

July 2010

A Word From the Wises

A Newsletter Update and Prayer Letter from Mark, Michelle, Alexis, Brittany & Joshua Wise
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An Enlightening Trip!

Seeking A Two-Year Commitment

After returning from our Uganda trip, God has confirmed numerous times and in a couple of dramatic ways, we are to pursue raising support for living in Uganda for two years. After returning we immediately began raising monthly support for that trip.

Highlights From Our Trip

The 1st week of our journey we were hosted by fellow Equip missionaries, Chris and Jane Sperling and their six (as of July 1st seven) children.

They did a great job communicating the detail of the Ugandan customs and culture, and taking us to visit prospective ministries. We visited Youth With A Mission campus in Jinja, Phil Jones orphanage in Iganga, an 800-man men's prison in Jinja, and a few Farming God's Way projects.



Photo 1 Chris teaching "Farming God's Way" principles (Isa 58:11).

On Friday, May 28th we joined fellow Equip missionaries, Jeremy and Tamara Boone, and a small Montreat Presbyterian short-term team at Masese slum area for visiting, prayer and handing out first-aid supplies.

The first two days in the slum we experienced a range of emotions. The scope of needs was difficult to

believe and accept: unsanitary conditions, sickness, accidents, and unbelief amongst other things.

The trip had its challenges: third world living; culture shock; seeing overwhelming needs; seeing slum living firsthand; and being overwhelmed by the need.

But the trip also revealed life's greatest gifts: love, patience, kindness, and gentleness amongst suffering, hurt and squalor; hearing Christina's story of salvation and resulting fruits of repentance before she died of a parasitic infection; hearing that Rita's hard heart was changed after seeing "*The Passion*"; hearing that Rita's mom recovered from a snakebite after prayer; seeing the joy on Tamara's and Jeremy's faces while they held 5-year-old Angelina whom God had pulled from the brink of death and restored her life; seeing the passion in Chris' heart to help the people of Uganda grow food so they could improve their physical and spiritual condition; seeing Chris and Jane's love for their children. Jesus said His people would be known by their fruit – the fruit of His life and power dwelling in them.

In summary, the amazing gift was the ability to catch a few glimpses of a holy, righteous, omnipotent, powerful God not only bend, but stoop into physical and spiritual squalor to help those in need. It was a glimpse of a compassionate Creator working gracefully, faithfully and patiently through His sinful children to bring salvation rest to an overwhelmingly needy and pitiful people. Jesus is real. He gives grace in His wisdom and at His command.

Meet Musisi

About the middle of our trip, Michelle and I had the privilege of meeting a Muslim man, Musisi. His name means "earthquake" in the local Luganda language.

Musisi was found by members of the short-term Montreat team.

Musisi had injured himself eight or more days earlier in a fall while working in the sugar cane fields. He had no friends or family to care for him, and was slowly dying while in excruciating pain.

Jeremy and the Montreat team went to work. After checking for friends and family to help with the situation and finding none, Musisi was taken to the local hospital.



Photo 2 Musisi at the hospital in Jinja.

At the hospital a patient (or his family and friends) is expected to provide everything – medicine, toiletries, food, toilet paper, etc. Jeremy asked if I (Mark) could go by the hospital and check on him, getting him whatever he needed.

When I arrived, the smell at the hospital was repugnant, and certain members of the staff were less than hospitable.

(con't on back)

"For the Equipping of the Saints and the Strengthening of the Body of Christ" Eph. 4:12

(con't from front)

Musisi did not speak English and I did not speak Luganda or Swahili. It was a bit frustrating to communicate through staff to determine Musisi's needs, but God was gracious. I was able to make visits, provide Musisi with the basics (a basin, wash cloth, toilet paper, rubber gloves, pain medicine, hot meals, and other needed items) while occasionally simply saying, "Jesus" and pointing to heaven. Musisi would respond with a polite "thank you" in broken English, but the communication barrier seemed insurmountable.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ saith the LORD.” Isaiah 55:8

When Jeremy visited, he arranged for Musisi to receive some scans. We were saddened to receive bad news: Musisi had a number of spots on his liver – cirrhosis or cancer, the radiologist was unsure – and to make matters worse he was HIV positive.

It was not the kind of news we were wanting. I had hoped for miraculous healing.

Musisi continued to verbally express thanks for the care we provided. Over the next few days he improved somewhat, and was abruptly discharged to the streets. He slowly made his way toward the Boone's home. It wasn't long until Jeremy found him and interceded with the hospital for one more night. The next day we left to return home to the States.

Satisfied with the situation? Not a chance. We left Uganda feeling we

had very little impact, but our lives were drastically impacted by poverty, hopelessness and suffering. A number of times Isaiah 55:8 came to mind as we visited the sick, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD.” Those words held hope, yet my thoughts were something different, “Your faith has physically healed you. Rise up and walk.”

Ten days after we returned, Jeremy relayed a message through his blog (see www.boonesinafrica.com) that one day while sitting on the side of his bed in the hospital, Musisi placed his faith in Jesus! He told Jeremy he “was surely going to die. The hospital could not help me, but God had.” He admitted he had been “drinking too much, but these days,” he says, “I have quit.”

Eternal salvation, a relationship started with the Savior of the universe, a changed life, and a bit better health! God's higher plans. Not a bad deal. It is in humility and suffering that Jesus often shows up.

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

- Isaiah 55:9



Photo 3 Entering Masese Slum Area



Photo 4 An estimated 500 people from Masese Slum area watch “The Passion” film.

Praise & Prayer Needs

Praises

- An enlightening and safe trip. God's protection was promised in His Word on the plane trip from Amsterdam to Entebbe. He faithfully fulfilled that promise.
- Great Equip team!
- Confirmations since returning, sometimes very dramatic and enlightening, that Uganda is where we are to follow God.
- A number of groups, churches and individuals have invited us or gave approval for us to share our Uganda presentation. Contact us!

Prayer

- The people where we will serve in Uganda; that God would give us a heart for them (Isaiah 58:6-12) and prepare a place for us.
- For more people to pray and support the ministry.
- That in our quiet times we would get beyond the external “fixes” and “patches” (Isaiah 58:1-5) of religion and seek to receive a relationship (God's heart). Jesus said out of the heart of man comes evil thoughts, pride, foolishness, deceit, covetousness, etc. There are places in our hearts that need a heart transplant to receive the love of Christ.

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"For the Equipping of the Saints and the Strengthening of the Body of Christ" Eph. 4:12