



This month's issue of the International Bible University USA Newsletter centers on a single theme: the transformation of nations through faith, ethical leadership, and responsible stewardship. From strategic discussions on investment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to deeply personal testimonies of calling and perseverance, each article contributes to a broader vision of holistic impact.

On pages 2–3, we begin with a report on a recent gathering of Christian leaders, business professionals, and ministry partners exploring collaborative investment and development in the DRC. The discussion moves beyond traditional economic models, emphasizing a people-centered approach rooted in integrity, partnership, and long-term sustainability.

Pages 4–7 examine the global cobalt industry, exposing the harsh realities of child labor, unsafe mining practices, and environmental damage. This section also introduces a redemptive framework—highlighting how ethical, well-structured ventures can transform both economies and communities.

On pages 8–9, we shift to a personal narrative in the testimony of **Dr. Giselle**, whose journey from hardship to leadership reveals how God forms calling through perseverance, struggle, and obedience over time.

Pages 10–11 explore agriculture as a strategic alternative to extractive industries in the DRC, presenting it as a more sustainable, accessible, and community-centered pathway for both economic growth and ministry impact.

Finally, on **pages 12–13**, we return to the heart of the mission with a look at International Bible University USA itself—its role in equipping leaders, fostering global partnerships, and advancing the Gospel through both spiritual and practical transformation.

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IBU hosted a meeting of investors and leaders to discuss collaboration and investment in the DRC

The meeting brought together a diverse group of Christian leaders, business professionals, and ministry workers united by a shared vision: the spiritual and economic transformation of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**. The discussion opened in prayer, framing the entire initiative as God-centered and mission-driven, emphasizing stewardship, unity, and alignment with divine purpose. Participants repeatedly affirmed that their goal was not merely economic development, but the “redemption of nations”—a holistic vision combining faith, ethical leadership, and sustainable prosperity.

Several speakers introduced themselves and their backgrounds, revealing a blend of ministry, business, government, and humanitarian experience. Notably, Congolese leaders shared firsthand insight into the nation’s challenges

—decades of conflict, exploitation of natural resources, and lack of infrastructure—while also highlighting its immense potential. The DRC was described as extraordinarily rich in natural resources such as cobalt, copper, gold, and other strategic minerals, yet hindered by corruption, foreign exploitation, and underdevelopment.

A central theme throughout the discussion was the need for a new model of engagement. Participants strongly rejected historical patterns of outside exploitation—where foreign entities extract wealth without benefiting local populations. Instead, they emphasized a “people-centered” approach: empowering Congolese citizens through education, job creation, and ownership of their own resources. True transformation, they argued, must come from within the country, supported—but not controlled—by outside partners.

Business opportunities were explored in detail, particularly in mining and infrastructure. Experts discussed practical strategies such as developing local processing capabilities, providing tools and training to miners, and building scalable pilot projects before expanding operations. There was also interest in energy development,

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Continued from previous page including oil refining and hydroelectric potential. However, participants stressed that all ventures must be ethical, transparent, and structured to ensure long-term benefit for the Congolese people rather than short-term profit for investors.

Another major focus was partnership—across sectors and nations. The group highlighted the importance of collaboration between churches, businesses, and governments. Building trust with Congolese leadership was seen as essential, as was securing proper legal frameworks, security measures, and anti-corruption safeguards. Participants noted that without strong relationships and shared vision, even well-funded initiatives would fail.

Human development emerged as equally important as economic investment. One speaker emphasized that the greatest resource in the Congo is not what lies in the ground, but the people themselves. Leadership training, education, and personal development were seen as critical

to unlocking the nation's potential. Empowering women, supporting families, and strengthening communities were also highlighted as key priorities. Underlying the entire conversation was a strong sense of urgency and divine timing. Several participants described the gathering as a “perfect storm” or appointed moment, where political, economic, and spiritual factors are aligning. They expressed a belief that God is orchestrating these connections for a larger purpose, calling them to act faithfully and decisively.

In summary, the meeting outlined a vision for transforming the DRC through ethical investment, spiritual partnership, and human empowerment. It seeks to replace exploitation with collaboration, dependency with self-sufficiency, and corruption with integrity—ultimately aiming to bring both economic development and spiritual renewal for the glory of God.



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Cobalt, Children, and the Cost of Modern Technology

The modern world depends heavily on cobalt. It is a key component in rechargeable batteries used in smartphones, laptops, and electric vehicles. Much of the global supply comes from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which produces more than half of the world's cobalt.

