Update from South Africa
TMS Alum David Beakley

"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace..." Ephesians 2:14-15

"On November 27th of this year, I saw the meaning of this passage come to life, and it was one of those real-life illustrations that are unforgettable.

Martin Seliane, a former schoolteacher and headmaster from the Free State (about 600km from the seminary), recently graduated from Christ’s Seminary Magna Cum Laude. Prior to seminary, Martin was an ANC (African National Congress—the current ruling party in South Africa, but banned before 1994) activist. He was totally unsaved, violent, and a heavy drinker. To Martin, shooting another man with a gun was a walk in the park. In 2002, through attending a meeting set up by some Campus Crusade workers, Martin saw the Jesus Film and was immediately made a profession of faith and a literal “about face” with his life.

For the next 2 ½ years Martin struggled with change, and eventually felt called to the ministry. When told about Christ Seminary, he reluctantly made the long trip up to Polakawani to see a “White Baptist” seminary.

After a spirited interview, Martin was accepted into our program beginning January 2006. In his first week of school while at our house he divulged to me that up until 2002 he hated whites and was a serious political activist. He also asked if Benny Hinn used expository preaching! I told him, “After 4 years, you will be able to answer that question for yourself!”
Adriann Johannes Vlok was Minister of Law and Order in South Africa from 1986 to 1991 in the final years of the apartheid era. Facing increasingly intense opposition and political unrest in this period, the South African government planned and implemented drastic repressive measures, including hit squads, carrying out bombings and assassination of anti-apartheid activists. No one was more assiduous in implementing the harsh policies of the Botha administration than Adriaan Vlok.

Though a longtime member of the Dutch Reformed Church, Vlok would never be accused of being an altar boy. It was he who ordered the bombing of theatres that were screening the movie “Cry Freedom” in 1987. In his position, Vlok was responsible for the national security strategy, and commanded South Africa’s “secret police” who rounded up over 30,000 (including 15,000 in 1987 during the state of emergency declared in 1985) and hundreds (accounted for) were killed.

Many blacks were bludgeoned to death, blown apart with explosives, barbecued, summarily executed in cold blood, hanged, thrown out of high rise buildings and dropped into the ocean from helicopters.

In 1995, Vlok’s wife committed suicide, and this heartache drew him to the Lord and to reading Scripture. Despite being raised “in the church” Adriaan had no relationship with Christ, yet now at this point in his life and facing great change in his way of life and threat to his own safety, the Lord chose to intervene in a great way. In late August 1977, Apartheid’s erstwhile minister of law and order, Adriaan arrived at the Union Building in Pretoria, the seat of government. He asked to see Frank Chikane, the director general at the Office of the President.

Clutching a towel, a bar of soap, a Bible and a plastic bowl, Vlok deeply apologized to him for apartheid, and gave the minister a Bible while quoting John 13:15: “I have sinned against the Lord and against you, please forgive.” He then asked to wash Chikane’s feet.

Since then, Vlok has proceeded to wash the feet of 10 women from Mamelodi, a black township near Pretoria--mothers whose sons were brutally murdered by the police under the watch of Vlok in the 1980s. A police agent lured them into a trap, and the youngsters were shot in cold blood, their bodies burned and buried in a field near Pretoria.

Adriaan is committed to this one thing that he quotes often: ‘I’m deeply grateful that, through the grace of God, I received the opportunity to follow the example of my Savior, Jesus Christ, to set a better example for others. My daily life is based on this: To abandon myself, to let go of my own sense of honor and pride above other people; To rid myself of my own superiority, egoism and selfishness and be prepared to put myself last and not first anymore, and to get rid of hatred for my fellow human beings.’

How is it that the former Minister of Security of South Africa, who thought
nothing of killing, torture, and deception to prop up a false kingdom is now
totally united with, in fellowship with, and endeared to a man who was a
political thug who thought nothing of killing his enemies, abusing others,
ignoring his family, and was actually in the crosshairs of the “secret list” for
termination of his fellow brother? Only one answer: Jesus Christ. It is only
through Jesus Christ that any of us can see ourselves as we truly are, and that we
can see God truly as He is.”

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Yours for the Master,

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