

The Messer Message

January 2006

Dear Fine Folks,

Hi. I told my mom I have 20 minutes to write this letter before I have to go and get the kids from school. She looked at me as if to say, "it can't be done." To which I replied, "I can tell it all to you in about 5 minutes, so I should surely be able to type it out in 20." Ha. Don't worry, Andy will edit so you won't get a crazy letter. :) He may even add some of his own comments. :)

Life has been super hectic here this past month. I kind of love it like that, but my energy does seem to run out a bit sooner than it used to. We were so blessed to have lots of family here for Christmas. My sister Laurel and her family (4 kids) were here the week of Christmas. My brother Nate and his family (4 kids plus a girl friend) were here the week after Christmas (they stayed with a dear friend of ours). Laurel's husband left around the same time Nate and his family left. Then Laurel and the kids stayed on till Jan. 7th. It was SO great to spend time with her again. We never got along as kids (shared everything and hated it), but as adults, she has become my best friend. God is so good to give me such a wonderful family. Also getting in on all the action was my brother, Sammy (2 kids here at home with them) and my sister Pam (2 kids). We had many loud, chaotic, yummy meals together. We ate African food, American food, Mexican food (hey, we did not eat Chinese food!—Oh well, next time.) Anyhow, it was great. At the end—I was exhausted! We spent the last week cleaning up the house, packing up the Christmas decorations, packing for Africa (stuff that we don't use on a daily basis, and we know we want to take back with us), trying to plan for the care of our house while we are gone, taking care of several coughing children and trying (without much success) to catch up on our rest. Many of you can probably relate to this (or at least to some part of it).

Before I go further in this letter, I'd like to say a BIG Huge Thank you to all of you who have prayed for us and to all of you who have given regular support or extra gifts this past year. We especially received several wonderful gifts during the months of Nov. and Dec. We really appreciate your generous giving so much. Can't properly thank you at all, but do want to express our gratitude! MERCI BEAUCOUP!! (Thank you very much!) Also, thanks to those who gave for the radio fund. There is a total of \$1,293.14 in the radio account. The total needed to buy the radio is \$4,000. We trust that the Lord will supply this in His timing. We are also still waiting on the govt. to grant us our own frequency. Please continue to pray about this as the Lord brings it to your mind. (OK, go ahead and pray now cuz you probably won't think about it at all later on!)

Now, to bring you all up to date on "the plans." We are purposefully preparing, planning and, dare I say, pushing to get back to Cote d'Ivoire. The time seems right and we are moving ahead by faith. We need your prayers in a major way. Here are the requests!

1. We need to have \$6000 to pay for our tickets. They only take checks (we don't want to get them on a credit card anyhow) so we have to have the cash on hand. So far we have \$2000 in our passage account and another \$1000 has been promised. Praise the Lord. So, we still need \$3000! We want to leave by Feb. 23. This means that we have to get the tickets pretty soon. Please pray!

2. Our desire (and her desire) is for my mother (Joan Watkins) to travel with us back to Cote d'Ivoire. She has not yet received clearance from her mission board (BMM) to return to the field. This is a matter of concern for her because she would like to travel with us (we could use her help on the trip as well with 6 kids in tow!) She

is much needed on our field (as would be anyone who is willing to go and share Christ over there!) and has indicated that she is willing to help out with the home schooling of my kids (she usually helps Joan as well with her kids). Please pray that BMM will grant clearance for her so that she can move forward in her plans to return to San Pedro.

3. We need to have arrangements made for the care of our house. We are working on this and seeing God work as well. We just need to trust Him more and worry less. Please pray that we will have much wisdom and guidance from the Lord on this issue.

4. We need to pack what is essential to take with us and be able (willing) to part with the things that are not. Pray for us to have wisdom in packing and to NOT be too attached to the things God has given us over the past year. It amazes me how we can leave Africa with a few back packs and end up with so much stuff in one year's time! God is good and His children are generous!

5. Final prayer request—the transition. Just to give you a clue, our family gets loud and fussy each morning and each evening. WHY? We don't like transition. (OK, our sin natures have a part in it as well) We do fine being awake during the day, but find it hard to STOP being awake and go to sleep. Once we're asleep, all is well, but then, alas, the time comes each morning to STOP sleeping and wake up! We don't like change. SO, please pray for us as we face the much larger change of going back to our beloved Africa. Don't get me wrong, we love being there—it's just the transition that gets us.

Thank you again for your prayers and support. We love you.

Andy, Becky, Leah, David, Nadia, Lexie, Prisca and Hadassah

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