with incredible brilliance and creativity. He held nothing back - he invested all he was and all he'd been given so that it would be doubled for the Lord at the end of life's short day.

Dr Gibson invested all of himself in the Lord's work. He made a practice of sharing the gospel of salvation every opportunity he had, whether to telemarketers or seatmates in flight. He labored to multiply church leaders and gospel workers by creating training models and setting up training programs that replicate. His writings will continue to impact generations of believers for years to come.

He courageously blazed new trails and invited us to follow. He didn't delay, waiting for a perfect situation or perfect people. He had a God-given knack for seeing individuals' potential and matching them to places of service in God's kingdom. He trusted us to steward incredibly valuable work.

Dr Gibson enjoyed physical labor too. It was quite normal for him to interrupt his desk work and take a load to the dump or do some other needful, dirty task. Somehow, he carved out time to read, continuing to learn and grow throughout life.

Dr Gibson had such a gift for teaching. He was attentive to illustrations in everyday life and used them to help us understand the way things are. He made truth so understandable and clear. He was very accustomed to the challenge of speaking through interpreters and had learned to say things precisely and concisely.

I am so thankful to God for the life of Dr Gibson, and for how it has deeply impacted my own in just a few short years.

**Elizabeth Albertson**

Curriculum Manager

## WHAT IS WRITTEN ENDURES

carrying truth farther and  
longer than a lifetime

### SGC Courses Written by Dr. Gibson

- + Christian Beliefs
- + Romans
- + Eschatology
- + Doctrine and Practice of the Church
- + Faith Traditions of the World
- + Biblical Evangelism and Discipleship
- + Practical Christian Living
- + Christian Family

- + Ministry Leadership
- + Local Institute Handbook
- + Cultivate Discipleship Lessons



Find  
Dr. Gibson  
Courses





**\*  
New  
Board  
Member**

**Dr. Ed Smither**  
Dean of the School of Missions  
and Intercultural Ministry at  
Columbia International University

Dr. Ed Smither (PhD, University of Wales; PhD, University of Pretoria) serves as Professor of History of Global Christianity and Dean of the School of Missions and Intercultural Ministry at Columbia International University. Previously, he taught church history and intercultural studies at Liberty University Theological Seminary. Prior to serving in higher education, Ed spent 14 years in intercultural ministry in North Africa, France, and the USA.

Ed has written or edited twenty books in church and mission history and missiology. He serves as Vice President of the Evangelical Missiological Society and was founding editor of the Journal of EMS. Since 1999, Ed has been married to Shawn, and they have three young adult children—Brennan, in the US Army; Emma, a junior at the University of South Carolina; and Eve, a high school senior. In his free time, Ed enjoys road biking, traveling, and cheering for the Washington Commanders.

**2026 Board Meeting**

On January 9th, we conducted our 2026 board meeting, and it was a very encouraging meeting.

The day was marked by prayer, thoughtful discussion, and a shared sense of anticipation for what the Lord has ahead for Shepherds Global Classroom in 2026.

We are deeply thankful for the wisdom, counsel, and spiritual leadership of our Board, and for their clear commitment to equipping pastors and Christian leaders around the world with sound biblical training.

**Thank You David and Joel**

As **David Croutou** and **Joel Hood** conclude their time on the Shepherds Global Classroom Board of Directors, we want to express our sincere gratitude for their service. We are thankful for David's role as a key connection at Columbia International University, and for his help with the certificate process. We are also deeply grateful for Joel's years of leadership, wisdom, and clear financial guidance, as well as his meaningful contributions to the Vision Dinner. Both men played an important role in SGC's growth. Both of these men will be missed, but we are thankful for their continued support of SGC and our mission.

