

## **BRUBAKERS PRAYER UPDATE – JUNE 2007 – URGENT REQUEST**

### **DEAR PRAYING FRIENDS –**

The past month has been one of the most exciting times of ministry we've had, yet filled with some of the most challenging issues we've yet encountered. We appreciate your prayers. The following prayer update is exceptionally long (we usually try not to be long-winded). But, for those of you who are serious about the task of praying for our ministry, you will want to read it fully.

### **NOTES OF PRAISE –**

Though at this time, our thoughts are consumed by the problem written below, that doesn't mean that we don't have things for which to praise the Lord. In short, let me say that MNC's ministry continues to make a tremendous impact in the lives of pastors. Last week, in the middle of a four hour session on the letter to the Romans, the pastors began cheering and shouting. Why? They said, *"We're excited to go back to our churches and beat the demons of false teachings! For the first time we understand the truth of Romans. This teaching is really helping us."*

### **BIG PROBLEM (PLEASE PRAY) –**

As of Thursday, June 7, MNC's Rwandese teacher named Katabirora Laurent has been imprisoned for genocide crimes. He was given a thirty year sentence with fifteen days to appeal. During the genocide, Katabirora worked with an ultra-conservative pentecostal denomination overseeing the distribution of funds and food within a particular city as a part of a Compassion International project. His family lived about twenty kilometers outside of the town in which he worked. Five days after the genocide began, he went to the church to make sure that the Compassion kids had received their food and supplies. According to Katabirora, he went to his office (on the church's compound) and saw that everything was fine, then returned to his home twenty kilometers outside of town. Again, according to Katabirora, he didn't realize that the church building (about fifty meters from his office) was full of Compassion children (whom he was responsible for helping) and their families who were hiding from the killers. Those who are accusing Katabirora are saying that on that day he had a conversation with the pastor of the church minutes before the killers went inside and slaughtered the entire group. One of the three survivors is accusing him of having conspired with the pastor to hand over to the killers certain children and their families who were hiding within the church and even to have played a part in the attack and murder of the victims. Those who are accusing him have presented pictures from 1992 of him marching together with the Interahamwe (the name of the group of killers) as well as a book with the names of the Interahamwe from that area, in which his name is written.

So, as you can see, there are two sides to this story. The accusations are ultimately coming from district leaders within the denomination that Katabirora was working with. According to Katabirora, the accusations are lies, inspired by jealousy they have of Katabirora's leaving the denomination and working with MNC. In Rwandan culture, neighbors and coworkers who have an equal economic level or position of power are very cautious to advance because those with whom they were considered peers will likely poison them or try to harm them in other ways. Thus, when Katabirora left his previous denomination to come work with MNC, he quickly left his former peers behind and found a place of influence to which they could not attain. He has had opportunities of studying in college and even forming a new denomination. Following rules of cultural engagement in Rwanda, these could have easily set Katabirora up to be "stabbed in the back" by those were formerly colleagues and friends. Where is the truth? We are very confused.

*How can you pray?*

(1) **Pray for justice:** Pray for justice to manifest itself in Katabirora's appeal process. And, on a wider scale, pray for justice to be manifest throughout this country as thousands are being imprisoned these days at the end of a long season of local tribunals (gacaca). The local tribunals have been filled with problems of bribery, lies, hypocrisy, and maliciousness (even among those who call themselves Christians). This country desperately needs to understand the freedom of "walking in the light."

(2) **Pray for Katabirora:** We don't know the truth. If Katabirora is guilty, we don't want to stand in the way of the legal process. We think he is innocent, though. So, we are asking God to open the doors for him to appeal and be released soon.

(3) **Pray for wisdom, discernment and safety:** This morning I was together with Katabirora's brother. He recently went to the prison where Katabirora is being held. There were three denominational leaders from Katabirora's former church standing by the gate noting every person who came to visit him. This brother quickly advised me to *not* visit Katabirora, as it would be easy for these leaders to target us. Thus, please pray for us and the others who work with us to hear Kinyarwanda well, to understand what we're hearing, and to be safe in light of the potential threats which could come.

(4) **Pray for provision:** On a practical level, we have been very dependent on Katabirora for teaching and working within MNC's pastoral training school. Please pray that God would provide people to fill in the gaps that are created by losing him at this time.

#### **OTHER PRAYER REQUESTS –**

- **Visitors** – Tomorrow (Tuesday, June 12) we are welcoming a group of pastors from Chicago. They will be with us for a week, seeing our ministry and talking about potential ways to partner with us.
- **Teaching** – On Saturday, June 16, Tim will be travelling with our visitors into northwest Rwanda to visit the church of one of our pastoral students. Please pray for safety and a good time of teaching.
- **Strength** – As I said above, this has been an exciting time of ministry for us, but very draining, as along with the excitement has come some pretty stressful issues. Even yesterday, in our own church, we had to sit through forty minutes of heretical “prosperity gospel” teaching by a visiting preacher.

Thanks for Praying!

#### **TIM, JESSICA, THOMAS, MARTIN & CECILIA BRUBAKER**

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