

The Messer Message

September 23, 2007

Dear praying friends and family,

'Tis the season to be scratching. And we are itching and scratching. The "we" would be Leah and I (Becky). Our family (and the Cuthbertson family) went on a family picnic outing. We drove about 2 hours and then hiked into the bush about 15 minutes to a waterfall. The kids were able to swim in the river at the bottom of the waterfall area. We enjoyed a nice picnic under the trees. The only problem was the uninvited guests! TONS of little tiny gnat like things that stung like bees. They actually drew blood! I wish I could show you the bites all over our legs, but suffice it to say, we're a itchin' and a scratchin'! We were thinking, and talking, a lot about the pioneer missionaries who had to come and LIVE in conditions like that. Many had to drink from the rivers. Camp in the bush (with all the bugs and critters!) and survive with NO bug repellent and No screens and No purified water... No wonder many lost their lives! God was so kind to let me be born during this day and age. My life out here is really not bad at all. Our little family outing made me really appreciate my home with the screens, air conditioner, clean beds and pure water. THANK YOU, Lord! And thanks to our supporters for helping us to be able to afford these wonderful blessings!

On our way home from this fabulous adventure in the jungle, we got to get some cocoa pods from a cocoa plantation (they are very yummy--not like chocolate at all!) The cocoa seeds are covered with white, sweet, sticky/slimy fruit. Hard to describe. Tastes great! You suck off the seeds and then spit them out. The plantation people dry the seeds in the sun on mats. They are then ground up and processed to make cocoa, one of the huge exports of this country.

We were also able to visit a rubber plantation. One word -- STINKY! It was very interesting. The rubber trees are ready to give sap after only 5 years (Ok, I guess that is a long time). They can cut small slits and catch a whole liter of rubber sap in one day. Then the sap must sit in the small bucket thing for 4 more days to get stiff. At that point, they dump it into a pile on the ground (on a mat) to be sent to the factory for processing. We got a blob of the white, stiff, bouncy, stinky rubber sap. You will probably see it on our display table one day (if we can stand the smell of it!)

Quick update on the Radio Station. We have completed our new (and revised) request. Yao, a man from Dan Cuthbertson's church, has taken it to Abidjan to submit it to the government officials. He is trying to get an appointment for us to speak with the president of the communications department, to plead our case. We'll keep you posted, but be warned, things like this ALWAYS take a long time out here. We know it will take a while and we are not discouraged. In fact, the extra time is a blessing as it will allow us to keep training the faithful men of the church so that they will be able to run the Radio Station in the future. This is not something that we can do all on our own, and even if we could, we don't want to. We want the Ivorian believers to be involved. The problem is that they are not ready yet. It would be really great if we had someone who was solid in doctrine and well trained in Radio to come and make this their main ministry. We really have a burden to get the gospel out to the people of Cote d'Ivoire. Radio is a great tool for doing this. Please pray with us that the permit will be granted and the personnel to run the Station will be secured--all in the Lord's perfect timing! Pray that we will have patience and wisdom while waiting on the government.

Remember Nadege? The little Ivorian girl who was staying with us a while back? She is really not so little. I think she is about 14 years old, but she does not know when she was born, so we are guessing. Well, about a month ago, Felicite, Nadege's mother said that Nadege could come and live with us, if we were still willing. We had to meet with her and make sure she knew it was not a "job" and there would be no salary. Nadege is not with us as a servant. It is more like a boarding school situation. We are sending her to school (she has never been!) and she starts tomorrow! She is excited! We went shopping and got all the notebooks and stuff that she needs. She lives here from Monday to Friday and goes home each weekend. This way I can make sure she does her homework, gets enough rest and eats three good meals a day. She loves being here with us. I am working with her on things like hygiene, posture, good manners and godly character. Each night we read a little baby book in English which should hopefully help her to learn a lot of English words. She has a lot to learn. We need a lot of patience and love. We appreciate your prayers in this area. Here are some of the benefits to my family of having Nadege here with us.

The kids are learning more French.

She helps with the babies. (Hadassah is nearly 2 and Prisca is 3)

We are overcoming some of our hidden prejudices.

Our children are learning to reach out and show love to someone who is very different from them.

The benefits to Nadege are:

seeing how a Christ centered home runs (at least we really try to make it a Christ centered home!)

getting to go to school.

learning a lot of English.

having her needs met (clothing, food, rest...)

Of course there have been sacrifices, but we are trusting the Lord to make it all worth it. We desire to see Nadege grow in the Lord and become a woman who could be a supportive and loving wife some day for a pastor or someone in ministry. She has a real heart for the Lord

and witnesses to others. She just needs a little help so that she will be a better wife in the future. Andy says that he wants the Bible School men to find wives who love the Lord and know how to read (so they can understand and teach God's Word). Pray for Nadege as she tries to learn from scratch!

Andy has been able to get the Bible School going again at our church. So far there are 6 students but some others may be coming into the program. Andy has two nationals, Yao and Parfait, teaching with him. He is hoping that these men and others will be able to continue the program even when we are not able to be in the country.

We hope that you all know how much we appreciate your prayer support and your friendship. You are a vital part of the work out here! If any of you would like a list of our current field projects, please send us an e-mail and we will be glad to share these needs with you. May God bless you and keep you as you grow in Him.

Prayer requests:

1. That the Bible School students will be faithful and persevere to the end.
2. That our church will continue to grow and advance so that it would be able to call its own pastor.
3. That we would trust the Lord during our waiting for the Radio Station permit.
4. That others would come to join the work out here.
5. That our family would be a shining light in our city.
6. For the protection of our family.
7. For the salvation of all our children.

Love in Christ,

Andy and Becky Messer
Missionaries with World Wide New Testament Baptist Missions
Serving in San-Pédro, Côte d'Ivoire
Sent by Salem Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, NC