



Son-rise in Africa Newsletter
CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
Report by EARL & KATHI COOPER
 (for Newsletter Archives go to <http://www.discipleshipministries.ca/>)
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Ministry Update...

Having just arrived home from Africa we reflect on the goodness of God in providing travel care, ministry blessings and a wonderful time of fellowship at the West African Mission "WATCH ME" conference during the week prior to our return home. Kathi was able to join me for this conference thanks to the gracious leadership of Muskoka Christian School in allowing her to be absent for the week of school teaching following March Break. Once again I found the student pastors in Ghana and Togo eager to study God's Word as they pursue becoming equipped for ministry. A few of the days in Togo were especially long in order to keep to the schedule. One day after walking the short distance to afternoon class, I commented on the coolness of the room. We checked and found the room to be 91 degrees F.! Upon setting the thermometer outside for a few minutes we discovered the outside temperature to be a scorching 112 degrees in the sun. Despite the heat, the classes were completed on schedule.

The Mission Conference afforded Kathi and I an opportunity to get acquainted with most of the ABWE West Africa personnel from the Gambia, Togo, Ghana, Liberia and Cameroon. We heard reports from each field and gained a better understanding of God's labours in these countries. The invitation to broaden Earl's teaching focus to Liberia and Cameroon was received with enthusiasm and anticipation. This may be able to be accommodated before the year is out.

Africa Calls...



We praise God for the wonderful response to the Ghana Team "Pastor George's House" project (December 2006 Newsletter) and are delighted to report that all the funds necessary to complete repairs on the house have been raised. Thank you to all those who prayed and sacrificed for this great need. I had opportunity to see the progress on the house while in Ghana in February. Building has taken much time because of the lack of rain, nevertheless Pastor George is thrilled with how God has supplied his need.

A new African project presents itself. The training of African church leaders is always challenging due to the lack of funds that these men face. The average income in the villages around Ho where the Mathetes Baptist Bible Institute is located is about \$2 U.S. per day. (This is double what it was in 2003, but still represents very little money to live on). Most of the leaders have small pieces of land to farm in order to provide for their families, and some have additional jobs when they can find them. This results in very busy lives – rising between 4 a.m. and 5 a.m. each day to work the farm, heading to work (often on an empty stomach), working until evening, returning home to eat and address family needs. Going to school from Thursday morning to Saturday noontime is a great sacrifice for these men – in time and resources (food and travel costs – when walking just takes too long!). As well as providing the class notes and materials, it is the desire of the ABWE Ghana Team to provide meals and help with transportation costs for the students while attending the Institute classes. The costs for helping the average 20 – 23 men that attend is approximately \$130 U.S. per session or \$3000 per year for the 23 sessions that are planned. The Ghana team has established a project to raise funds for this purpose. You can help by sending donations to ABWE Canada (address below) marked – "Ghana Bible Institute Project"

Let me introduce you to Seth Addo Ameyia, one of the Mathetes Baptist Bible Institute students: "I was saved on the 9th December 2003 through Ephesians 2:8-9 at the Dzakpo Baptist Church as Pastor Dave Totman trained, baptized and encouraged me. Since I am saved by hearing the gospel, I see myself as a sinner and by believing in Christ my sins has been paid for. I am now attending Mathetes Baptist Bible Institute for about three months." ... **Africa Calls**



Here is a Word in Season from Earl

The only real haunting that each person must be concern with is "the haunting of our past" which affects our present and our future. A man once said, "I can face anything but the future--and certain parts of the past and present!" Truly the sins and failures of our past often linger as a dark cloud over the present, seemingly only to promise storm for the future. John Bunyan, in his great book "Pilgrim's Progress" portrayed such sin as a burden carried on the back of pilgrim until he stood

at the foot of the cross of Calvary. Here, and here alone, can the haunting of the past be washed clean from our conscience and restore our hope.

Augustine wrote "Trust the past to the mercy of God, the present to his love, and the future to his providence." To trust the past to God's mercy is to accept His sacrifice on Calvary as payment for our sin and His blood as the cleansing stream from God to wash away our past. The Bible states: "How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!" (Hebrews 9:14). None of us can face the past unless we know we are forgiven by the grace of God. None of us can face the present unless we know we are strengthened by the presence of God. None of us can face the future unless we are certain of the love of God.

John Claypool, in "The Future and Forgetting" told this story: "Years ago a thunderstorm came through southern Kentucky at the farm where my Claypool forebears have lived for six generations. In the orchard, the wind blew over an old pear tree that had been there as long as anybody could remember. The story is that my grandfather was really grieved to lose the tree where he had climbed as a boy and whose fruit he had eaten all his life. A neighbour came by and said, "Doc, I'm really sorry to see your pear tree blown down." My grandfather said, "I'm sorry too, it was a real part of my past." The neighbour said, "What are you going to do?" My grandfather paused for a long moment and then said, "I'm going to pick the fruit and burn what's left."

Does the past haunt you? In Christ, anyone can pick the fruit of the past with its positive memories and beneficial experiences knowing that all the rest is gone, not burned, but equally eliminated by being washed fully away. The Bible repeats this truth clearly: "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more." (Isaiah 43:25). "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Accept Christ and spoil the haunting past.

Please pray with us...

1. For effective teaching while in Africa. Our prayer is to labour in the Spirit's power to bring understanding to the pastors and equip them to teach their own people.
2. For travel safety –for our trip to Pensacola FL for Dave's graduation in May (Earl by car, Kathi by plane) and for Earl as he travels in Ghana and Togo in May/June.
3. For wisdom as Earl labours with a team to put together a curriculum for the newly established African Baptist Schools of Theology (ABST) with a goal to deliver theological education in the African countries of Ghana, Togo, Benin, The Gambia, Cameroon and Liberia.
4. For our support deficit of approximately \$205/month.
5. For Kathi as she continues to teach the Junior and Senior Kindergarten classes at Muskoka Christian School.

Present Itinerary for 2007:

In Africa: May 23 – June 25; Sept 6 – Oct 8; Dec 28 – Feb 12 2008.

At Home: Apr 15 – Riverside Baptist Church, Huntsville, ON.

Apr 29 - Havelock Fellowship Baptist Church, Havelock, ON.

May 6 - Louisville Baptist, ON.

May 9 – Dave's graduation from Pensacola Christian College, FL

May 23 – Leave for Africa

We are continuing to make contact with Canadian & American churches for ministry in 2007. If you are interested in having us share our ABWE "Son-rise in Africa" ministry, or be involved in a Mission Conference, or conduct a Bible Conference, please do not hesitate to contact us. *Our aim continues to be to build the body of Christ up in North America while sharing the ministry needs of the body of Christ in West Africa.*

Air Miles Assistance

Thanks to air miles assistance we are close to gaining a free trip to West Africa. For those who have passed on your earned air miles to us, we thank you. You can help our travel costs by using our Air Miles number. This is a practical way of supporting our ministry travel costs. We thank you for your consideration.

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