



Son-rise in Africa Newsletter

ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS FOR WORLD EVANGELISM
CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Report by EARL & KATHI COOPER

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Kathi's Notes...

It has been a nice reprieve for me this month to be able to stay at home each weekend while Earl fills the pulpit at Riverside Baptist in Huntsville each Sunday (Pastor Don & Zala were given a dream vacation to Egypt, Greece, the Isle of Patmos... following the steps of John & Paul. I can hardly wait to hear the sermons he'll preach on his return!). Here on Healey Lake, weekends are more relaxed and I have been found lazing on the hammock more than once! This has allowed a good start-up for my year of teaching and I'm thankful for that. I'm sorry to not be travelling with Earl to the Maritimes in October. I have always loved visiting the eastern provinces--maybe next time! I'm looking forward to our weekend in NY, as we'll be staying with good friends, Merle & Doris Richardson. They were the directors of Shalom Lake Camp in Ohio in 1979, when we served as summer missionaries. The Richardson's have been faithful prayer supporters throughout our years of pastoral ministry. It's people like that on whom we're still depending, especially as we wait on the Lord to provide our needs, strengthen our bodies and direct our paths. Since our last newsletter, Central Baptist Church in Brantford, ON has joined 10 other churches and 40 families in supporting us. What an encouragement that is! Thank you, so much.

Africa Calls...

Before I came to the saving grace of Christ in 1999, I was trying to be good. Not because I believed that my goodness would earn me salvation but just to satisfy the requirement of a good child. My trying to be good increased when I was asked to stay with my aunt in Ho. Throughout my secondary school education I was seen as a respectful boy and it was a pride. In December 1998 my worldview was challenged when I met an evangelist called Pastor Jim. I could not believe when he said my own righteousness was not good enough to earn me salvation. His message those days was based on Romans. I was then fellowshipping with the E.P. church of Ghana. I took my time with the idea of proving to this pastor that he was a liar through my daily Bible studies in Romans. With my studies with this man the Holy Spirit led me to the true Salvation in Christ. My former church members disagreed with my departure, it was a hectic time with many people before I joined the Dzakpo Baptist Church. Now as a member of this Baptist church I have the chance of learning God's Word which I preach to people. I now consider it a challenge to help in building the church of God. Every day I continue to enjoy the loving relationship of God. This makes me grow in the Word. It is my prayer that God would help me to be more useful in His ministry no matter what opposition I may face. May His will be done. Africa calls...



Present Itinerary:

October 2 - Main Street Baptist Church, Sackville NB

October 5-8 – New Brunswick Bible Institute Missions Conference, Victoria Corner, NB

October 9 - Devon Park Baptist Church, Fredericton, NB

October 16 - Mayville First Baptist Church, Mayville, NY

October 30 – Pinegrove Baptist Church, Bracebridge, ON

November 3-29 – West Africa.

December 4, 11, 18, 25 – Bethel Baptist Church, Orillia, ON

Here's a Word in Season from Earl

No doubt most people have bitten in to a piece of cake or pie only to find out that one of the key ingredients has been overlooked. The flavouring has been missing in the cake or the sugar from the pie. We discover quickly that what looked all right on the outside tasted terrible. Might this also be true of Thanksgiving? Canadians are programmed to think of Thanksgiving in terms of Pilgrims gathering together to enjoy the blessings of harvest. However, this is a mistaken image because true Thanksgiving didn't start with the Pilgrims and is more than just an act of gratitude for blessings received.

Thanksgiving is first mentioned in the scriptures in the book of Leviticus where Israel was given instructions regarding offerings to God. In Leviticus chapter 7, the sacrifice of Thanksgiving is the "peace offering" presented to God. The fact that a peace offering was necessary spoke of the division between sinful man and holy God. In Leviticus chapter 3, the manner of this peace offering was given in detail, indicating that only a spotless lamb could atone for the sins that separated men from fellowship with God. When this peace offering was presented as a sacrifice of Thanksgiving it was understood that peace had been made through the sacrifice which provided the family with

fellowship with God through atonement of sin. The sacrifice of Thanksgiving, therefore, was a time of fellowship between God and His people.

The need for this peace offering for all men was fulfilled in Christ who was described by John as the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world". Christ's substitutional death on the cross did not just atone (or cover) sins but, as scriptures declare, removed sin as far as the east is from the west. It is in this context that we understand what true Thanksgiving is.

The Hebrew word for thanksgiving is 'yahdah'. Though translated "praise" in English, "yahdah" simply means to confess. In Psalm 138, David said "I will worship toward your holy temple. I will praise (or confess) your name." This passage expressed a confession of God's care. In Psalm 145 David said "All your works shall praise you (or confess you) O Lord and your saints shall bless you. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom." Here we see a confession of God's sovereignty.

The heart of Thanksgiving is the realization of our total dependency upon God and therefore, a confession of Him. Much of man's "Thanksgiving" must taste bitter to God because the fundamental ingredient of confession is missing. Scripture states that "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thy heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."(Romans 10:9) It is only as people confess the finished work of Christ on the cross as "the peace offering" which provides forgiveness and fellowship with God that we can have the complete ingredients of true Thanksgiving.

Please pray with us...

1. ***For good health.*** The good news is that Earl is feeling great and all is functioning normally. However, our urologist is concerned about some blood test results to the extent that he is making arrangements for Earl to have additional tests at Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto. Nothing is conclusive, but as a precaution Dr. Tony wants the Ontario experts to have a go at him! These tests are scheduled for Oct 19. Please pray that these tests will confirm that all is well.
2. ***For the remainder of our support.*** We are now at 80% of our support requirements. Ten churches contributing \$27 per week would complete our support needs. Please pray that the Lord would raise up the additional prayer and financial partners for this ministry.
3. ***For a successful November teaching tour.*** Earl has prepared a study in Hermeneutics (Interpreting Scripture) for the Mathetes Bible College in Ho and Institute classes in Ho and Hojoe respectively. As well, a curriculum meeting with pastors from Togo is tentatively scheduled. Please pray that these classes and the meeting will be blessed of God and further equip the pastors in West Africa as they carry on the work of sheparding their flocks and planting new churches.
4. ***For wisdom in preparing studies and designing curriculum as the West African Baptist Bible College and Seminary is in the process of being founded.*** In late January Earl is joining a strategy team in Ghana to develop a plan for establishing this needed school to address training in 5 West African countries. Please pray that the team is united in thought, passion, wisdom and God's strength.
5. ***For Kathi as she holds down the fort at home.*** Fall is often a busy time for scheduling the next year's meetings. Winter also comes early in Muskoka with its snow removal and driving challenges. Please pray for Kathi as she faces these challenges in Earl's absence along with her teaching responsibilities.