



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

Ministry Update...

As the blessings of family get-togethers for Christmas turns to the business of final preparations for our teaching tour, David (our son) and I are putting the final touches on plans to teach 2 classes on Youth Ministry and a Stewardship Seminar for Ghana. We teach together for 2 weeks in Ho, Ghana, and then David returns to Pensacola Seminary and I head for Togo to teach 4 studies and complete another Stewardship Seminar. I am particularly looking forward to introducing David to mission ministry in Africa. I hope to introduce him to some of the village ministries and have him meet some of the pastors who continue to sacrifice so much for ministry.

In this month we complete our 5th year of teaching tours in Africa. We rejoice in the privilege the Lord has afforded us to be a part of the labours in His harvest. We thank God for His provision through His people, enabling us to complete 22 course manuals which have been used to present a total of 42 courses and multiple seminars in the countries of Ghana, Togo and Cameroon. These courses have been taught to about 125 pastors throughout these countries who in turn teach the studies in their churches. As a result, these studies have potentially been passed on to over 7000 African believers. (One of the great blessings I have is to visit a church and see the Pastor teaching a Sunday School Class from the manuals received in our classes.) Please pray for a successful teaching tour for David and me (we depart on December 30), for safety as we travel, for good health (we arrive during the hot and dry season when dehydration is always a danger – among other disease and parasite challenges).

May the Lord enrich each of you with a blessed New Year.

Here is a Word in Season from Earl (see our website for daily devotionals)

And now we come to the "What I really wanted" season! This is that time when all thought of the care and love expressed toward us with that very special gift is often cast aside for an exchanged gift of higher priority. How the store clerks must smile within themselves at all the excuses they hear for returned items. The amazing thing to me is that stores are so willing to let items be returned or exchanged at all! In this perhaps the mood of Christmas is still alive, captured in that little word "willing". After all, it was "willingness" in the mind of God that began the plan for Christmas. God was willing to send His Son into the world because he was not willing that man should perish but have everlasting life (2 Peter 3:9). Christ willingly surrendered His life to a cruel, substitutional death on the cross to pay the judicial demands of a Holy Father on a sinful world. As Jesus faced that horror of death He boldly prayed "not my will but thine be done" (Matthew 26:39).

Amazingly enough, it is that very willingness of God to allow His Son's death to be exchanged for each person's death that brings meaning to the coming of God's Son. However, people who come to the Father to complete that exchange cannot come with excuses. God's requirements for exchange are in keeping with His own nature of righteousness: "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21). God simply calls men to come to Himself with godly sorrow for their sin, a desire to be done with it (this is called repentance), and belief in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus as payment for sin (this is faith toward our Lord). In coming to God on these terms, Jesus Himself makes this promise: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24).

Now in this "What I really wanted" season, would it not be a wise thing to prioritize all that life is about and exchange your imminent death and judgment from the Holy Father with the everlasting life of the Son? "For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23).

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 during winter ministry at home.
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 financial support for David as he undergoes his first mission experience in January.
5. For the winter trip to West Africa with both Earl & David going to team-teach. Who do you suppose is more excited—Earl or Dave?
6. For ministry opportunities in Canada and U.S. as we commence filling our 2008 schedule.

Present Itinerary for 2007:

Dec. 30 – Jan. 28 2008: West Africa

Feb. 10 – Pinegrove Baptist, Bracebridge, ON

Feb. 17 – Bethel Baptist, Orillia, ON

Mar. 2 – Riverside Baptist, Huntsville, ON

Kathi's Notes... What fun we've had with our family this month! We had another celebration for Earl's mom's 85th birthday at home—a seafood meal, of course. On Dec. 15 we had a Christmas meal with my sister in Aurora, ON and made the connection with David & Aleece. We're pleased to announce that as of Dec. 16, David is engaged to Aleece Power, a wonderful girl from Gig Harbor, WA. They are making plans for a wedding in 2008, working through the paperwork that the USA government requires for her to marry 'an alien'. Sadly, Aleece could not stay for all of our family Christmas celebrations and flew home Dec. 21. We've had a house full of laughter, commotion, and chatter since the Bouma's arrived from Brantford. My special times with Drew & Caleb were at bedtime, reading stories in the light of the Christmas tree. We enjoyed our traditional seafood meal on Christmas Eve with all the family present and then had more time together on Christmas Day. It was great to watch all four little boys playing with each other and sharing new toys. I trust that you also have special memories of this Christmas.

This week I will be busy helping with preparations for Earl and David's trip to Ghana—how many packages of Sidekicks will it take to feed two men? Do we have enough tuna packed? Is there enough medication for 2? Do we need new batteries for the camera? How many suitcases will we pack—the fewer the better? I will also need a refresher course in the operation of the tractor/snowblower and the generator—just in case January brings storms along with the snow. Please continue to pray for our family... Colossians 4:2 "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ..."

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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