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# GREETINGS FROM LIBERIA

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## MY ROUNDABOUT RETURN TO GANTA

March 31, 2010

**Where have I been?** My time in the U.S. went quick—partly because of my two-month recovery from Type IV malaria. It's an amazing story—too long to tell here. Afterward, I was able to visit my good friends in Tennessee and in Asheville. Seeing the changes at my church gave me some mixed emotions, but I know that God is blessing the work there. I also was able to visit my previous pastor, James Walker, in Georgia where he and Debbie and family are doing well. Spending time with David and Sandi Gaines and girls and seeing how well he is doing made my heart swell with thankfulness. What a testimony to God's answer to prayers in the most unusual ways. I was able to attend 3 seminars at The Cove, where I was fed not only physically but some of the finest spiritual food I could hope for. I was able to speak to several Connect Groups at my church. Staying with Jack and Louise Krauss, who I call my stateside missionaries, and then Mary Jane Holyday allowed me the freedom to come and go, store stuff in their homes,

and otherwise be a nuisance. My sister, Lois, took such good care of me while I recuperated at her home. Even one of the pastors from Baltimore flew to Michigan to visit with me. That was a very special time and helped speed up my recovery. Then a visit to my brother and his wife in Va. Beach made my time home complete. If I forgot to mention anyone, I apologize—you know the memory thing.

It is impossible to convey my thoughts and emotions while on the tour of Israel in November. The group I went with was absolutely terrific. Ralph Sexton, the tour leader and pastor of Asheville Trinity Baptist Church, was amazing in what he did for us and what we were able to see and experience. We had a small contingent, about 75, which was just right for two buses. I just saw a tour on the web that had 650 people—so we were so blessed to be a good size. Our hotels were the finest; the food was sumptuous and plentiful. We saw many places such as where David slew Goliath, hid from Saul, John baptized Jesus, crossed the Sea of Galilee, Saul was kept prisoner, and many other biblical places. But the best part was



experiencing where Jesus walked and talked, and healed. I will never forget the Via Dolorosa, Gethsemane, and Golgotha. I took many pictures, but the best one was in the tomb, and is shown here.

Just before I left for Israel, I received word that my pick-up was involved in a one-vehicle accident and the driver, my very good friend, died instantly. This sad news put a damper on my trip, but God provided me with peace about the incident. My immediate concern was to help his family of 10 children and his wife. It was an accident that didn't need to happen, if he would have kept his commitment to not drive at night.

So my return to Liberia was with some hesitation, not knowing how his family would react and possibly make unreasonable demands.

But God took me through the ordeal with calmness and peace. We managed to solve all the important issues. There were a few hiccups, but thankfully they were dealt with quickly.

I also discovered that my able caretakers (security) and cook had taken excellent care of my home and my dog, Sassy.

Since the pick-up was pretty much demolished, and since I would never drive it again, I donated it to Service to Servants, the mission agency that ships goods to missionaries in Liberia. They will have it repaired to drive in the Monrovia area. Actually, it didn't look much worse than half of the vehicles on the road in Liberia. It just wasn't driveable.

I have been without wheels except for my pen-pen motorcycle, which I can drive around Ganta. I have met some Liberian Christians who have either taken me to Monrovia or loaned me their vehicle to take. What a gift. I thought about getting another pick-up in the States and having it shipped; that would be expensive and take considerable time. God opened the door for me to buy a 2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee

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from two missionaries who have to return to the States. Only setback – it won't be available until July 1, which is just before I also return to the States. But that is okay! I will get by. And, I have a friend who will store it at their home, which has good security and is far away from city rogues.

**So, what am I doing here?** Well, that's a good question. I chose to leave the college for a number of reasons that prevented me from doing the job I believed God wanted me to accomplish. As of now, I am still not working there. Many students come by to see me, which is encouraging. I am still working with pastors who travel to the deep bush areas to minister, by providing Bibles, glasses, and other donated items.

One pastor, Arthur Weyhee, and his team, travel bi-weekly to the bush to evangelize and train. Just since my return, they have had over 200 decisions for Christ and a number of rededications. This is an amazing accomplishment that shows the hunger people have here for God. With the impact of Islam, hearing about the freedom Christ brings is exciting for many who have been in satanic bondage for decades. Other pastors have had similar impact where they go.

I have been asked to begin tutoring illiterate adults who desire to change their situation – mainly to be able to read and understand their Bible. Also, I have two adults who are learning music theory and the keyboard. Little did I ever know that my limited knowledge of music, and piano would now help others to learn. My two classroom students are Christian successful business people, even though they have limited knowledge in math and English. I am amazed at their willingness to learn and do homework. Much different than the

college setting I experienced here.

Time has permitted me the opportunity to do much more Bible study – on line and listening to sermons from Godly pastors, including my own. The internet has become a remarkable tool for Christian service around the world. I love it – even though it is slow and sometimes down.

I continue to help my local community with rice, food, and financial assistance, although I have become much more discerning to not let people become dependent on me for their support. One family, Jonathan and his wife, Catherine, recently gave birth to twin boys, Meshach and Shadrach. Jonathan is a recovered leper who has lost much of his hands and fingers but is skilled at carving. He had a job at the rehab facility for painting, but was terminated for lack of funds. With now four children, I help out where I can – mainly with rice and greens to cook.



Last night, I received word from In Touch Ministries that they will provide me with ten Messengers. I am thrilled. The Messenger has several of Charles Stanley's sermons which can be listened to over and over, just like the Bible Proclaimers we use. They can be charged by solar, as well as current – which just doesn't exist in the bush. It will be some time before they arrive by shipment, but they may be here when I return in October. These will be used for bush ministry.

I know many of you went through global freezing while I endured global warming at its best. Snakes are thriving, scorpions are a curse, but they just don't escape my trusty caretakers. Even Sassy held a cobra at bay until the killing machine (Garrison) arrived.

I plan to return in July to Michigan, then to Tennessee and finally back to Asheville for the month of August. I will return to Michigan the 1st of September to leave for a tour of Germany where we will attend a performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play. We will also visit several cities in the German and Austrian Alps. It will be old times for me as I have been there several times, but spending time with my sister will make it once again new and special. Then in October I will return for one more year.

**What are my needs?** First of all, continued prayer is so appreciated. Finding out what God's plan is for me here next year is important. To work outside His will for me will be unfruitful. I certainly appreciate and value continued financial support. I must pay for the vehicle I purchased and am quickly depleting my savings. Continuing to purchase Bibles with your donated funds is so important a ministry here. So, please, consider sending a tax-deductible donation to:

Equip, Inc.  
PO Box 1126  
Marion, NC 28752



You can make a one-time donation or a monthly contribution; any and all are appreciated. None go to my personal support; all go to purchase Bibles and, if you designate, to help pay for my vehicle. Do not write my name on your check, just attach a note and it will get to my account.

I thank you so much for being part of my team.

In His Service, Judy Thurman