

## **SCHEERS' PRAYER UPDATE – OCTOBER 2008 -- RWANDA**

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### **Windows on life and work in Rwanda**



went to a baptism party. The 13 year-old daughter of our friend and worker Ndagijimana had the day before. Ndagijimana invited 40 people and the church choir to his house to celebrate and drinks were served, the choir sang, presents were given, speeches were made.

re shed. This girl, Lillian, was born just before the death of her mother 13 years ago. A was given to Laurie because she had supplied the baby with infant formula until she could handle solid foods (formula is far too expensive here for the local people; otherwise they would have simply given the infant regular cow's milk). As Lillian remembered her history she cried a bit, even as people were bringing her presents.

### **Good happenings of praise**

Grading is a bane of teachers, but sometimes what I read brings joy and a "Yes!" to my heart. I was evaluating the reports of the pastors studying in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the PTS. A young pastor (just recently married in fact), named Sylvain, wrote about the overnight retreat he scheduled with his church leadership to evaluate the ministries of the church. That alone is fantastic – pastors don't do that sort of thing here!

He himself told me that when he first started pastoring he felt the church was his to grasp in his hand – holding his hand up in a fist. He went on, "One thing I've learned in this 4 years with NCM is that leading a church correctly means building a leadership team, and equipping that team."



He went on to describe what he's doing to enable these leaders for ministry:

- \* a seminar to teach them how to preach,
- \* a workshop on how to use case-studies as teaching tools,
- \* taking one or two leaders out with him as he visits people to show them how to do it and then letting them try it under his supervision and advice.

His leaders told him that if he keeps up this type of leadership they will have an excellent church – I agree. Leadership that enables rather than controls is scarcer than hen's teeth here. This is a "Yes!" – This is what NCM is all about, discipling leaders who then pass it on enabling their people to "do the work of the ministry" (Ephesians 4:11-16 exactly!).

### **Family ups and downs**

First the ups – Matt (our second oldest in Spokane) and Ellie called with the news that Ellie is pregnant! Grandchild #3 on the way! And Andy (our youngest) successfully finished his service in Sudan with Samaritan's Purse. He's taking advantage of the time to travel (Egypt and the Red Sea, Israel, Jordan, Thailand) before coming to be with us here in Rwanda for Christmas.

Now the downs – Gary's mom has just started her second round of chemo therapy (they live in Littleton, Colorado). She and dad had hoped to have a longer remission – she had finished the first chemo round in late January. But when we called and talked to them on the phone they were both amazingly "up" and encouraged. This round will again take her to the end of January.

Laurie's brother, David, passed away (in California; he was 5 years older than Laurie). It was a surprise and, of course, a blow to the whole family. In times like this it's a struggle to be away from the family. Pray for them all. It came at a time when Laurie's mom was in a care facility because of a serious infection – she wasn't able to go to the funeral.



## Work blessings and challenges



First the blessings – Engineers Ministries International (EMI) sent a team from Uganda to help us develop site and building plans for the campus we'll need for the degree level program we hope to open in late 2010. They did a remarkable amount of work in 2 days time. They're now taking the basic plans we worked out together and developing full architectural plans for us! This is professional help that would have cost us a fortune – they ask us to pay their transport and living while here for 2 days – thanks EMI!!

We just received word that a family from Wickenburg, Arizona, has just made application with WorldVenture to serve with us in the training ministry here in Rwanda! Laurie and I had met them our last time home (they belong to our supporting church there in Wickenburg). There are a lot of steps ahead of them before they get here, but they've started the journey – may God lead you, Dan, Rachel and boys!

Now for the challenges. We're still working at getting African staff for our ministry. And we're still having a hard time finding committed people with the right mix of heart, education and skills. Presently we're working on finding a Pastor to the Pastors (a mentor to the pastors in the Pastoral Training School), and a Dean of Students for the degree program (one of the first positions we'll need to help us work out the whole academic program of the school). The right people are out there – pray that we are led to each other.

In the same line we're looking to recruit two more board members for our Rwandan board of directors for New Creation Ministries. Our conviction is that good people make for good ministry. We're a bit closer, it seems, to this goal than the previous, but again, pray for the right people to be led our way.

## Wisdom from Rwanda

***Inkoni nziza imera mu manga.***

***The best walking stick grows in the abyss.***

Very interesting! There is a lot to this little saying. "Mu manga" or in the abyss is a place that is unattainable or unreachable except by plunging in and to your death! Down there is an "inkoni nziza" the best walking stick. It is something that looks to you, from your vantage point far away, like the best stick you've seen, a thing to help you get what you want, or it might be the thing you want itself. It's sort of a more complex version of our proverb – the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.

In your mind you want that stick down there and think once you get it it will help you along the way of life, to where you want to be – after all, it is a walking stick. The trouble is that stick is in a forbidden, inaccessible place. You really only have 2 options before you, 1) give it up and forget about it or 2) take the plunge to get it and die, ruin your life! You cannot have the stick and think that you will ever walk the road you are now on again. You're just kidding yourself.

How is it used? In it's most direct and powerful sense it would be used to warn someone off from an adulterous affair. You see someone else's wife. You think that she would be the one to make your dreams come true. But if you think you can have her and not destroy your life, you are totally deluded – the stick is in the abyss! You can either forget it and carry on your life, find your dreams another way, or get the stick and find yourself forever lost in the abyss.



All that said in 5 words in Kinyarwanda – wisdom indeed!

Read Proverbs 5:3-5 for a parallel in the Bible.

Partners in Him,

*Gary and Laurie Scheer*