

# The Messer Message

## September 9, 2007

Dear Family and Friends,

Hi. We are back from our "vacation" in Abidjan. It's not exactly a vacation spot (unless you are very rich and you stay at the Hotel Ivoire). We stayed in a guesthouse, which was quite comfortable and adequate and inexpensive. We took my mom, our two oldest kids (Leah - 10 and David - 8) along with two cousins (Susanna - 11 and Isaiah - 9). The first few days were hectic trying to get business done and running around town. The traffic there in Abidjan is CRAZY!!! Everyone just kind of does what he wants on the road. Hardly anyone obeys the traffic rules. It was stressful for me just to watch Andy drive in it. Poor guy, he was wiped out by the time we got home to the guesthouse each evening. We were able to drop my mom off at the airport with no problems and she is now in the good ol' U.S. of A. (Mamma, we miss you!)

We spent a good part of last Monday morning sitting in the government office of the Minister of Communications. We were basically petitioning them for the permit to open the Radio Station. We are not really ready to start the Radio Station, but we need the permit to get it all going. They told us that the government has given out three permits for "Religious" Radio Stations. One Catholic. One Muslim. And one Protestant. They do not recognize any other groups. We were able to explain to them that Baptists are not (and have never been) part of the Protestant group. Besides that, in San-Pedro there is only one Radio Station and it is a commercial one. We were advised to get the Baptist churches together out here (there are 5 in our city now that we work with -- 1 older and 4 very small, new, young churches) and make our request for the Station as a group. They will not give it to just one church (ours for example), but if we present ourselves as a united group, they are more likely to give us the permit. We were also given a few examples of paperwork/requests that were granted, so we can follow their example while re-doing our request. We have to give lots of information (for example: who will run the Radio Station, who will do technical repairs, what hours will we be on the air, a sample of our program schedule for the day, week... what kind of equipment do we have...) LOTS of information. It is good in that it helps us think it all through and make more solid plans. We thought we needed the permit to make the plans, but they want the plans to grant the permit. We are working on it. We are making contacts with those who have done this and trying to get advice... Please pray for us. If God wills, they will give us a frequency, but first we have to get it all planned out properly and submitted to two offices in Abidjan. The red tape in this country is something to behold. We need wisdom. We need courage and perseverance. At first we felt a bit discouraged (Satan?) but we are not going to give up. We will follow the instructions given and pray that we will find favor in the eyes of the government. The director who spoke with us did seem hopeful, but the amount of work required did feel a bit overwhelming. I told Andy, "I'm glad you have a big motor! and an even bigger God!!" Please pray for us. We do believe that God wants us to pursue this tool for reaching many with the Gospel, but the obstacles sure can seem big and scary. We are going to need a lot of help from God and maybe from some of you. If you have experience with Radio Stations, we welcome your input and advice. One of the hardest parts for us is that all of the programming must be in French. We seem to have a hard time finding good material (music, teaching, preaching...) in French. We are working on contacting some missionaries from France to see if they can help. So, the bottom line is... **the meeting was positive, but still no permit. Keep praying.** We have a better vision of what we need to do, but are a little nervous about the amount of effort it will require. We have begun to fill out the paperwork and we need your prayer support if this is going to succeed! OK, that was a very long paragraph!

Other than that, we did have some fun in Abidjan. We took the kids to the zoo, swimming and bowling. It was Susanna's and Isaiah's first time. We all bowl pretty rotten (except for Andy who used to bowl on a league in America). We had fun eating out at Lebanese restaurants and we even got ice cream a few times. We stopped at a rubber plantation on the way home (that was interesting) and visited a chimp island (we rode in a canoe out to the island and tossed fruit to the huge chimps that live there). All in all, it was a fun, somewhat tiring, but also refreshing, much needed change of pace, interesting vacation. And if any of you wish to do these things and see these places--we invite you to come and visit us! It will change your life if you come and spend some time out here.

One little funny on Prisca. :) She is 3. We found a couple of cheap wigs (good for skits) in Abidjan. Andy wore one that had long, curly, blond hair when he came to greet Prisca. She was looking at him and sort of laughing. He asked her, "Do you know who I am?" She said, "Yep! You're a puppet!" We all got a good laugh out of that one. She particularly loved the puppets at VBS.

Thanks for your love and prayer support!! Thanks to those who have e-mailed and prayed. We sure do appreciate you guys a lot! We very much enjoy being in touch with so many of you via e-mail. May God bless you and encourage you as you serve Him. Remember, however, it is your love that He wants--even more than your service! **May we love Him more each day!!**

David's birthday is the 18th of September. He will turn 9. If you have a moment, could you send him a quick note by e-mail to tell him Happy Birthday. He does not get too many e-mails and he would love to hear a note just for him. Thanks a bunch.

Much Love in Christ,  
Andy and Becky Messer

Missionaries with World Wide New Testament Baptist Missions  
Serving in San-Pédro, Côte d'Ivoire  
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