

March 2013

Dear Friends,

On my recent trip to Liberia, it seemed like everything was going wrong. Our Field Director, Isaac Zoedah, was to visit the Kokoya District in the Bong county to make arrangements for me to visit and preach the gospel. This is the area where we repaired 12 water wells last August and September, and I always like to follow up on such work and share the gospel with those who benefit from the water. But Isaac came down with malaria and whipworms and was unable to make that preparatory trip.

When I did arrive in Liberia, I taught a pastors workshop on the 12th of January. The next day, I preached at his church, and right after that we headed north to the Kokoya District. It was one of the hardest trips I have ever taken. The roads were horrific with potholes all along the way. By the time we reached the town of Gbanga, we still had 2 more hours to go and I was at my limit. The swerving to miss potholes and the jolts of hitting them had taken its toll. I was nauseated, my previously-herniated disc was acting up and my neck and shoulder muscles were in knots. I couldn't go any farther. So what were we to do?



Isaac and I prayed about it as we checked into a rather primitive hotel and decided to see what the Lord might provide for us in Gbanga, a town of 30,000. He ran off to find a local pastor he knew in town and I stayed back to try and recover. The hotel manager came by to see if things were okay and I explained how we weren't able to go to Kokoya and were instead, looking for some place in Gbanga for me to preach. I asked if she knew of a school that might be open to having me come and speak and she said she would look into it. After about an hour of lying in

bed in the heat, I decided to get up and stand outside the hotel door to get some air. While standing outside, Eva, a young student at the Gbanga University, spoke with me. She too, said she would see if she could get me into one of her classes to speak, which she did. Isaac came back shortly after that to the hotel and he too had found a place for me to speak. So within an hour and a half, we had 3 appointments to share the Gospel to a total of 980 students (800+ at a public school, 50 at a class in a university and 115 at a private school).

Their response was also very positive. And although we can't see within their hearts, we truly trust that God's Word penetrated them and that a large percentage of these young people understood the message of God's grace and trusted in Christ alone for their salvation, as they indicated to us that they had. As Proverbs 16:9 teaches: A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord determines his steps. So even though our best laid plans were derailed, God had His way and directed our steps.

Trusting in Him,

Dean Chollar

*A man's heart plans his way,
but the Lord determines his steps.
Proverbs 16:9*

Building for the Lord

Back in the early 80s when I was in between ministries, I used to build custom homes. I served first as the General Manager of one company and then shortly after that, a couple of friends and I started Texas Heritage Homes in Arlington, Texas. Once I left this homebuilding work to pursue God's leading as a missionary, I thought my building days were over. But right now we are presently in the midst of 3 different building projects in 3 different countries.



One such project just happened recently last summer when a Nicaraguan family wanted to donate about an acre of very nice land to us. After praying about it, and agreeing to accept it, a Foundation in Texas approached us and wanted to supply some funding for a building on a mission field. So within 30 days, God had provided both the land and a promise of support to start our Office/Training Center. The Foundation supplied funds for Phase 1, of around 1000 sq. ft. We had planned in the future to increase the functionality of the

Center by building Phase 2, to double the footage. But we realized as we started the building, that because of the steep grade of the property, it was more cost-effective to go ahead and build Phase 2 at this point, building up and adding a second level. And this, of course, is stretching our faith as we look to God to provide the additional funding, trusting that He is directing our steps.

We also have on-going building projects for the new Way School in Meki, Ethiopia (which is almost completed), and our Office/Training Center in Liberia. We are also looking to the Lord to find individuals who can come and help us finish out the interior of these projects. Merle Admire is putting one such team together to travel to Nicaragua, so let us know if you have an interest in helping.

God is at work, determining our steps

When I was growing up, I was fascinated by technology. My father was an electrical engineer, so I was exposed to science and technology from a young age. I remember watching my father build a stereo system in our basement. I went to science camp and visited the Kennedy Space Center as a young boy. So no one was surprised when I chose to follow in my father's footsteps and enter engineering school.

After college, I went to work for the same engineering company where my father worked for over 25 years. Engineering seemed to be a natural fit, and I was advancing in the company.

Then I made a decision that changed everything. At the age of 35, I trusted in Jesus Christ alone for my salvation and was adopted by a new Father. Soon, I became more interested in the things of God than the secular career I'd been pursuing. Eventually God led me to seminary and then into the pastorate for 15 years. And in 2012, God took me in a new direction. I joined CrossWay International, where I am heading up the International Training Ministry.

I see my multiple careers as a great adventure. God has been in control the whole time, and He is using everything in my background to His glory. The years of leading small churches have equipped me to train the pastors of international churches. And the years of working with technology are helping CrossWay International find new ways to reach the world with the Gospel.
--Gary Jones, International Training Director



Digging your own grave

Recently, a very different way of baptism happened here at Cross-Way international Ethiopia. Two young people, Elias and Dejene, put their trust in Christ alone for the forgiveness of their sins. Consequently, after we enrolled them in our baptismal class, we baptized them in the grave that they dug by their own hands. Though their experience sounds funny it was a great symbolic activity to help them visualize that we as believers have spiritually died with Christ and risen again from the dead, to live for the One who died for all of us.

