



Son-rise in Africa Newsletter
CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
Report by EARL & KATHI COOPER
(for Newsletter Archives go to <http://www.discipleshipministries.ca/>)
March 2008

Ministry Update...

March has been a busy month of curriculum development. As we work on producing material that will fit the criteria for the new Baptist Theological Education in Africa (BTEA), the labours include pre-course study guides, student manuals, and daily teaching schedules. The result is a lengthier preparation time and more work for Paul Rondeau, our French language translator. We have kept him very busy this month.

Our weekend ministry travels were blessed with safety, enthusiastic responses to our 2008 Ministry Report, and great fellowship with God's people in five different churches. Although there were several snow storms, God kept roads clear for us all the way. Our short trip to Pensacola to visit David and Aleece and assist them in getting ready for their marriage this summer was a treat. Even though we only saw the sun on one day of the four we were away, sharing with David and Aleece was a special time for us.

Our schedule is filling in quickly and my return to Africa in May is fast approaching. Please pray for all the manuals to be completed and flights to be arranged without difficulties.

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

In updating his computer system a friend of mine lost four years of work by mistakenly saving the wrong file. When I asked him if he had "backed-up" his work, there was a long, painful pause which gave me his answer! Imagine losing four years of work with a single push of a button! Imagine the agony of mind that such a mistake would bring! Imagine how often since that mistake my friend has asked himself, "Why didn't I follow instructions and back-up my work?"

As heart-wrenching as this must have been, a worse fate awaits the negligent Christian. Paul warns of a time when every believer will stand before Christ and either have something to show for a life or lose it all: "If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames." (1 Corinthians 3:12-15 NIV).

This is clearly not a judgment of sin. God's promise to the person who has accepted Christ as personal Saviour is removal of all condemnation (Romans 8:1), without any separation (Romans 8:31-38). However, because God has called each believer to serve Him as the salt and light of the world (the agents to bring the message of salvation through Christ to the world and the models of that new life in Christ before the world – Matthew 5), God will measure the faithfulness of His children when He calls them to His presence. Here there will be either joyful celebration at God's approval or shameful regret for a wasted life. As stewards, God will hold each believer accountable!

Should this judgment bring fear and anxiety to the believer? No – not if that life is daily surrendered to Christ. In daily surrender, the Christian makes himself/herself available to be used of God, and is empowered by God for each day's tasks. The beauty of this arrangement is the wonderful fellowship the believer has with God through the process of surrendered service. This is the reality of the abundant life Christ promised.

William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was interviewed near the close of his life. This is what he said: "God had all there was of me. There have been others who had greater plans, greater opportunities than I; but from the day I got a vision of what God could do, I made up my mind God would have all there was of William Booth." Christian friend, has God got all of you every day? If not,

you risk standing before the one who died for you empty and ashamed. There is still time to “back-up” and save your life for Christ.

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 spring ministry at home.
3. For wisdom as Earl works with a team to put together a curriculum for the newly established Baptist Theological Education in Africa (BTEA) Schools 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 \$300 month. We praise God that some supporting churches have increased support for us.
5. For ministry opportunities in Canada and U.S. as we commence filling our 2008 schedule.

Present Itinerary for April - June:

April 12-13: Central Baptist Church, Brantford. – Minne Bouma's (our son-in-law) ordination council.
April 19: ABWE Canada annual meeting, London, ON
April 20: Springfield Baptist Church, Springfield, ON
April 26-30: Quebec schools trip with Dave Smith.
May 11: Pinegrove Baptist Church, Bracebridge, ON – marriage banns for David and Aleece
May 25-June: Africa teaching tour

Kathi's Notes... April has arrived and it's still snowing in Muskoka! One afternoon last week we got a dump of over one foot of wet, sticky, ultimately slippery white flakes, but our little tank of a Civic literally plowed a path through the seemingly impassable road. With Mom in the back seat praying and Earl & I in the front steering and navigating through the white-outs, up hills and around curves, we made it home. Mind you, on some of the hills we took several runs and Earl had to get out to kick a path through snow (our winter emergency shovel had been removed) and fix the wipers which were caked with snow. Fun! The next challenge will be the muddy road with deep ruts and mud puddles. These driving scenarios remind me how much of a team effort our ministry is. We have many praying for us 'in the back seat'—we depend on you! Others are 'in the passenger seat' giving practical help—many times people tuck 'gas money' into our hands. We are hands-on 'in the driver's seat'—we're privileged to make the trips to West Africa to teach pastors. And all of us keep our eyes glued to the road ahead to see what great things God is going to do. We appreciate so much our friends who are driving this route with us, cheering us on. Thank you! 2 Thessalonians 1: 3 "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith growth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth."

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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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