

December 2010 Prayer Points

Those who do not have time to read the stories may get the prayer items and main points in less than three minutes by scanning the portions in bold italics.

Dear Friends:

Once more I must begin this letter apologizing for another three month hiatus in our regular reports. The last account in September featured the Fiel Conference. My computerized timelog says for a month I had worked nearly twelve hours a day seven days a week preparing for that conference, and when it was over I was far behind on other responsibilities. Only this week have I finally caught up on overdue assignments!

In this report I would like to feature three Mozambicans whom God has blessed in a singular way through the Fiel and church ministries.

The first individual is ***André Kizito, pastor of an Evangelical Assembly of God congregation.*** Kizito is a highly motivated, well educated man who led a corrupt life in the military before being saved and radically transformed by the Lord. He is one of those believers who seems never to have lost his first love, and God continues to bless him in extraordinary ways and with much success in his many endeavors. He eventually was led into pastoral ministry, giving up a lucrative position with a foreign NGO in order to devote himself full time to serving the Lord. His congregation is too poor to pay him a salary, yet the Lord provides for him in remarkable ways. He recently imported a fine truck from Japan with only 40,000 miles on it for a mere \$6,000, including freight! Everyone thought he was being tricked by Internet con artists, but the truck arrived as promised, was in near perfect condition, and has provided excellent service!



Kizito with wife and daughters

Missionary colleagues who assist with the Fiel work and attend Kizito's church encouraged him to participate in this year's Fiel Conference. ***He finally showed up***

on the third day, and was spell-bound by the messages. It was his first time to hear preaching from a doctrines of grace perspective. When the invitation went out to sign up for the post conference seminar he enthusiastically cancelled all his engagements for the coming week so he could prolong the experience. Kizito is a serious Bible student with excellent Christian experience, so despite the fact that he had not studied theology



Kizito posing in front of his church with a visiting preacher

before, he grasped the material quickly and instinctively, ending up with a final grade of 98% on the 15 tests of the seminar. I thank God for letting me be part of the Fiel ministry and for the obvious delight and blessing it brings to faithful servants like André Kizito.

This was the sixth consecutive year I offered a seminar for those participants at the FIEL conference able to stay on an extra week. **Pastor Doug Van Meter from Brackenhurst Baptist Church in Johannesburg helped out by teaching a pastoral course on I Timothy** to 15 men while I taught systematic theology to a class of 16. Though the material is always well beyond the ken of some students, I was thankful for Kizito and several others whose participation alone would have made the effort worthwhile.



Two other students scored as high or higher than Kizito, making this class unusual in having three standout performers, but both of them were fellows from my Saturday Bible classes who were already familiar with some of the material. One was **Jeremias António, a young man who was just saved recently after participating a year in the church without seeming to gain any benefit. Suddenly the Lord took hold of him and in the space of a few weeks his world and life were transformed. Since then his spiritual growth has been meteoric, surpassing anything I have seen before in my ministry, and we have had some remarkable transformations. In only three months he devoured and memorized word for word our church's entire scripture catechism. That amounts to 48 typewritten pages containing 365 questions answered by 365 brief Bible passages** (but only the answers are memorized). No one has come close to



Jeremias signs church membership covenant

accomplishing all that so quickly. Jeremias's spiritual comprehension is as remarkable as his memory, as evidenced by his earning the second highest mark in the Fiel Seminar and outscoring all the pastors except Kizito, some of whom were seminary trained with 20 years experience (but still having never read the entire Bible!).

I am pleased to see that when Jeremias learns something from Scripture, a lively faith compels him to put it into practice. Some of the passages in the catechism address Old Testament tithing and Christian giving. In the last 14 years scores if not hundreds of individuals have participated in the scripture memory program because it is also a means of providing financial aid to people who need it, but Jeremias is the first person ever to ask that 10% of his earnings from the memory program be set aside for the church. **As one might expect, Jeremias's transformation has attracted the attention of friends and relatives, and presently there are five**

people attending our services because of what they have seen happening in his life.



