



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...

This month I have the privilege of writing this report from beautiful Bangalore, India – the Garden City. However, as yet I have not seen much of the city since arriving one week ago. I am residing in a Christian Hostel close to Beacon Baptist Bible College and Seminary where I have been teaching 20 seminary students a study in Pastoral Theology. The students are from all parts of India as well as Burma, the Philippines, Bangladesh and points beyond. One student told me that when the semester is over in a couple of weeks it will take him two more weeks of travel by train, bus and foot to arrive home for Christmas! The students are enthusiastic and committed men and women who are preparing to serve the Lord. What a joy to see the passion for the Word and commitment to Christ from such young folk, all single and few over 22 years of age! Pray that the Lord will place a burden on some of their hearts to become missionaries to the thousands of India immigrants who have come to Canada.

When I return home in a week I begin a short 2 month pulpit ministry at Bethel Baptist in Orillia while they commence a search for a pastor. This opportunity will keep me close to home for the poor winter driving months and allow for a period of lessened travel and stress after a busy travel year. God is good. Please pray for my preparations to teach in Cameroon during the month of February, and for Kathi's continued teaching ministry at Muskoka Christian School. Have a blessed Christmas season!

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

Christmas Change

Ebenezer Scrooge in Charles Dicken's story found genuine happiness and was forever changed, much to the joy of the community. However, for most the "scrooge in us" usually resurfaces after the Christmas season is over. . In truth, all the good will during "the season to be jolly" fails as the season passes because: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34). As has been often stated, "the heart of the matter is the matter of the heart". An unchanged heart cannot hold on to a changed attitude.

When the angels announced the birth of Jesus with "peace and goodwill toward men", more than an encouraging wish was expressed. They were declaring the will of God the Father who would provide the only means for that peace through the offering of His Son: "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," (Romans 4:25-5:1 NIV).

This repentance toward God and faith in His Son's death for our sins and subsequent resurrection for our justification, coincides with a changed heart: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV). John spoke of this new heart as experiencing the fullness of Christ: "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." (John 1:16)

This fullness is described by Charles Spurgeon: "There is a fullness of blessing unspeakable, unknown; a fullness at all times; a fullness by day and a fullness by night; a fullness of comfort in affliction, a fullness of guidance in prosperity,, a fullness of every divine attribute, of wisdom, of power, of love; a fullness which it were impossible to survey, much less to explore."

It is only here that the heart can grasp with permanence the changed attitude of year round "good will to man". Only here is the heart moved with a new fullness. To this end, Charles

Dickens's "Christmas Carol" offers a meaningful allegory. As with Ebenezer Scrooge, good will does not come from good intention but as a result of a changed heart experienced through revelation that brings repentance. To mankind, the agents for changed hearts are the revelation of Scripture applied by the Holy Spirit. So transforming is this change of heart that the Bible calls it being "born again": "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God." (1 Peter 1:23 NIV).

In Christ there is a permanent "good will" to be found by those who would let the Spirit and the Word touch their hearts with truth. In Christ, every season is a season to be joyful.

Kathi's Notes:

Finally, at long last, I was losing hope, a heavy wet snowfall is forecast for tonight!! I thought I would avoid the rush and arranged for the snow tires to be put on in the middle of October. Now I can do all my traditional Christmas preparations with contentment. I've really been dragging my feet until now. Snow is just the thing to spur me on! Do you find that true in your life? It is a good thing that God has given us the Holy Spirit and His Word to spur us on in our daily life. Imagine if something as variable as the weather were meant to encourage us...I might get stuck in the doldrums and languish. "...be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man" Ephesians 3:16

Present Itinerary:

Please pray for God's blessings as we complete our 2009 schedule.

Teaching tour in India: Nov. 20 - Dec. 6

Bethel Baptist, Orillia: Dec. 13 – Jan. 24

Cameroon Teaching Tour: Jan. 31 – Feb. 28

Please pray with us...

1. For effective teaching where God leads. 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 Earl & Kathi's continued travels in 2010.
3. For preparation of the studies for Cameroon early in the new year.
4. For our monthly support shortfall.
5. For ministry opportunities in Canada and U.S. as we arrange our 2010 'Home' ministry schedule. .

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

A practical way of supporting our ministry travel costs is by using our Air Miles number at participating merchants. For those who have passed on your earned air miles to us, we thank you.

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