

The Messer Message

May 30, 2008

Dear praying friends and family,

There are things I want to tell you, but not sure if I should. It seems that when I tell my great bug stories it makes some of you squeamish and discourages others from wanting to visit us. We have people planning to come out (Andy's niece and nephew, a young lady who wants to help with home schooling, a group from a church...) and I don't want to scare them off...but...

Just one little story, OK? I want the ladies to know that I'm not really some Amazon woman. I don't like bugs either. Last Wednesday night we had prayer meeting. It had rained a lot that day and guess what happens out here after a good rain? Tons of termites come out and fly around any and all lights (until their wings fall off). We used to call them "buga-bugs" in Liberia. In fact, we used to fry them and eat them—I'm not joking. I was a little less intelligent in those long ago days. Anyhow, there were lots of those little critters flying around inside our church building. It seemed that they were mistaking my white skin for the moon or something. I was jumping and swatting and NOT having a nice time. Finally, Andy said I was going to embarrass myself (really, it was embarrassing, but one of them even flew in my face and many were around my feet and I was afraid they would get up in my clothes...) I ended up going into a dark (remember, they go for the light), little room off the baptistery. I could still hear the message just fine and the bugs could not find me back there. About half way through the service most of the bugs had lost their wings and were just crawling around on the floor—much less scary for me. One of the ladies came and told me the danger was past and I was able to sit and enjoy the rest of the service. For those who want to come out, this does not happen all the time. J

As you may have guessed, the rains are here. We love the rainy season! It is so much cooler and you have more energy because you are not so hot and sweaty. It does bring a lot of dirt and mud with it, but the cool air is worth it in my opinion! This is the time of year when we find all our roof leaks and try to get them fixed. J The ones in the bedroom are all repaired and there are just a few in the kitchen to work on. These kinds of projects keep Andy fairly busy all year long.

Things have been super hectic here the past few weeks. My brother, Nate Watkins, came out to sort and sell his stuff. He and his family will be doing a ministry in New York, working with Liberians. Lord willing they will be moving to NY this year. They are still trying to raise support (the cost of living is much higher in NY than out here) and find affordable housing. The house we are currently occupying belongs to Nate. So, his stuff has been in storage here for the past 4 or 5 years (moldy is the word that should come to your mind). He has been moving boxes, sorting, having an ongoing yard sale and trying to deal with it all. It's quite overwhelming. I don't think it will be done by the time he leaves on June 4th, so add that to Andy's list of stuff to do.

My other brother, Sam Watkins, and his family will also be heading back to the U.S. This is a very loooooonnggg story and I simply can't put all the details into a short prayer update. Please pray for him and his family. This choice was not theirs but they know God is in control and has a perfect plan for them. If you want the details, you can e-mail us. In the meantime, they are also trying to sell some stuff, close up their home, deal with ministry issues etc. It is an incredible amount of pressure and I doubt that many would understand unless they have ever been on the field and had to leave unexpectedly. They need prayer!

Our church work is going very well. We have been having about 25 to 30 adults on Wednesday nights. They are faithful and praying for spiritual growth in our church. We are confident that the Lord will answer this prayer. Sundays we have been running about 100 people (mostly adults!). Not that numbers are everything, but we are growing. People are hearing God's Word and what I really love is when they put it into practice. One lady told me that she had resolved a conflict with her sister that had been going on for 2 years after she heard the lesson on forgiveness that I taught. That was such a blessing to me! We are seeing some who were falling

away come back (a man named Armand and his family had a really rough time, but they are back in church and growing.) Andy has begun a men's Bible study using the book *Disciplines of a Godly Man* by Kent Hughes. The men read the book at home and Andy checks to see if they have done the study questions at the end of each chapter. Armand has been eating it up and told Andy that he thinks the man (Kent Hughes) wrote the book "just for him about his life." It is great to see the Lord working in people's hearts.

Another huge blessing this past month was the salvation of a dear friend (Karen) of ours. She works for the UN and has been coming to our church off and on. I was invited to lunch at her house and while there was able to really share the Gospel with her one on one. She has been seeking the Lord and by His grace, she made a profession of faith! We were so thrilled. Please pray for her to grow spiritually and find a good church when she returns to London, England to be with her husband.

Thank you so much for all you sacrifice and give so we can be here doing this work. It is hard work, but it is so fulfilling. We know we are in the center of God's will and this knowledge makes us able to keep going when things are very hard at times. We are so thankful for the wonderful support team that the Lord has given us. You make this journey so pleasant for us. Thank you to Waterford Baptist Church who sent our family a wonderful package. That was so fun and really brightened up our day! We know how much work it is to get the stuff together, pack the box, ship it (the cost is not cheap!) and pray that it will arrive. Your labor of love has not gone unappreciated! We were very blessed. We pray that God will bless each of you who prays for us. Thank you so much!

In closing, I want to share something I read in a book by James MacDonald entitled *Lord, Change My Attitude* (before it's too late). He shared that there are three levels of thankfulness. There is the elementary level where you say, "Thank You," because you feel you must. Then there is the high-school level where you say, "Thank you," for the good stuff because you really are thankful. The highest level is the graduate level. This is the level where you are thankful for the hard or bad stuff because you know God is using it in your life to shape and mold you. We've had some struggles over the past month and I wonder if God is not working on us to bring us up to that graduate level of thankfulness. I won't say I'm all the way there, but at least I'm aware of the class that is being offered by the Holy Spirit. Where (what level) are you? Where do you want to be? Let's all work on being truly thankful in the good times and in the hard times. We have a loving Father who is working out His will in us. Let's be soft and pliable in His hands and see what He wishes us to be. I know it will be well worth it in the end.

Be encouraged in the Lord!

With much love,
Andy and Becky Messer