

The Messer Message

January 2005

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year. In case you are like me (Becky) and you get easily confused--it's 2005!! That means I'm going to turn 30 this year. FINALLY grown up!! With five kids I feel even kind of oldish at times. This past year has had some difficult moments, but on the over view it was a pretty great year. We are really thankful for Prisca who was born last year at the end of May. I can hardly believe she is nearly 8 months old. She is very little (like all of our babies have been) so she is pretty easy to carry and hold. She has a very weird attraction for hair. She MUST be holding it to fall asleep. When I became very tired of her pulling mine out (if I'm bald by age 40 you'll all know why), I resorted to giving her my cool fake hair thing that I bought in the mall. She loves it and goes right off to sleep. So, it has some purpose other than pure vanity. :) My friends at church have just laughed whenever any of them have seen it.

Lexie and Nadia are both enjoying themselves here in Salem's mission house (we moved in last Friday). They play with dolls, dress up stuff, Barbies, Polly Pockets and little fairies. They also love to draw, help with dishes, laundry or cooking as much as I will allow. They love to go out with me, but we've curbed that a bit as the weather has become so cold this past week.

David is working on Kindergarten here at home. Pray for me to have patience eh? Or for him to get super smart and fast so he can understand and get his work done quickly (probably me getting patience is more reasonable!) We are working on reading and a little bit of math. Next year he will do first grade and I've decided to use Abeka or Bob Jones.

Leah is at Salem Baptist Christian School (our Church's school) in first grade. She loves it. She does her work happily for her teacher (a wonderfully patient lady) and it is such a burden released from my shoulders. Next year she'll do 2nd grade, again with Abeka or Bob Jones curriculum.

So, you wonder where we'll be next year? Me too! Things are about the same in the Ivory Coast. The man leading our church (Yao) told Andy that we should not come back until the rebels disarm. Lots of people are still mad so the peace is very unstable! I want to be there with all my heart (while at the same time wanting to be here!) but I do not want to go back and forth every single year. Most of all, though, we want to do what God wants. We are praying for His guidance. Please pray with us that He would make our path known to us. We have a couple of meetings lined up (some of our churches we were not able to report to last year) and I will be going to any meetings that are near home. The far away trips (over nighters) will be only Andy. This is because of Leah's school, but aside from not getting to see my dear friends, it suits me fine. I am QUITE tired of packing, unpacking and living out of a suitcase... Please forgive me, I WANT to see so many of you, but I just feel like if I don't stop running for a while I'm going to maybe fall apart. For now I'm so happy and content here in this house (it is perfect for us!) cooking, doing laundry, home schooling and just being a wife and mother.

A couple of goals/prayer requests for our time here (I won't call it a furlough--it's more like a stop bath --for those in photography):

1. We are trying to start up a Bible study with another couple (it was their idea) and that should be edifying for both of us.
2. We are trying to encourage our friends here in America to put God first and walk in obedience to Him.
3. We want to witness (and be a living testimony) to those who are lost around us (some being in our own families).
4. We do need to stay put until our finances are caught up. With the exchange rate dropping last year (and continuing to do so) it was very difficult to make ends meet. We gradually lost more and more support during the months of last year. Add to that the expenses of travel that were involved in evacuating and it comes up to about \$9,000 that still needs to be paid (it was more than that, but so many of you have given to help meet these needs). We are looking to the Lord to meet this need and trying to budget wisely with the funds that we do have each month. We are SO very thankful to those who have given extra gifts! You'll never know, but without God prompting you to do this, we would probably not even make it from month to month. We've been able to buy Bibles, commentaries and Doctrine books in French for our believers in San Pedro, work on the building of the church (foundation and baptistry are done--still needs walls, doors, windows and a roof), buy home school supplies for Kindergarten for 3 kids, eat and live. Because of the war, prices have gone up in the Ivory Coast, the exchange rate has dropped and our rent has also gone up--therefore, I do believe that unless things change, we're going to have to raise more monthly support. We plan to meet with our pastor and discuss our finances so when I know where we stand, I'll let you all know. Please just pray with us about this issue. Isaiah 30:1-3 really challenges me to take these needs to the Lord and not try to solve them myself with the world's methods. He knows of what we have need and He is more than able to supply it ALL! I just need to work on loving Him and obeying Him!
5. We are still paying off our car in Africa (we still owe about \$3,500). Praise the Lord that our van here in the U.S. did not sell last year and is running OK for us. We did have to change the starter but now it is "on the road again!" :) With the five kids and the new car seat laws in NC we have the car completely full! Another reason we need to stop having kids I think--we won't fit in a normal vehicle if we have any more. :)
6. Home school--this is SUCH a huge challenge for me--please pray for us in this area.
7. Our church in Africa (Eglise Baptiste Biblique). Praise the Lord they are still meeting and doing well. I was SO happy to hear that the ladies are now meeting for a ladies Bible study. They want me to send them some notes or something (in French of course!) to help them. I will be working on translating a study in Ruth for them in the near future. Pray for me as translation is not my favorite job! Cooking I can do (Ok, so sometimes I make nasty stuff by substituting too many ingredients, but I like to cook!), laundry I can do (Ok, so sometimes I ruin clothes by not following the care instructions, but I sort of like to do laundry!), but translating I really do NOT enjoy. Anyhow, I'll be very happy (as will the ladies) if I can get a study done for them in French and then e-mail it out to Yao. I'm so thrilled that they are taking the initiative to do this in my absence. God is so good and He strengthens and helps ALL of His children. Please pray for the believers in San Pedro. Just stop and say a prayer right now as you are reading this!! God will hear it and He will remember it long after you may forget it or give up on it. God heard Zacharias' prayer (John the Baptist's father) and answered it even though Zacharias had given up hope (Luke 1:13). Zacharias had so given up, he did not even believe the angel and was struck dumb to remind him to believe! So, let's learn from Zacharias and NOT be caught in unbelief. God can and will do all that pleases Him. He is our Father and He loves us. We can pray to Him and trust Him to hear us and answer in His wisdom and time!

Until we see Him face to face, KEEP ON BELIEVING!

Love,
Andy and Becky Messer