Wilberforce International Institute

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Full Life Training Center, Gorkha, Nepal [Reflections on Kevin Cooney's Visit] 9/3-6, 2026

By Santosh Khatiwada, FLTC Nepal

We are deeply grateful that we had the privilege of welcoming **Kevin Cooney** to Nepal. His time with us, his sermon at Grace Community Church and Reformed Presbyterian Seminary in Kathmandu, and his multiple teaching sessions in Kathmandu and Gorkha, was a blessing to our churches, our leaders, and our community.

I want to reflect on his visit in two parts: **the blessings we received** and **the challenges we observed**.

Blessings

One of the unexpected blessings was meeting **Raju Maharjan**, his family, and learning about the work he does. Building a warm and respectful relationship across different faith backgrounds was a gift from the Lord. (Editor's Note: the Maharjan family are family friends of the Cooneys and hosted him in Kathmandu so he did not need to stay in a hotel.)

Kevin's core message, "Who is your God?", spoke powerfully to me. He shared this teaching in four different settings, and each time it encouraged my heart. Nepal is a nation struggling in many ways: our communities lack flourishing, our politics are unstable, our economy is fragile, immorality and addiction are rising, and many young people are leaving the country in search of opportunity.

In this context, the church stands as a beacon of hope. Pastors are called to preach the gospel faithfully. Yet we face significant spiritual challenges. We must contend with the influence of **Tantra–Mantra**, and with the narratives shaped by Yogis and Babas that shape the worldview of our society.

We also face practical challenges like balancing limited resources to care for our families and our churches. I often struggle in this area. Kevin's message reminded me that our identity in Christ is not transactional but redemptive. God is our Father, and as His children we are called to trust Him fully. This truth strengthened my heart.

Challenges

We also recognized a few challenges during the visit.

First, the group in Kathmandu, made up of Christian professionals, had hoped for more teaching specifically on **biblical worldview** and how it guides daily life in work, family, and society. This is helpful feedback, and next time we will prepare content that addresses these needs more directly.

Second, the long road diversion caused by flash floods made travel extremely difficult. Monsoon season in Nepal is unpredictable, and the nine-hour journey each way was exhausting. In the future, we will explore better scheduling options. Nine hours each way was not good use of Dr. Kevin's time in Nepal.

Third, because we do not yet have a ministry vehicle (such as a van or Scorpio), I was unable to bring my family along or include them in both events. This is **something we hope to improve as God provides.**

Despite these challenges, Dr. Kevin's visit was spiritually rich and deeply encouraging.

Gratitude

Finally, we want to thank all of you for your generous giving that made these events possible. Your partnership with Wilberforce strengthens the work of FLTC, our churches, and our communities. May God bless you abundantly. **Amen**.

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What Wilberforce Means to Me

~~ Santosh Khatiwada ~~

Full Life Training Center (FLTC) / Grame Community Church Napal

Santosh and his Family

For many years, my Christian faith was shaped primarily by personal experience with Jesus Christ. “Blessings” became the word that best summarized my walk with God. It shaped how I read Scripture and how I served in ministry. Preaching, counseling, and evangelism were often motivated by the hope of receiving or imparting blessings. And of course, blessings are real, God truly does invite us into a covenant relationship where He delights to care for His children.

But something changed when I began studying the biblical worldview. Through the generosity of Dr. Bob Osburn, who provided a scholarship for a fourteen-week comparative worldview course, my heart and mind were stretched in ways I had never imagined. During those weeks, God began shifting me from a self-centered faith to a God-centered one. It felt like a new birth; an awakening of both mind and heart.

I began to love God not only through experience, but also through understanding. I learned what it means to love Him with all my heart, soul, and strength, and also with my mind, just as Moses commanded in Deuteronomy 6:4. My approach to Scripture changed from seeking blessings to seeking the Triune God Himself, His character, His counsel, and His providence. My ministry changed as well: from positivity alone to repentance, confession, and deeper discipleship. It was as if another layer of my baptism had been revealed to me. **This is what Wilberforce meant to me.**

As my worldview expanded, I began to see all of reality through the story of creation and re-creation. I grew to love agriculture, the arts, education, business, and people of every race and region. Not to exaggerate, but I am still living and serving in Nepal because of that worldview course. I could have pursued opportunities abroad, as many young people do, but God gave me a vision to rebuild communities through education and the church. Today, that vision is taking shape. We are developing the **FLTC** in Gorkha and planting three churches in Gorkha and Kathmandu. FLTC provides vocational training for young people so they can remain in their communities, support their families, and strengthen their churches. Our church-planting work aims to build congregations that are holistic, loving God and loving neighbor in tangible, visible ways.

