

The Messer Message

November 11, 2007

Dear Faithful Friends,

Hello. Oh, I have stuff I want to tell you all. Some of it is quite trivial, but I can't wait to share. J

First of all, the important stuff. THANK YOU to those who pray for us and support us financially. We appreciate you a lot and want to make sure you know it.

Second, the ministry—this is WHY we came here, right? We were joking (another missionary lady and I) that since we came here to look good and feel good, and it was not working out, we may as well head back home. J The heat and humidity make our hair go limp, and our make up run (if we had the time to put it on that is). We often feel hot, sticky and tired too. Nope, that is not why we came here, so I guess we'll stay.

Today was a good day at church. We had the Lord's Supper and also an award ceremony to give Bible School Certificates to two of our young men who have finished the Bible training program for pastors. These two men have completed 3 years of Bible School. I (Becky) only did one year at Piedmont Baptist College. I told them that they now had more training than I, so I would have to come to them with problems instead of vice versa. They laughed, and said I was living with "le sage" (the wise man—Andy) so they would still come to us for counsel and advice. We joke around, but it is wonderful to have some guys who are trained, and can handle God's Word efficiently. They can lead a person to the Lord. They can give Biblical advice. It is an answer to our prayers for this church work to have men of God who will be active in the church, and in serving the Lord. Please pray for these two men (Williams and Parfait) to keep their testimonies pure and their lives clean.

On the humorous yet semi-sad side of today's services, we had a brawl break out during church (not during the preaching time). It seemed that a little girl moved from her seat for a moment, when a little boy quickly took her place. The girl, who was holding a little baby (not yet walking, but able to sit up—still in a diaper and quite small) came back to find the boy in her spot. They were in the front row. She began to fight with the boy—hitting him and trying to make him move from her seat. In the process, she dropped the baby who was lying on the cement floor screaming. I ran over and grabbed the baby up off the floor. Two or three other adults grabbed the fighting kids, and tried to separate them. They were ferocious. They were holding onto each other's clothing (to prevent the adults from pulling them apart,) and hitting each other as hard as they could. The girl got in a few swift whacks to the boy's head. I did not see what he was doing to her. The whole church was just watching in a state of semi-shock. Finally, after what seemed like minutes, but was probably seconds, the grown ups got the kids apart. I took the baby to the nursery and Andy gave a mini-message on "How to Act (or not act) in the Lord's House." Neither of these kids had parents at our church. We don't want to turn the children away, but sometimes they can be such a disruption.

Now, on the cuter side of childhood, we have Stephen Cuthbertson (my nephew). I asked him what a "carpenter shop" might make or sell. He replied, "carpens." Good guess. J Hadassah is pretty close to being totally potty trained—still needs a few weeks to perfect her "stay dry" system. We are thankful for the sudden decrease in diapers to change and wash. Prisca is, as Andy puts it, the "cutest thing since sliced bread." She talks up a storm and is in that adorable 3 year old stage, when life is so full of wonder and excitement. She asks things like, "Where my Daddy is?" and her favorite song is, "Jesus loves me this I know, For the Bible tells me so, He shed his blood on the cross 'a Cabary' (of Calvary), there He gave his live for me." (repeated several times!) She is so cute when she sings. Lexie is doing so well with reading that I'm amazed. She used to have a lot of trouble pronouncing certain letters, but she is doing MUCH better with all of that. Thanks to anyone who prayed for her. Nadia continues to grow more beautiful with her dark, long, shiny hair, and thick curly eye lashes. She loves to tidy up (fold clothes, dust, arrange the dolls neatly...) David is my complex child. He loves to bring me flowers, give hugs and kisses and cuddle with Mom. He does not like school, but he does fairly well at it. He works independently and fast. His main goal is not to really learn anything, but to get done with the work so he can play. This can present a problem at times. He gets fussed at a lot by the sisters, but very often, when I get to the bottom of the trouble, he is innocent (as innocent as a 9 year old boy can be). He is not malicious (I'm thankful!) but he does sometimes play rough. The deal is that the girls play rough too, but he does not tattle nearly as much as they do. He needs a brother, and maybe one of these days he might get one (adoption?) Leah is growing into a lovely young lady. She is still very loving and quite dramatic. Her latest is trying to make herself cry on cue. She is a help to me and has become extremely interested in cooking and sewing. Nadege is doing pretty well, but please pray for her. She has a hard time with school. She would rather play than study, and we have had to really crack down to get her to do her school work. I was frustrated

with her last week when she was an hour late for her tutor time. Her teacher made her copy about 5 pages of blends (ba, da, ma, ta...) as punishment. I think she will try to be on time from now on. Please pray for her.

Andy and I are doing well personally. We have had viscous cough that lasted nearly a month (Andy's is gone and mine is on the way out). My sister said it could have been whooping cough (no whoop, but the cough lasted so long!) We'll never know, but we're glad to be over it. When my brother, Sammy Watkins, his family and my mom came back from the U.S. (just a week or so ago) we were able to go to Abidjan to get them from the airport. Joan kept all 6 of our kids. It was like a honeymoon. We were in an apartment/guesthouse completely alone for 2 days! It has been so long since we've had that much time alone together. It was a gift from God. We were able to go out to lunch together and just chat. We were able to go into a mall (yep, there is a big mall in Abidjan—if almost feels like America, but with a definite European flare), walk around and leave without buying anything. This does not usually happen if we have kids along. Anyhow, it was a wonderful change of pace. We came home feeling quite refreshed.

Finally, a piece of trivia. Where in Abidjan can you buy: rugs, wall pictures, drinking glasses, juice pitchers, CD cases, DVDs, sun glasses, car mats, jumper cables, irons, tissue, dish rags, dish towels, finger nail clippers, clocks, live fish in mayonnaise jars, kids toys, fishing poles, power tools and about 20 other unrelated items? NO, not Wal-mart. You can find all of this stuff and much more being sold between the lanes of traffic while driving around the city of Abidjan. The people stand in the middle of the road and hold their stuff up to your window. If you want to buy anything, they run along beside the car making change and selling their wares. You get to shop from the comfort of your car. Ahh. Life in Africa. If you want to see it for yourself, just e-mail us and we can help you plan a visit. There is so much to see and do.

Prayer Request:

1. Continued good health for the missionary families (Kings, Watkins and Messers) on the field here.
2. Spiritual growth in our church works.
3. Souls to be saved (especially the Muslims we witness to)
4. That the new Bible School students would persevere.
5. That our family would be a shining light in our community.
6. For the salvation of our all our children.
7. That Nadege (she is 13) would advance in her learning to read and write.

Thank you for praying for us.

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