



***Son-rise in Africa Newsletter***  
**CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**  
**Report by EARL & KATHI COOPER**  
(for Newsletter Archives go to <http://www.discipleshipministries.ca/>)  
**October 2007**

## **Ministry Update...**

The September/October teaching tour brought the opportunity to teach 33 pastors in Cameroon. This was a great privilege and richly blessed by the Lord. The daily examination of the Word led to many discussions. The topic 'Angels, Demons and Satan' provided opportunity for the Lord to dispel many fetish beliefs and binding superstitions. I have been invited back to teach in September/October 2008. My two weeks of teaching in Ghana was also a blessing. I finally got to see the completed work on Pastor George's house and thank all who contributed to that project. I will be sending out a special thank you letter to all contributors with pictures included. Please pray for the Lord to raise up additional church leaders in West Africa--the need is critical!

Here is an email that I sent to Kathi while in Cameroon earlier this month. I call this my African cultural faux pas: "I was guest (along with Pastor Samuel and Pastor Simon) at a "wine and dine" dinner of the most recently elected mayor of an adjoining city in Cameroon last night. We were invited because this mayor, who was elected during the September municipal elections, wanted to "thank God" for his appointment. There were other "dignitaries" at the dinner (about 12-25 in all). These folks were all dressed up in their finest ties and cufflinks; however, not knowing about this invitation ahead of time, I was dressed in my green checked short sleeve shirt and dirty light tan pants (dirty from walking through rain-muddied streets).

Upon arrival I was greeted by Mayor Simon. In accord with the Ghana greetings, I extended my hand for the usual African handshake, which is concluded by snapping your fingers with the greeter as you withdraw your hand. However, I discovered that this is not the way in Cameroon! Major Simon, instead of taking my hand, grasped my shoulders with his two hands and commenced a head butting greeting – first to the right side, then to the left side and finally, forehead to forehead. I tried my best to hide my surprise. We chatted politely until meal time where we were ushered to a nicely decorated dining area in the mayor's house. To further enhance the fine dining there was a television set up with a Walt Disney movie (in French) playing all through the meal. Pastor Simon was asked to pray and while I was bowing my head (not really knowing whether he was praying or talking, as it was all in French) every one stood for prayer - except me of course - since my eyes were closed and I'm too deaf to hear the shuffle of chairs. I felt like a heathen when everyone said a loud AMEN and I was the only one not standing!!

The meal was smorgasbord style, with an assortment of meats - beef, fish, chicken and even giant shrimp hanging from some kind of decorative centerpiece - giving the impression of a palm tree with the shrimp as the leaves. I filled my plate up since I had not eaten since noon and it was now 8 p.m. However, as I sat down I noticed that everyone else just took a small sampling of a few things. I found out (by subtly asking Pastor Simon) that the African custom is to take little, but go up for food many times. This shows, by good appetite and proper manners, appreciation to the host! So in spite of my full plate I had to be sure to go up several times for food. The problem was the food itself. Although delicious and well cooked, every entrée of meat was prepared the same way. I'm not kidding - it seemed that whatever the meat, it was first cooked (bones, scales, heads, feet, etc. then all chopped up, by a giant machete I'm sure, then re-cooked in the particular sauce for each respective meat. The result was a tasty combination of meat, busted bones, scales, sinew, (maybe even eyeballs - but I didn't look too carefully) and whatever else is part of an animal, with every bite! When the meal was over there were more "uneatables" on the napkins beside each plate than "eatable" food consumed!

Well, despite my awkward head butting reception and heathenism during prayer, my gluttony during the meal, and my awkward disposal of all manner of animal parts from my mouth, I was asked as "special guest" to close the evening with prayer - in English (perhaps there was a belief that God favours the English language??). In any case, I asked the Lord to bless Mayor Simon with wisdom and prosperity and to uplift the Lord Jesus Christ through him. There was a chorus of Amen's in concluding the prayer. Before leaving I requested to have my picture taken with the mayor. I think he was very pleased that I asked, as he made sure that the picture was taken with a background picture of him in his official attire. The mayor asked for a picture of me - I gave him my business card and our prayer card (he was very impressed with the picture of my woman!!) and we went home. I can now say I know (or - am a friend of - as they say in Africa) one of the big mayors of the country of Cameroon! Life is never dull in Africa.

