

SCHEER'S MARCH UPDATE

The other side of ministry

Someone comes to our gate about 8 o'clock one morning. I find it's a young man who has recently been elected as one of the neighborhood block officials. He tells me that there is a man who died last night in the neighborhood. He has no family. He asks if we would contribute towards the expenses of burying him. We are not the only ones being asked to help. This official is going to all the homes in the neighborhood for this collection. I contribute 5,000 francs, about \$10 -- this is a lot as most will give probably 1,000 or 2,000 francs. This collection will buy for him a rough wooden box quickly put together by local carpenters, a truck for the trip to the cemetery, and the cemetery plot. This is how the local Rwandan community works.

Good happenings of praise

We've got a whole backlog of good things!

- 1) Our son, Matthew, the one up in Spokane, returned to Moody Flight School on February 19! He had had to sit out a year to make money in order to continue. The money came in the form of an interest-free loan. He should finish up in May of 2008 if all goes well.
- 2) Laurie and I just finished our first visit-our-churches trip. We spent 2 1/2 weeks in Arizona (Phoenix area and Tucson). We visited 3 supporting churches and 3 supporting families and other friends during that time.
- 3) While we were in Arizona some friends of ours from the El Camino church in Tucson took us to a time-share condo in beautiful Sedona, AZ! It was a delightful 3 days of relaxing and enjoying friends and the beauty of God's creation in the midst of a busy schedule. Thanks Jim and Teri Wood!
- 4) During that trip we presented the opportunity to subsidize a student in the Pastoral Training School (PTS) at \$600/year. Eight people took cards to make a commitment! We're shooting for 30 commitments of \$600/year by the time we go back to Rwanda in August, and 50 by the end of 2007. Eight is a great start! People have seen that it's a great opportunity to channel giving to something that really has an impact.
- 5) Speaking of IMPACT, at the end of 2006 we gathered statistics from our 45 PTS students. They reveal the exciting impact that makes the \$600/year subsidy of these students such a great investment. Here they are:

Our 45 students (they are all pastors) have 10,000 Christians in their churches. As we disciple these men, it is touching 10,000 lives.

These students have established 310 small groups in their churches, where discipleship and Christian nurture are going on.

During 2006 our 45 students baptized 555 new believers! And these new believers have a greater chance of becoming solid followers of Christ because of the PTS.

During 2006 our 45 students were involved in starting 35 new churches -- that's exciting.

This is why we're convinced that our ministry of enabling and empowering Rwandan pastors is the most strategic thing we can do for the people of Rwanda.

- 6) Since we didn't do a full UPDATE in December we failed to inform of a GREAT PRAISE -- Gary Bennett and family are back in Rwanda! Gary came just before Christmas with his two girls and his new wife, Barbara! Gary's first wife had died 6 years ago; he married Barb last March. We were able to have about a month with them before we came back to the States in January.

Take these to the throne

1) Pray for Barbara Bennett as she adjusts to Rwanda, it's life, routines, people and hardships. Especially pray as she works at learning Kinyarwanda -- some ratings claim it is the 19th most difficult language in the world.

2) Pray for the goal of 30 commitments of \$600/year to subsidize the PTS students. We want to go back to Rwanda in August with 30, and end this year with 50.

3) In about 2 hours we're heading out to Cheyenne, WY, to visit Meadowbrooke Baptist Church for the weekend. Keep praying as we make the rounds, that we'd CONNECT. That's our goal, to connect significantly with people in every church so they would pray and support what's happening in Rwanda with greater knowledge and excitement about what's happening there.

Wisdom from Rwanda

"Umujinya w'imbwa ushirira mu murizo."

"The anger of the dog ends in his tail."

You need to know that in Rwanda dogs are not the pampered "children" that they are in the States. They are lowly creatures that are often abused, skinny, with scars from fights and kicks, not to mention plenty of ticks and fleas.

The dog barks angrily at a passing boy, the boy picks up a stick and a rock and goes after the dog and the dog turns tail and runs away to maybe bark at a greater distance -- and the boy laughs.

So the meaning of the proverb is that it does no good for the lowly people to get mad at things or people that aren't right in the powers that be. They'll only end up turning tail when the "big guys" go after them with their "stick and rocks". It speaks volumes about the perceived relationship between the common man and the Big Boss leaders in a society like Rwanda.

Partners in Him,
Gary and Laurie Scheer