Alongside large industrial mining operations, the country also has a vast network of artisanal and small-scale mines. In these informal sites, mining is done largely by hand, often with simple tools such as shovels, pickaxes, and metal rods. Workers dig narrow shafts or scrape surface deposits, then carry heavy loads of ore to be sorted and sold.

It is within this sector that child labor is most prevalent. Estimates suggest that between 25,000 and 40,000 children are involved in cobalt mining in the DRC. Some are very young. They typically do not operate machinery but instead gather rocks, sort minerals, wash ore, or carry heavy sacks—sometimes weighing over 40 pounds.

The work is physically demanding and dangerous. Children often labor long hours for minimal pay, contributing to family income in regions where poverty is widespread. In many cases, families depend on this work simply to survive.



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Health risks and long-term consequences

The dangers of artisanal cobalt mining extend beyond immediate physical strain. One of the most serious risks is exposure to toxic dust and contaminated environments. Workers frequently inhale particles containing cobalt and other heavy metals without any form of respiratory protection.

Over time, this exposure can lead to:

- Chronic lung disease
- Skin disorders and infections
- Damage to internal organs

Research has also found elevated levels of heavy metals in people living

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Continued from previous page near mining regions, indicating that the effects reach entire communities—not just those working directly in the mines.

Particularly concerning are findings linking mining exposure to reproductive health issues and birth defects. Women living near mining areas have shown higher rates of complications, suggesting long-term environmental contamination.

In addition to disease, the physical dangers are immediate. Hand-dug tunnels are often unstable and can collapse without warning. Fatal accidents occur, but because many of these mining operations are informal, accurate death statistics are difficult to obtain. Experts widely agree that such incidents are underreported.

Environmental damage compounds the problem. Mining runoff can pollute local water sources, affecting drinking water, agriculture, and livestock. As a result, entire communities may suffer long-term health consequences tied to mining activity.

What safe cobalt mining looks like

Cobalt mining does not have to involve these conditions. In regulated, industrial mining operations, safety standards significantly reduce risks.

Safe mining typically includes:

- Engineered tunnels and stabilized open pits
- Ventilation systems to remove harmful dust
- Dust suppression methods such as water spraying
- Protective equipment, including helmets, gloves, and respirators
- Regular health monitoring of workers
- Strict enforcement of labor laws, including the prohibition of child labor

These operations rely on trained adult workers and heavy machinery rather than manual digging. They are subject to oversight and safety regulations, which help prevent many of the dangers seen in artisanal mining.

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A global issue

The demand for cobalt continues to grow as the world becomes more dependent on rechargeable technology and transitions toward electric energy systems. While these developments are often seen as progress, they are tied to complex global supply chains.

The persistence of unsafe mining practices in the DRC is driven by a combination of poverty, limited regulation, and global demand for inexpensive materials. Although efforts are underway to create more transparent and ethical sourcing systems, significant challenges remain.

The issue is not a lack of knowledge about how to mine cobalt safely. Those methods already exist. The challenge lies in ensuring that safer practices are applied consistently, particularly in regions where economic pressures are severe.



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From Awareness to Action: A Redemptive Approach to Resources

In last month's newsletter, we introduced the vision behind the [Joseph Anointing Company](#)—an initiative rooted in stewardship, provision, and long-term transformation. This month's discussion on cobalt mining brings that vision into sharper focus. The realities of unsafe mining and child labor in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are not merely humanitarian concerns; they are opportunities for righteous intervention.

The Joseph Anointing Company, in collaboration with strategic partners, seeks to help establish profitable, ethical mining ventures and other projects that benefit all stakeholders—local communities, workers, and government alike. The goal is not simply to extract resources, but to do so in a way that creates safe working

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Continued from previous page environments, eliminates child labor, and builds sustainable economic growth. By aligning financial incentives with ethical practices, such efforts can encourage governments and local authorities to enforce higher standards and welcome responsible investment. In such an environment, schools can be built, hospitals can be opened, and communities can dwell safely without threat of violence or exploitation.

This vision is consistent with the biblical mandate to subdue the earth—not through exploitation, but through wise, productive, and moral stewardship. Resources like cobalt are not inherently unjust; rather, it is the manner in which they are obtained that determines their impact. When managed rightly, they can become instruments of blessing rather than harm.

Recent geopolitical developments suggest increasing openness to such partnerships. For example, initiatives supported during the administration of Donald Trump have emphasized expanding U.S. involvement in critical mineral development in Africa,

including the Congo, with an eye toward both economic opportunity and supply chain security.

Beyond economics, these ventures also serve a greater purpose. Profits generated can help fund missionary work, education, and community development, creating a cycle of transformation that addresses both physical and spiritual needs. In this way, what begins in the ground can ultimately bear fruit in lives changed, communities strengthened, and nations uplifted.