# GLOBAL TRAINING

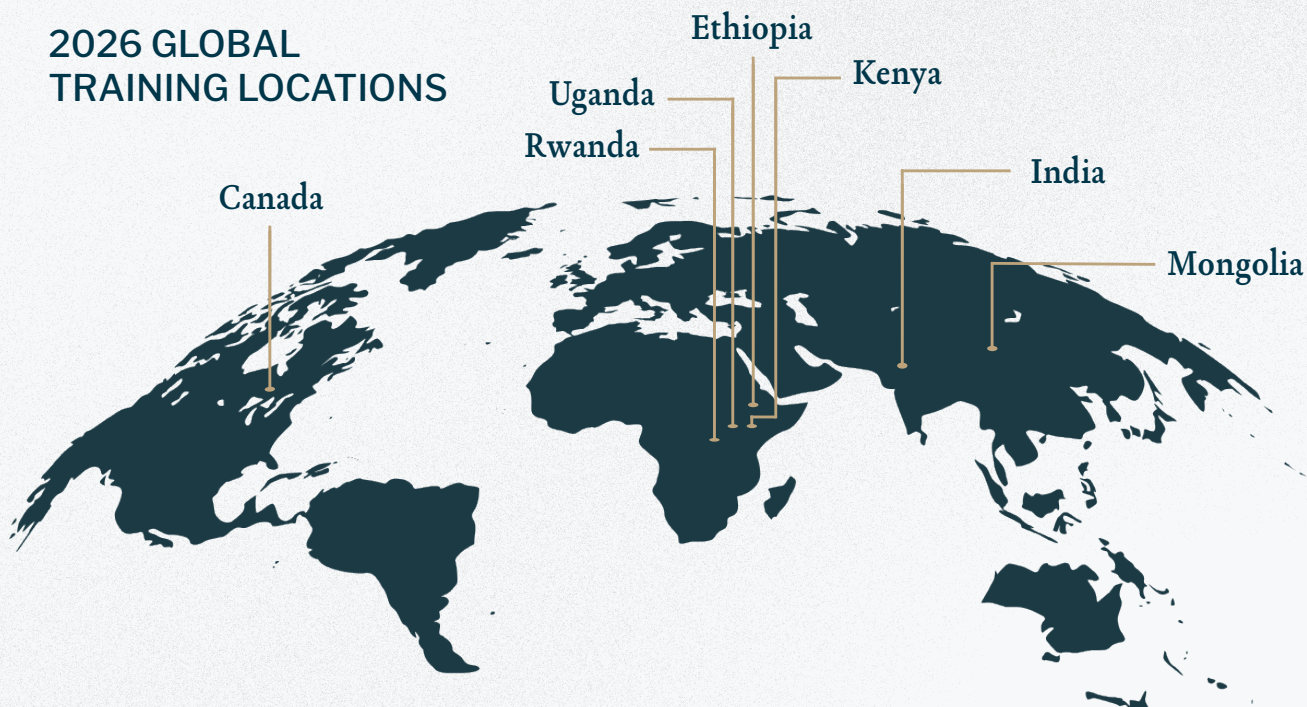
Dr. Randall McElwain  
Director of Global Training

In my devotions this month, I have been reading the book of Acts. Reading about Paul's ministry, I have been struck by the balance between strategic planning and divine leadership that guided his travels. Both planning and the guidance of the Holy Spirit were important in Paul's ministry. Paul was a planner. If you track his travels on a map of the Roman Empire, you will see that Paul planted churches in strategic locations. Corinth was a key port city. Sailors from throughout the empire spent time in Corinth. By reaching this city, Paul was able to send the gospel to dozens of other cities. Evangelizing Corinth was like planting a church in New York City, Hong Kong, or London today.

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. The church in Ephesus provided a base for reaching every other city in Asia Minor. For example, there is no record that Paul ever visited Colossae. But a native of Colossae, Epaphras, was converted on a visit to Ephesus and then carried the gospel back to his hometown. Paul was a strategic planner. But Paul did not rely solely on human planning. Paul listened to the voice of the Holy Spirit. We see this in Acts 16. Paul and Silas traveled through areas where Paul had planted churches. As they traveled back through Asia Minor, Paul wanted to preach in each of those cities, but the Holy Spirit said, "No." He decided to travel to Bithynia, located on an important trade route. But the Spirit said, "No."