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My wife shares this calling. She leads the **Naya Jyoti Children's Home**, offering shelter and care for children at risk. She also teaches at a seminary and carries a vision for holistic Christian education for young students.
At the end of the day, my wife and I remain deeply grateful to the **Wilberforce International Institute** for mentoring us, shaping our worldview, and nourishing our spiritual lives. **Thank you for investing in us —and in Nepal.**

FLTC

Santosh's Training Center (Future Home)

A Wilberforce Evening

Wilberforce International Institute invites you to one of two special evening dinner gatherings with Dr. Kevin Cooney and Dr. Bob Osburn—nights designed to inspire, encourage, and reconnect you with the global mission of redemptive change.

This fall, Kevin and Bob will share powerful stories from the field—testimonies of transformed lives, emerging leaders, and the expanding influence of Wilberforce's work across Africa, Asia, and beyond. You'll hear how God is opening new doors for mentoring, equipping, and mobilizing Redemptive Change Agents in some of the most strategic places in the world.

We are hosting two dinner events, each offering a warm, relational setting to learn more about where Wilberforce is headed and how you can be part of this growing movement.

- **October 24 – Snoqualmie, Washington** Church on the Ridge An evening with our Seattle-area friends, partners, and supporters. (35221 SE Douglas St Snoqualmie, WA 98065-9284)
- **November 7 – Stillwater, Minnesota** Near the Twin Cities A gathering for our Midwest community and long-time Wilberforce family. (9348 75th St N Stillwater, MN 55082-9288)

These will be uplifting nights of fellowship, vision, and shared passion for seeing Christ-centered leaders bring redemptive change to their nations. We would be honored to have you join us for one of these exciting evenings.
You can sign up here: https://secure.qgiv.com/for/aneveningwithbobandkevin/event/awilberforceevening/
Or scan this QR code:

I've Been Thinking

Bob Cooney

After William Wilberforce became a follower of Christ in 1785, he very secretly met with John Newton, the former slave trader who had since become a pastor (and also wrote the hymn "Amazing Grace").

"Should I leave the Parliament and become a pastor? asked 26 year-old Wilberforce who was the best friend of the equally-young British Prime Minister, William Pitt.

"Serve God in the Parliament!" was the gist of Newton's reply.

As I shared with those who attended my lecture on biblical leadership at Rochester L'Abri on August 28, I fear that too many of us have chosen to stay out of the line of fire that comes with public service. Have we sought protection in business (increasingly less so) or by working in Christian organizations and NGOs? (I am pointing fingers at myself…)

As the writer of Hebrews summarizes the courageous faith of many of the Bible's heroes in Chapter 11, verses 32-38, tell me where those of us in professional Christian ministry find ourselves in the text. A sample:

"conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight."

My appeal is not for some kind of "warrior ethic." Far from it!Nor do I write without the awareness that many pastors shepherd their flocks at great cost to themselves. But, what I am trying to say in the soon-to-be-released book on biblical leadership that I have co-authored with my colleague Dr. Cooney is this: God is building leaders in the literal and metaphorical trenches, often far from the nearest pew. --- *Are you one of them?*

Kevin's Corner

Better Together

Many of you have sensed from my field updates that this summer's three international trips were both spiritually rich and physically demanding. I found myself pushing my body beyond its normal limits because God was doing such great things in the places I visited. It brought to mind Paul's words in **2 Corinthians 11:23–28**, where he recounts being beaten, shipwrecked, and suffering in many ways for the sake of the gospel.

Now, I haven't endured anything even close to what Paul experienced, but his testimony reminds me that God never promised an easy road for His people. In fact, Jesus told us plainly that the world would hate us (**John 15:18–19**) and that we would face trouble. Yet He also commanded us to take heart, because **He has overcome the world (John 16:33)**.

This truth, God's love for us in the midst of worldly hardship, shapes my worldview. He is greater than anything the world can throw at us. When I ask myself the ultimate question, "Who is my God?" I can answer with confidence: My God is the One who has overcome sickness, death, and every evil power. This is the God I serve through my work with Wilberforce.

Nothing I endure compares to the joy that awaits us, or to the rejoicing in heaven when even one lost soul comes to faith in Jesus. **Amen!**