Crossway International, as a result of the generous gift of its partners, has bought a fairly good-sized parcel of land in the town of Meki, 134 km away from Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, for the purpose of helping children and their mothers who are in a devastating economic situation. Moreover, this property has helped the house church ministry that is going on in Addis Ababa in many ways. For instance, every time we lead someone to Christ we will organize a special worship and baptismal trip to the town of Meki. Then, since we do not have a formally prepared place for baptism, we ask the people who are ready to be baptized to dig a hole, line it with a plastic cover, and fill it with water for the baptismal ceremony. Then after the baptism we fill the soil in the hole once again for the safety of the children in the Way Kindergarten. Though the practice of digging one's own baptismal place started as a result of a need, it has become a very powerful symbolic way of helping believers to vividly remember the fact that they die with Christ to the power of sin and rise again to live for Him for the rest of their days.

Blessings for all who participated in different ways to enable us to facilitate our ministry, so that we could help the hurting world, and above all to lead people to the Lord Jesus, who died for our sin and rose again from the dead.

--Melaku Abebe, Ethiopian Field Director



Medical Clinic > School > Library

Melaku Abebe, whose article you see above, has had much experience with God changing our plans and directing our steps. In 2002 God provided for CrossWay International to purchase a tract of land in Meki, Ethiopia. Melaku recommended this land 2 hours south of where he lives in Addis. This community has a population of around 60,000 with an inadequate medical clinic and no doctor. The land came with a very small building which we began renovating to establish a medical clinic, but due to government regulations and red tape, this became unfeasible. (We were able to take two medical missions teams to the area.)

When we encountered the issues with setting up the medical clinic, we sought God's will in how to proceed. Melaku told us that he had always had a dream of establishing a school in this area because of the great need. Most kids in Meki do not go to school because their parents cannot afford it. (There are no free public schools.) So we decided to add on to the existing building and use it for a school. Right now we have 50+ students enrolled in the Way School in Kindergarten and 1st grade, and we hope to add a grade each year. This will entail adding a new classroom to the building.

In addition - in the town of Meki there is no library at all, and we are hoping to start one at the school, making books available to the community. Melaku has advised that we charge a modest price for use of the library (which is normal in Ethiopia) to help in making the school self-sufficient (which is our goal). Since it is too expensive to ship books, we are praying that the Lord will provide the \$3,000 for books for the new library. Want to help start a new library?

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This Way



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Meet Bruce McIntosh



Bruce heard the Gospel for the first time as a student at the University of Minnesota. He knew he believed in God, but had no idea who He really was. For two years he had been praying, examining world religions, and visiting churches. Instead of finding answers, however, all he did was get pretty good at recognizing counterfeits. That's when a fellow student shared the good news that Jesus Christ had personally paid for every imperfection that could have ever kept Bruce out of Heaven by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. This was the first thing that made sense to Bruce in those two years of searching. Two months later, after examining the Bible to see if it really said what that student said it did, Bruce put his trust in Jesus Christ as his own Savior, receiving the free gift of Eternal Life.

A few years later, believing that the Lord was leading him into Christian ministry, he attended Bible college, and some years after that, received his Master of Ministry degree in graduate school. Over the ensuing years Bruce worked in a number of ministry venues including as a youth pastor, assistant pastor, and pastor. Counseling has always been a major factor in his ministry focus, and he currently works as a counselor, providing family and parenting counseling. And in addition, he serves with CrossWay International as our Member Care Director, visiting with our Coworkers overseas and teaching counseling to pastors and churches there.

Praise

- 1) A special praise for all the many who are hearing the Gospel of God's grace and coming to faith during our many mission trips to Liberia, Kenya, Nicaragua and Ethiopia.
- 2) Praise for those Americans who have volunteered to go on many of these mission trips and for their invaluable contribution.
- 3) Praise for a little 4 year old boy named Miteku, (attends our school in Meki, Ethiopia) who was rescued from Pneumonia and death by Tamaru, one of our coworkers.
- 4) Praise for Joseph Kioko (a blind boy) and for a 16-year old boy, Boniface Kababa (an orphan and yes, this is his real name) in the village of Masewani, Kenya. God provided funding for their schooling!

Prayer

- 1) Pray for the Lord to provide the needed funds to finish our three buildings in Nicaragua (\$12,000), Liberia (\$7,000) and Ethiopia (\$15,000).
- 2) Pray for Bruce McIntosh as he leads a Couples Retreat (April 12 – 15) in Nicaragua and that it would benefit these pastors and their wives.
- 3) Pray for the future travel plans of Dean as he heads out for more mission trips in the coming months.
- 4) Pray for a pick-up truck to ship to Liberia for our water well ministry and also for funding for a library at our school in Meki, Ethiopia.

This Way