Finally, while they waited in Troas, God called Paul to take the gospel to Macedonia. From there, the gospel soon spread throughout Europe. This had not been part of Paul's original plan for his second missionary journey, but he was sensitive to the voice of the Spirit. Both planning and the leadership of the Holy Spirit were important for Paul's ministry. So, what does this have to do with SGC? In planning for Global Training events in 2026, we want to be strategic and sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit when He says, "Go here."

## 2026 GLOBAL TRAINING LOCATIONS





## AN URGENT DOOR NOW OPEN

Jesus taught his disciples to work with a sense of urgency. “Do you not say, ‘There are still four months, then comes the harvest?’” he asked his disciples. “Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes and see that the fields are white for harvest” (John 4:35). This was not a general call to global missions; this was a call for disciples to pay attention to what the Spirit of God was doing right in front of them...in Samaria, and to harvest the grain while it was still ripe. It’s as if Jesus was saying, “As you guys look over this field of people eager for the word of God, do not say ‘we’ll come back and tell them someday,’ tell them now. Live and work with urgency.”

Jesus might plead with you and me today, “When you see your brother in need, do you say, ‘once I get in a better place financially, I’ll share what I can’? No! They’re hungry now. Give them bread now.” Move while the door is open. Act before the tide turns.”

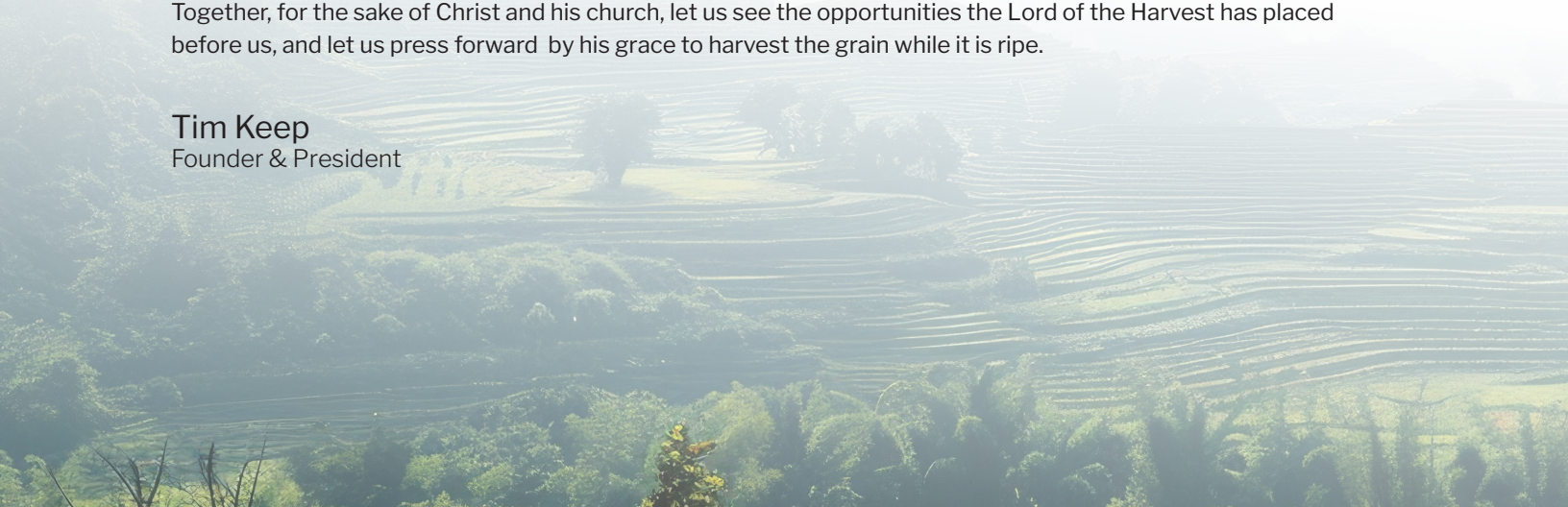
Jesus isn’t saying we shouldn’t save, invest, prepare ourselves, plan, or wait for the right opportunities, but he is saying there’s an urgency to respond to the opportunities the Holy Spirit is placing before us. The Lord wants to use us now, not in the future. Today is the day of salvation.

