

Scheer's August Update – 2005

Dear Friends,

I'm back in Rwanda from my quick wedding trip to Seattle.

SOMETHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT

This summer four of us went to a soccer game at the national stadium -- Rwanda vs. Nigeria. Even though we'd bought our tickets ahead of time we went to the stadium almost 1 1/2 hours early because we were warned that they always sell more tickets than there are seats. As we drive up to the stadium we see small groups of boys here and there standing at the outside of the perimeter fence. There is one security guy on the inside for 150 yards of fence! He's busy with his stick keeping one group from getting over the fence while another group 50 yards down hops over. When he goes to chase them down the other group hops over.

So we get to the entrance and the gates are closed and the soldiers and police are there saying the stadium is full. You got tickets? So what! But we wait and pretty soon a gate opens for a car to go through and a group of 50 or 60 push through, but the soldiers immediately go after them and anyone at the entrance with their sticks. Some make it in, some were beaten down, one of our guys was whacked a good one on his arm as he shielded his head.

We patiently waited, pleaded and cajoled, and finally they let some of us in. But then we found the doors at the stadium themselves were closed -- stadium's full, they tell us. You got tickets? So what! Again we wait and plead and cajole. Finally just as the game is about to begin they let us in, but not to any seats. They lead us in to the field itself where we stand behind and just to the left of the players' benches! We look above to the section for which we bought tickets and see 1/4 of the seats are taken by the kids that climbed the fence!

The game was good. Rwanda lost 2 to 1, but played really well against a world class team. When we left the stadium no one had opened the gates out of the stadium grounds, so we, too, had to climb the fence -- to get out. Such is soccer at the national stadium in Rwanda.

GOOD HAPPENINGS OF PRAISE:

The wedding of Matt and Ellie! It was a beautiful outside wedding. It began at 6PM as the sun was setting after a beautiful sunny day 1 hour outside Seattle. Because the wedding was not at a standard wedding-type place (a church or rented facility) there was much to do the week before and especially the Friday and Saturday, the day of the wedding itself. That was great for us, because often the groom's family just shows up for the wedding without much involvement. But we were glad to be heavily involved, and do it as a family -- Lor and I, Andy, Jamie, her husband Eric all working together with Matt and Ellie and some of her family.

We find Ellie to be a great match for Matt. She was a beautiful bride. They're settled now in Spokane. Matt's beginning his 3rd year in flight school and Ellie has a job as a nurse in a local hospital.



Andy was Matt's best man and Jamie was a bride's maid.

LIFT THESE UP BEFORE THE THRONE:

- 1) The wedding was great -- pray that Matt and Ellie's marriage would be great.
- 2) Laurie is still in the States. She's taking another 3 weeks to be with her recently widowed mom. May Laurie be a good companion and a source of counsel and spiritual perspective during these difficult days for her mom.
- 3) Please join us in prayer for serious illnesses among our colleagues here:

The wife of the president of our board has just been diagnosed with breast cancer. But there are no facilities here to even do biopsies or other tests, much less treat it. We're trying to work out some options with them now. Her name is Speciose.

The 10 year-old son of my partner in teaching has been in the hospital with a bone infection since last October! They seem to be doing nothing for him. X-rays show the shin bone has been seriously eaten away by the infection. For him, too, we are trying to see what options might be for getting him to some effective medical care. His name is Alexi.

The husband of one of our workers has become seriously mentally ill. He has paranoid delusions of people coming to kill him. He keeps the family up at night and has been violent. It is driving his wife to despair -- he was also the bread-winner. Again, there are no good options for care for him here.

These are heavy heavy burdens on our hearts. Life them up with us.

PROVERBIAL WISDOM OF RWANDA:

-- Ubabaye ni we ubanda urugi. --

"The one in pain is the one who pounds at the door."

Here it is expected that one who has serious problems will push hard for you to help solve it. So the proverb is used to say that if someone is pressing you hard for help, maybe it is because he really has a difficult problem beyond his ability to solve.

In our Stateside culture we suffer alone and expect people to solve their own problems. Maybe that's because often if someone looks and works hard enough, the solution can be found. Whereas here, what can Jonas do for his wife with cancer? Or Laurent for his son's leg? Or Beatrice for her mentally ill husband? So our door gets pounded on.

Partners in Him,
Gary and Laurie