⚠️ CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD LABOR Cobalt Mining in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

🫁 HEALTH DAMAGE

Toxic cobalt dust exposure leads to chronic lung disease, skin infections, and long-term organ damage.

🎓 LOST EDUCATION

Many children miss school or attend irregularly, limiting literacy and future economic opportunities.

⚠️ PHYSICAL DANGER

Unstable tunnels, falling debris, and heavy loads result in injuries and unreported deaths.

🗑️ COMMUNITY CONTAMINATION

Mining pollution affects water and soil, exposing entire communities to harmful heavy metals.

🔄 CYCLE OF POVERTY

Child labor replaces education, trapping families in long-term poverty and unsafe working conditions.

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From Survival to Calling: How God Directed Dr. Giselle's Journey

In a recent interview with International Bible University (IBU), **Dr. Giselle** shared a testimony that reflects more than personal success—it reveals the hand of God working through hardship, uncertainty, and persistence to bring about purpose.

Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dr. Giselle left her home in 2003, spending time in Cameroon before arriving in the United States in 2004. What she encountered was not stability or opportunity, but struggle. She arrived alone, without a support system, limited finances, and unable to speak English.

“I had to find a roof, I had to find work... I was facing America all alone with zero direction.”

In those early years, survival was the priority. She worked in housekeeping, cleaning hospitals and hotels, doing whatever was necessary to sustain herself. At the same time, she enrolled in ESL classes, determined to learn the language despite repeated setbacks. She failed college required

entrance exams, but she did not stop. She continued until she passed. Looking back, it becomes clear that what seemed like delay was actually preparation.

knew it was not her calling. Like many, she had followed a path that made sense on paper but lacked conviction. It wasn't until she was in the pressure of real life—with no clear direction—that God began to redirect her.



While working multiple jobs, including as a cashier to force herself to practice English, she made a decision to pursue healthcare. At the time, it was not a spiritual decision—it was a practical one, even based on a misunderstanding. She believed it might allow her to avoid speaking English.

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 Instead, it did the opposite. Healthcare required communication, connection, and clarity. It forced her to grow in the very area she had tried to avoid. What she thought was a way around difficulty became the path through it. She'd found that God had other plans.

From there, her journey continued step by step. She earned her associate degree and went on to study at the University of Texas at Dallas, where she pursued molecular biology. She completed multiple bachelor's degrees and ultimately earned her doctorate. Even now, she continues to grow, currently completing a master's degree in clinical neuroscience.

She is also actively involved in professional organizations and has recently been appointed Executive Director of Health for the Americas Chamber of Business Global.

But her testimony is not about titles or achievements. It is about calling.

During the interview, Dr. Giselle spoke

about the deep inequalities within healthcare systems—how those with resources often receive excessive treatment, while those without are neglected. This burden is not abstract to her. It is personal. She has lived on the side of need, and now she stands in a position to respond to it. This is where her work takes on ministry significance.

Her life reflects a principle seen throughout Scripture: God often builds His servants in boscurity, in hardship, and in seasons where the path is unclear. Direction does not always come at the beginning. Often, it is revealed through obedience in the middle of uncertainty.

Dr. Giselle did not arrive in the United States with a clear plan or a defined calling. What she had was perseverance and a willingness to keep moving forward. Over time, God shaped that movement into purpose. Her story is a reminder that calling is not always immediate, and it is rarely easy. It is formed through endurance, refined through difficulty, and revealed through faithfulness.

For those in ministry, leadership, or preparation, her journey raises an important truth: God does not waste struggle. What feels like survival may, in fact, be the foundation for future service.



Dr. Giselle's life is not simply a story of overcoming—it is a testimony of God's direction. From Congo to the United States, from cleaning rooms to leading in healthcare, the thread that holds it together is not circumstance, but calling.

And that calling continues.

You can watch the full interview at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IzuadrKwOfSJQdwe5Te5X4-RLu773cql/view?usp=sharing>

Beyond Minerals: Why Agriculture May Be the Congo's Most Strategic Investment

Discussions about the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) often center on its vast mineral wealth—cobalt, copper, gold, and other resources that power global industries. While these sectors offer significant financial returns, they also come with high costs: large capital requirements, exposure to corruption, and, in some regions, ongoing violence. In contrast, agriculture presents a quieter but potentially more transformative path—one that

prioritizes people, stability, and long-term growth.