The Lord has placed before SGC some incredible opportunities—not in Samaria, but Monrovia, Kampala, Cairo, Vijayawada, Lahore, and beyond—and we feel an urgency to press the advantage. Many of you are feeling it too.

One of our most exciting projects this year is the publication of *A Theology of Suffering*, by Dr. McElwain. This powerful teaching will strengthen the faith of hurting, traumatized people all around the world, and give pastoral teachers a tool to help countless sufferers in their congregations. Our goal is to begin translating this course by June, **and your gift this month will help us do so.**

Your partnership is a gift we cherish. Your intercessory prayers and generous gifts are the fuel of this ministry. Together, for the sake of Christ and his church, let us see the opportunities the Lord of the Harvest has placed before us, and let us press forward by his grace to harvest the grain while it is ripe.

**Tim Keep**  
Founder & President

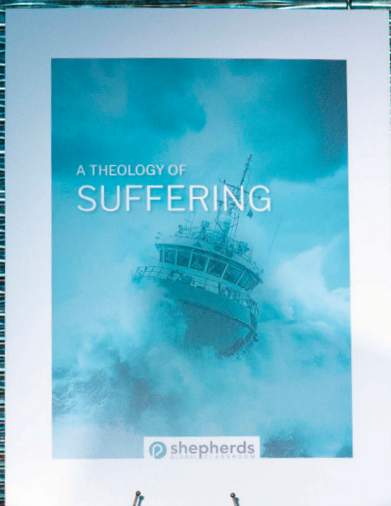


## HELP US TRANSLATE

### A THEOLOGY OF SUFFERING

In our last newsletter, we announced our new course, *A Theology of Suffering*, a course created to help pastors and Christian leaders walk faithfully with people through pain, loss, and hardship with a clear biblical framework. Now, our focus turns to translation.

We are working to make this course available to pastors and leaders around the world who urgently need this teaching in their own language. In 2026, our goal is to translate *A Theology of Suffering* into eleven key initial languages, jumpstarting global access and placing this vital resource into the hands of those who need it most.



LANGUAGE	COST
Arabic	\$8,211
Chinese (Traditional)	\$8,212
Chinese (Simplified)	\$8,213
Hindi	\$5,634
Kiswahili	\$6,495
Portuguese	\$8,216
Tagalog	\$6,498
Tamil	\$4,779
Telugu	\$6,500
Spanish	\$6,497
French	\$8,216

If you, your church, business or organization would like to support this project, **mark your donation** for a specific language, or contact our team!

**\$77,471**

Total needed to complete the translation of *A Theology of Suffering* into eleven key languages

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SGC earned a 2026  
Candid Platinum Seal  
of Transparency!

### Volunteer for the Vision Dinner



There are many moving pieces on the night of, and leading up to the Vision Dinner. We would appreciate your help.

### Become a Vision Dinner Sponsor!



We would love to partner with you, your organization, business, or church to make this night special!

# VISION

DINNER

09.15.2026

## Mark your calendars!

Join us on **September 15, 2026**  
for our 6th annual SGC Vision Dinner!

Each year, Shepherds Global Classroom hosts a fundraising dinner to highlight the past year's wins and give our faithful supporters a vision for the coming year. We hope to see you this year!

Registration will open in May.

*Event Sponsor:*

