



Son-rise in Africa Newsletter
CHURCH PLANTING THROUGH THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION
Report by EARL & KATHI COOPER
(for Newsletter Archives go to <http://www.discipleshipministries.ca/>)
February 2010

Earl's Ministry Update...

February for me (Earl) involved a teaching trip to Cameroon for the most part. I was blessed to share three studies at the Cameroon Biblical Seminary: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, Spiritual Health from Proverbs, and Introduction to Biblical Greek. As well, I taught Christology and repeated the Proverbs study at the Cameroon Pastoral Ministry school. This was a very busy schedule with 4 hours of teaching each morning (plus 5 chapel messages) and 4 hours of teaching each afternoon/evening (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.) with a 2 hour trip between. The Lord richly blessed the classes with a sense of His presence and the true joy of discovering God's truth together.

2009 was a transition year for us. Because of the closing of the schools in Ghana and Togo in anticipation of the new ABWE school commencement, the opportunity for Earl to broaden his teaching ministry to other countries was made available. Earl was privilege to teach in at the Pastoral Institute in Romania, at the Baptist Seminary of the West Indies in Trinidad, at the Cameroon Pastoral Ministry in Cameroon and at the Beacon Baptist Theological College & Seminary in India.

As experience in international education grew, the Lord confirmed that concentrating our labours in one or two schools would greatly improve the long term impact of our ministry toward pastoral training and ultimately church planting. During 2009 we continued to pray for God's direction in where our labours should be focussed to best serve Him. In the early months of 2010 God answered our prayers. Three schools, two in Cameroon and Beacon Seminary in India asked for long term commitments to fill teaching staff needs. The Lord has clearly led us to focus our future teaching ministry in Cameroon, West Africa and India. In confirmation of this decision the Lord has wonderfully provided other teachers to take our place in Ghana and Togo. As a result of these developments, Earl has committed to regular teaching schedules in Cameroon and India, and will be returning to Ghana and Togo in May of 2011 to finalize his ministry there. Please continue to pray for wisdom as studies are prepared and teaching tours are arranged. Please continue to pray for health and safety during the many kilometres of travel for ministry is undertaken in Canada and abroad.

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

With images of great Olympic endeavours still on our minds, consider these thoughts: Rocky Bleier was drafted as the running back by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1968. Shortly afterwards he went to war in Vietnam and had part of his foot blown away by a grenade. He was told that he would be lucky if he ever walked again. Although crippled and weak, Rocky was determined to make a comeback effort using running, weight lifting and any other exercise that seemed to help. After four years of gruelling self discipline, he could run faster than before the injury and returned to football, eventually helping the Steelers win the Super Bowl. Such mental concentration and physical determination is the explicit meaning of "gumnazo" (goom-nad'-zo), from which we get the English word "gymnasium". Rooted in the era of the Greek gladiators, this word literally meant to exercise in nakedness and suggested a life completely void of all possessions and all ambition except for the strengthening of the body for competition or battle.

It was in this very context that God opened the eyes of the early Christians to the disciplines of Spiritual life. Through the apostle Paul, God declared: "... exercise thyself unto godliness. For bodily exercise profits a little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. (1 Timothy 4:7-8). The Lord calls each believer to pursue spiritual strength with that same mental concentration and physical discipline as the training athlete. This requires the regular diet of the Word of God (see 1 Peter 2:2), as well as the spiritual exercise of prayer, meditation and worship. Paul states the blessings of such determination is the promise of THE LIFE, now and to come. That LIFE is the gift of eternal life from God: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). Christ himself qualified that life: "... I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10 NIV).

Although salvation is free to all who confess personal sin and accept Christ as the Saviour who died in man's place (see Romans 5), the abundance of that Salvation-Life is found through spiritual exercise. Even as determined athletes devote themselves to exercise for the thrill of competition, so Christians should devote themselves to spiritual exercise for the richness of Salvation-Life.

The apostle Paul was so determined: "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like a man running

aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize." (1 Corinthians 9:25-27 NIV)

Paul's testimony is a constant challenge to each believer to rise to the call of Spiritual Exercise. How do you measure up in exercising the spiritual disciplines of Bible memorization and meditation, meaningful intercessory prayer, holy living, faithful witnessing, private and corporate worship, and offering our royal priesthood sacrifices of person (Rom. 12:1), and of praise and possessions (Heb. 13:15-16)? Are you endeavouring to do your very best as all the great winter Olympians did?

Kathi's Notes: While Earl was in Cameroon, I once again enjoyed Sundays at Riverside Baptist in Huntsville. It is always so good to be there amongst our church family and to share in the blessings of affective preaching and meaningful worship. One weekend, Mom and I headed over to Quadeville, ON to spend time with Dave & Aleece and to join in worship at Lyndock Baptist Church where Dave is the energetic pastor. It was good to see how well they are accepted and loved by the folks there. It is evident they are fully enjoying the country life! The last couple of weeks I've been closely following the 2010 Winter Olympics. My KinderKids greeted me each morning with the latest medal count and let me know what their chosen athlete had accomplished. There were many late nights during that time, and it's good they are now over, for it's report card time again. March break will soon be here and with it, our 2 oldest grandsons. Drew & Caleb are staying with us while their parents take a quick trip to Portugal to help out the mission team they will be working with when they have their full support. The three Bracebridge cousins are anticipating sleepovers, birthday celebrations, and lots of 'boy fun' during the March break. It will be a time for memory making, photo taking, laughter, and the sheer joy of being together. I will have to rest sometime in April, I guess!

Present Itinerary:

Please pray for God's blessings as we continue arranging our 2010 schedule.

Riverside Baptist, Huntsville – March 7

Fenelon Falls Baptist – March 14

Grace Baptist, Windsor – March 20 & 21

ABWE Canada Annual Meeting, London – April 17

Springfield Baptist, Springfield – April 18

Riverside Baptist, Huntsville – April 25, May 2

First Baptist, Waterloo – May 15 & 16

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 the Lord to provide teachers to meet the growing need.
3. That Earl might know how to better challenge God's people to consider preparation for missionary teaching around the world
4. For travel safety during Earl & Kathi's continued travels in 2010.
5. For preparation of the studies for the year.
7. For our monthly support shortfall.
7. 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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