Unlike mining or large-scale infrastructure projects such as hydropower, agriculture requires relatively low startup investment. A modest initiative—providing tools, seeds, and basic infrastructure—can begin at the village level for thousands rather than millions of dollars. Cooperative systems, small processing facilities, and training programs may scale into the tens or hundreds of thousands, still far below the multimillion- or billion-dollar thresholds required for mining operations or energy projects.

More importantly, agriculture operates in many of the DRC's more stable regions, particularly in central and western areas, avoiding the conflict-prone eastern provinces where mineral extraction is often concentrated. This reduces security risks and allows projects to develop without the constant threat of disruption or exploitation. In this sense, agriculture is not only more accessible—it is also safer and more sustainable.

However, agriculture's greatest strength is also its greatest challenge: it depends heavily on people. Most Congolese farmers operate at a subsistence level, using basic hand tools and

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 traditional methods. To unlock the sector's potential, investment must focus on training—teaching improved farming techniques, crop management, storage, and market strategies. Even modest education efforts can significantly increase yields and income. Alongside this, organizing farmers into cooperatives and providing access to processing—turning cassava into flour or cocoa into finished products—multiplies value and keeps profits within local communities.

In addition to its economic benefits, agriculture creates a unique and often overlooked opportunity for ministry. Unlike extractive industries, which tend to isolate workers or operate in controlled environments, agriculture is community-based and relational. It places workers, trainers, and partners directly among families and villages, where trust is built over time through shared labor and mutual benefit. This opens natural doors for discipleship, teaching, and the demonstration of Christian principles through both word and action. In this setting, the gospel is not presented from a distance but lived out in daily life—through

integrity, service, and genuine care for people's well-being.

Compared to mineral extraction, which often removes wealth from the ground and exports it, agriculture builds wealth from the ground up. It feeds families, creates employment, stabilizes communities, and fosters environments where both economic and spiritual growth can take place. While it may not deliver the rapid, high-margin returns of mining, it offers something far more enduring: a foundation for both economic independence and lasting transformation.

In the long term, the DRC's greatest resource may not lie beneath its soil, but in its ability to cultivate what grows upon it—empowering its people to produce, sustain, prosper, and ultimately, to flourish as whole communities.

In creation, man was first placed into a garden to tend it. Agriculture is the original occupation, and the most fundamental for any society. All else should stem from there; especially if our goal is to uplift the people and make them self-sufficient.



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International Bible University: Our Heart and Call

At the center of lasting transformation is leadership. For this reason, **International Bible University USA (IBU)** exists not merely as a place of learning, but as a training ground for pastors, missionaries, and leaders called to serve in the Kingdom of God around the world.

IBU is built on a clear conviction: when leaders are grounded in sound doctrine, equipped with practical wisdom, and shaped by godly character, they become instruments of transformation in every sphere they touch. Churches are strengthened, communities are stabilized, and the Gospel advances with both clarity and power.

While IBU's reach is global, its work is especially focused in both the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the United States. This reflects a strategic connection between areas of great need and areas of opportunity. In the DRC, where instability and underdevelopment have limited access to training and resources, IBU invests in people—raising up leaders

who can guide, disciple, and build from within their own communities. In the United States, IBU serves as a base for education, partnership, and sending, connecting individuals and organizations to meaningful Kingdom work abroad.

At the heart of IBU's mission is a biblical vision of stewardship. This begins with the soul—proclaiming the Gospel, making disciples, and forming leaders in truth. But it does not end there. As lives are transformed, so too are the conditions in which people live. And it is all about the people. Strong leadership leads to healthier families, more stable communities, and more ethical and sustainable approaches to resources, work, and culture.

For this reason, IBU's work extends beyond ministry training alone. God not only calls pastors and missionaries—He also calls business leaders. IBU seeks to walk alongside these men and women, helping them grow as faithful stewards of the resources God has entrusted to them. Through wisdom, accountability, and shared vision,

they are empowered to invest in and build initiatives that are not only profitable, but righteous—projects that uplift communities, create opportunity, and reflect the character of God in the marketplace.

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In this way, IBU equips leaders who serve not only in churches, but in every sphere of influence—spiritual, social, and economic. The goal is not simply education, but multiplication: leaders who train others, disciple others, and carry the mission forward into places IBU itself may never directly reach.

International Bible University stands at the intersection of faith, education, and global mission. In a world of both deep brokenness and great opportunity, it remains committed to one purpose: equipping leaders, reaching nations, and transforming lives for the glory of God.



Get Involved

International Bible University USA invites you to be part of what God is doing through education, leadership development, and global outreach.

- Pray for ongoing initiatives in the United States and the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Partner with us through financial support or strategic collaboration
- Connect with our team to explore ministry, education, or business opportunities
- Share this newsletter to help expand the reach of this mission

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