## **Here is a Word in Season from Earl**

Although war continued for years, it took the horror of a terrorist attack on America to wake the world up to the overwhelming devastation of evil dictatorship. It would seem that unless humanity sees itself in pieces, it assumes all is well! This can be said as well for the state of destruction that the family is in. The perfect paradise of Genesis chapter two was viciously torn apart by Satan who introduced sin and rebellion.

Satan, in his own pride-induced rebellion against God (see Isaiah 14:12-15), carried that rebellion into paradise by usurping the authority of God's Word: "He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in

the garden'?...You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:4-5 NIV).

Satan turned Adam and Eve's God-created desire for food and wisdom, within a perfect plan, to personal lust outside of God's will: "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it." (Genesis 3:6 NIV). Paradise was destroyed, only devastation remained. Genesis 3:7-12 records the devastation; beautiful intimacy became shameful nakedness, perfect harmony became selfish discord, meaningful fellowship with God became fear before God. In that single act of rebellion, the parents of humanity condemned all mankind to death: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12 NIV).

God's judgment of death was evident; in sin, Adam and Eve knew spiritual death--they were separated from God. They knew social death--they were estranged from each other. They would know physical death as their bodies ceased to rejuvenate themselves. Here is mankind's first picture of itself in pieces. Bitter was the taste of sin, great was its destruction! The resultant judgment upon the original family was cushioned in part by God's own initiative to restore fellowship. Although paradise was forfeited, all was not lost. By offering animal skins for Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21), God indicated the final sacrifice. He would provide in His Son: "Christ...has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. (Hebrews 9:26 NIV).

Even as God restored Adam and Eve to fellowship, He can through Jesus Christ, restore people today. Here are the words of one restored family put to song: "Heartaches, broken pieces, ruined lives are why You died on Calvary; Your touch was what I longed for, you have given life to me." (Gloria and William Gaither).

### **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 fall ministry.
3. For wisdom as Earl works 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 \$470/month.
5. For the winter trip to West Africa with both Earl & David going to team-teach. PRAISE--Dave has his yellow fever inoculation and a visa for Ghana. Who do you suppose is more excited—Earl or Dave?

### **Present Itinerary for 2007:**

Nov. 4: Pinegrove Fellowship Baptist, Bracebridge  
Nov. 5–8: Fellowship Baptist Convention, Hamilton.  
Nov. 11: Central Baptist Church, Brantford, ON  
Nov. 17 & 18: First Baptist Church Mission Conference, Waterloo, ON

Nov. 25: Fenelon Falls Baptist Church, Fenelon Falls, ON  
Dec. 9: Pinegrove Fellowship Baptist, Bracebridge  
Dec. 27 – Jan. 28 2008: West Africa

**Kathi's Notes...** Now that Earl is home from Africa, we are 'on the road again'. We had a great weekend driving to Marathon, ON, early in October—the scenery along Lake Superior is breath-taking and since that was my leg of the road to drive, I had my eyes wide open. Our visits with Pastor Benno and Wendy Kurvits and the folks at Marathon Baptist are always a blessing. Enroute we were hosted in Blind River by Mrs. Carlson and learned of many missionary ventures from her. We had a good mission emphasis weekend in Hanover's Victory Baptist Church. Getting acquainted with Dave & Elizabeth Harrison and Pastor Paul and Karen Holden and others was enjoyable. Earl went solo to Ottawa, driving home through the first bit of snow. He always enjoys catching up with Pastor Dave & Vida MacBain; they were fellow students in past years. As I flipped the calendar to November, I saw a lot of dates filled in. It looks like we're going to be busy travelling until Christmas, reporting to supporting churches and representing ABWE. At school November is always a busy month with extra meetings, report cards and parent/teacher interviews. Did you notice the children's poster contest "If I were a missionary..." that ABWE is sponsoring? I hope to have students enter from my school. Lots to do!

### **Air Miles Assistance - Cooper Air Miles No. 8006 178 1930**

*Thanks to air miles assistance we have traded for grocery vouchers. For those who have passed on your earned air miles to us, we thank you. You can help our monthly 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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