

# The Messer Message

## March 2008

Dear Loved Ones,

January, February and March—gone, gone and half gone. Isn't that how it goes? When I was about 4 or 5, I remember thinking time was absolutely standing still. I thought I'd NEVER grow up. I'd never be able to reach the faucet in our "very tall" bathroom sink. You know, when we evacuated the first time from Cote d'Ivoire, we actually drove to the town in Liberia where I was born and raised, Tappi Town. Andy and I slept on an air mattress in my old room. There was a huge hole in the ceiling that did not use to be there, but the walls were still that dark blue color Laurie and I had chosen as kids. In fact, the stickers we had stuck on our door were still there as well. You know what was funny though? I went into that old bathroom and was amazed at how little that sink was. Much smaller, and closer to the ground than most normal sinks now-a-days (in my "grown up" opinion). I guess it was all a matter of perspective. I also guess that I was a pretty short kid. Anyhow, now that I'm older, time seems to be accelerating (It must be the 6 kids).

January started off with great New Years services at church. We stayed there till midnight on New Years eve, singing, listening to good preaching, watching footage of the church events of 2007. It was wonderful. On the first Sunday of 2008, we encouraged the people to face the new year with confidence in the Lord. He is in control. (A very true statement!) We talked about not being afraid of what we might face because the Lord is with us and will always help us. Also, He allows things that even seem bad to us for our good and His glory. If you've been in church a lot, you know these things.

Right at the end of that same month (Thursday, Jan. 17th), our son David (age 9) became ill with Malaria. Out here, Malaria is abundant and it is treated like a headache or flu (common place and not a big deal). It really is a big deal though. All of us missionaries know this. We also know that it can kill you rather quickly. We take it seriously and treat it immediately. Well, to make a very long story (which I'm sure most of you already have heard) short, David did not respond to the treatment we gave him at home and he ended up with cerebral malaria, seizures and in a stage 2 coma. By Monday the 21st we had evacuated him to Abidjan to a Doctor who seemed to know what was going on. He was in the hospital in Abidjan for 5 days before he woke up from the coma. 11 days later we were able to leave the hospital to go and stay at his doctor's house. One of the best parts of the whole "trying" situation was that the doctor, a Muslim, Lebanese man, accepted Christ as his Savior. We were able to witness to all of the nurses and several guards. We also grew in our own faith and had a chance to put in to practice what we had been teaching our church folks—trusting God in the midst of a storm. One of my FAVORITE passages in the Bible is Psalm 107. If you're ever going through deep waters, read Psalm 107!!

So, by mid-February, we were back in San Pedro going on with life as usual. It really felt weird to be in Abidjan one day with a very sick child and then back in San Pedro a few weeks later like nothing had happened. The month of February was filled with its own "various" trials—every one of my kids had Malaria during the months of February and March. At least the doctor in Abidjan told us what kind of medicine to use now, so the kids all responded quickly and got well without any of David's scary complications. So what did we learn? "Be patient", "Count it all joy" and "Cast our cares on the Lord." You'd think we'd be good at it by now. J

In the midst of all of this, we were covered, surrounded, enveloped and washed with so much love and prayer from our brothers and sisters in Christ. It almost felt like a huge wave had come and knocked up head over heels. At first, we felt like we were spinning out of control and hitting sand on the bottom every now and then (if you've been to the ocean, maybe you know how this feels). Then, from all around, hands were grabbing us. Picking us up. Holding us above the next wave. Giving us a life preserver to hold onto. Keeping our heads above the water. It was amazing. We do feel that we've come back onto the solid ground (our lives have calmed down considerably!) If you read Psalm 107, the storm is over and we've reached the desired harbor! I know there will be more storms, but it was just so marvelous, awe inspiring and wonder creating, to see how the Lord delivered us from those huge waves! How can we thank all those hands that lifted us up? How can we thank all those people who gave us a shove toward the shore as we were floundering along? We stand amazed at the love.

Prayer Requests:

1. Growth of our church (spiritually and numerically)—there have been several new converts this past month. It is truly exciting to see them coming to church and growing in the Lord. Satan must be mad.
2. The new guard in front of our neighbor's house. The old guard, Moktar, who made a profession of faith, now works the night shift. The new day guard is named Raymond (a Muslim). We've been able to share the gospel with him a lot (the guards just sit in front of the house all day long and are more than happy for company and conversation). Yesterday I was able to witness to him for 3 hours—going through Genesis as well as the Gospel.
3. Health for our family.
4. Bible School—Andy has been teaching half of a module at the Institute Theologique Biblique (ITB). It has been a busy week. Andy had to work very hard to get the materials together (this is a new class and they had no previous materials)—not to mention it is all in French. LOTS OF HOURS ON THE COMPUTER!!! Then he had to study a lot (late nights!) and get up early every day to teach the class. This class finishes on Friday and then he has our own church's Bible School on Saturday, followed by church on Sunday. A non-stop week. Pray for strength for Andy.
5. Easter services—we have a pastor friend from Abidjan (an Ivorian) who will be coming to preach for our church this Easter. This will be a real treat!
6. Praise the Lord for the funds that have come in to cover David's medical expenses. We even got enough extra to get a much needed new computer. Our computer was having problems and it even crashed right before David got sick. A repairman in Abidjan was able to get it working, but it has lots of problems. It locks up for no good reason, and makes us spend a good deal of extra time on things that shouldn't take so long to get done. It's hard to get all the Bible School material prepared when the computer is acting up. Not to mention the handouts for Wed. night Bible Study... This is a big answer to prayer for us. We've been needing a new computer for a while, but just lacked the funds, so were hanging on to the old one and trying to be patient while working with it and all of its glitches.
7. New converts - Dason Adama and Serey Francis. These two men made professions of faith in the last three weeks. Pray for their spiritual growth. Both of them are married. Pray for the salvation of their wives as well.

Thanks for upholding us in prayer! Thanks for supporting us financially!

God Bless you and keep you!

In Christ,

Andy and Becky Messer

Serving with:

World Wide New Testament Baptist Missions

PO Box 725

Kings Mountain, NC 28086