Some people may remember the reports on daily Bible reading conducted for the 70 member construction team that built the hospital. Over the months of the project, the workers heard the most prominent O.T. passages prophesying the coming of Christ, the four gospels, Acts, and the first 11 chapters of the book of Romans. This reading schedule was not contrived by me. This was just where the regular Grace Missions workers were in the daily consecutive Bible

reading that had begun in Genesis two and a half years before construction began, and where we finally had come to on the last day of the job. Folks familiar with the Bible can readily appreciate that this was a propitious time for unbelievers to be associated with Grace Missions and an outstanding opportunity for me to witness to the many Muslims and neighbors serving on the workforce! God granted excellent opportunities to preach the gospel from compelling passages that came up in the daily reading. Fifty workers bought Bibles from money taken out of their paycheck, and everyone received helpful scripture tracts. We hope many began attending local churches – a few even visited the boss’s church (probably an intimidating business, but they came!).

In the case of most of the men one can merely wish hopefully that the seed sown bore some fruit. But we can know with certainty that God spoke to at least one of the workers. His name is Paulo Agostinho.

After several false starts, some months ago he finally began faithfully attending both the Sunday services and Saturday Bible studies despite living far from the church. He soon came under conviction, and so he could more easily participate in the church he even bought land in our neighborhood and erected a mud hut dwelling on it. Recently he asked to be baptized, and unlike most applicants, gave the leaders convincing, knowledgeable answers to all their questions the first time around. We are thankful that God was pleased to grant us this visible evidence that His Word does not go forth in vain or return to Him empty without accomplishing what He desires and without succeeding in the matter for which He sent it!



Ron and SouVonna Miller

As mentioned in the last report, we much appreciated the prolonged visit of Ron and SouVonna Miller from Heritage Baptist Church in Owensboro, Kentucky. They would have been a wonderful addition to the church and administrative work here, and we are thankful for the friendship that was established between our families. However, **after long and prayerful consideration they have concluded the Lord is not leading them to Nampula at this time.** Where Ron and SouVonna are concerned, Julie and I cannot take “No,” for an answer, so we haven’t stopped praying that God may yet point them clearly in the direction of Nampula!

This makes two fine families from two outstanding churches we have missed out on in two consecutive reports! Considering what we have lost might drive us to despair if God had not tempered disappointment with some recent good news. ***A third couple has visited us from a third excellent church, and in their case the Lord has worked in convincing ways to persuade them and us that He is calling them to partner in the medical work in Nampula! I hope to present them in the next newsletter*** after their church leaders have made the information public.

We are now expecting to begin furlough in the States during the month of February. ***While on furlough we will be visiting churches with a view toward recruiting:***

- ***two surgeons***
- ***an anesthesiologist***
- ***a family practitioner***
- ***an administrator for the hospital***
- ***an administrative assistant***
- ***a church planter to help in the Fiel and church ministries.***

We expect the hospital to be completed after returning from furlough in 2012, so those who will become part of the missionary staff need to enter the pipeline soon! ***If you know people who could fill these positions, please contact us!***

Just four months after losing our eldest son and most faithful missionary associate, Kent, who left us to attend Covenant College in Tennessee, we bade farewell this month to our oldest daughter, Sarah Beth, who is now in the States preparing to start the spring semester at Ventura Community College. She will be staying in the home of Tim and Lesli Sheehy, one of the elders at Faith Community Church, our sending church in Oxnard, California. Shriveling down so quickly to a family of five has produced a state of shock in the Woodrow household, with the remaining survivors stumbling about our near empty residence in a catatonic condition that has not made it any easier to complete the work that still stands between us and furlough!



In concluding this report, here are the important praise and prayer items we would like you to remember:

- 1) ***Praise for the missionary doctor and wife who have committed themselves to work in Nampula.***
- 2) ***Praise for the fruitfulness of God's word in the lives of: Pastor André Kizito through the FIEL ministry, Jeremias António through the church ministry, and Paulo Agostinho through the Grace Missions daily Bible reading.***



Kent, Sarah, Julie, Benaiah, Charles, Grace, Andrew

- 1) ***Pray that God may grant Sarah Beth special manifestations of His particular love and care for her in these first days of living apart from the family (though she is probably reveling in the independence that brings).***
- 2) ***Pray that God may help me finish the remaining tasks that must be done before starting furlough.***
- 3) ***Pray that during furlough God may give success in finding the seven additional associates needed to carry this work forward in the next term.***

By His grace,

Charles and Julie Woodrow