

June 2008 Prayer Newsletter
—CALL TO PRAYER—Andrea Herman

“Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me.” Psalm 50:15

I have a confession to make. After one speaking engagement, someone asked for my precise departure time from Minneapolis, so that he could pray for my travel. Though I appreciated the sentiment, I thought it unnecessary. I was very wrong. To explain the entire saga that lasted 3 days+ would take too long, so I'll try to share the “highlights” as briefly as possible.

Went to airport on June 6, but flight from MN to DC was delayed several hours, so would've missed connection to Paris, with no other flights until the next day. Returned to airport next day to try again, with a cold. Cold turned into major sinus infection in flight. Had a 10 hour layover in Paris. During landing in Bamako, Mali, lost all hearing in left ear (due to sinus infection), and Air France lost one of my bags. Next day lost my voice, but bag was found. Then learned that I couldn't drive my truck because a paper had expired and I wasn't allowed to renew it like last year. Was told I would have to pay \$7,000-10,000 USD to drive it legally due to new customs regulations. Spent a week in Bamako trying to chase down the appropriate truck paperwork, which cost \$130, so I could legally cross the border to return home to Guinea. I've learned my lesson. Next time, I'm asking EVERYONE to pray for safe and uneventful travels!

Despite the less than ideal situations surrounding my return to West Africa, the rest of June has gone remarkably well. I did have a minor memory lapse with the Maninka language, but my language helper was pleasantly surprised (as was I) that it wasn't too serious.

Conakry had some issues earlier this month that could have potentially affected the entire country. But God, in His great mercy, spared us from any troubles. There was one week in mid-June where several different groups announced that they were striking: the police, customs agents, taxi drivers, teachers (right before end of the year exams were to be administered), and that same week there were elections for labor union representatives, where there was some rowdy behavior going on days prior to elections (due to excessive drinking). It had the potential to be quite a week!

Conakry was the only place where anything serious happened. There, a faction of soldiers went to police headquarters during the police strike. Their original intentions were unclear, but there was a shootout between soldiers and policemen, with at least 8 deaths reported. The soldiers looted the police station (computers, fuel, vehicles, etc.) and took many police into custody. The government intervened and eventually the police returned to work, as all the other striking workers have as well. The fact that there was no violence anywhere else in all of Guinea is a major miracle, especially considering how many different groups were striking. We praise God for His protection in the midst of what could have been a bad situation, and that even the violence in Conakry was very isolated.

My language helper and I have talked about the Jesus film since I returned. It was nice to finally be able to talk about it, but unfortunate that so much time passed between when she saw it and when we could talk. However, she said some very interesting things. First of all, she said she would like to see it again if she could. She said it's a great movie that EVERYONE should see, AND, they should watch it often so that we can remember how we are supposed to live. She said that we should all try to live our lives, just like He lived His. She had not yet received the cassette of the audio from the Jesus Film, so I was able to give that to her. Two of her daughters, had already seen the film. After watching the film, my language helper and her daughter discussed the film extensively. They both had

questions for each other about different parts of the film. I was thrilled to hear about that kind of dialogue going on between her and her children. Please continue to pray for this family, that they would openly ask spiritual questions and that they would seek the Truth.

I have one more story of God's goodness this month. One of my language helper's younger daughters (about 16) was quite ill with abdominal pain. They took her to the hospital and the Dr. told her it was appendicitis. He said to come back in 3 years if it wasn't better (I hope he MEANT to say 3 days). When I heard this, I was very concerned and explained how if it was appendicitis, something needed to be done very soon. I looked in many medical books for answers, but told them that I would pray for God to grant her daughter healing.

Here's another confession: I spent way more time paging through medical books than I did praying. I went to their house the next day, assuming the worst. My language helper hadn't come to lessons (so I assumed she had to take her daughter to the hospital, with a burst appendix). She was at the house and said her daughter had gone in to sell at the market that day, which I could hardly believe. I waited and waited for her daughter to come home. It was almost an hour after she usually gets home from market, so I assumed she had probably collapsed on the way and was in urgent need of health care. When she finally got home, I asked her right away how she was feeling, and she said, "Fine!" Since I could hardly believe that, I proceeded to ask her more medical questions that I had found in the books. However, she insisted that the reason she went to market was because she felt totally fine...and continues to feel fine to this day, more than two weeks later. Oh me of little faith...

The next day I apologized to my language helper and to God for initially questioning God's healing of her daughter. I said, when God heals someone that we ask Him to heal, we should just praise Him instead of asking questions. She agreed. Please join me in praying that God would continue to reveal Himself in very real and tangible ways to this entire family, that they would believe the truth and be set free by it.

Please join me in thanking God for:

- the miraculous healing of my language helper's daughter
- getting me safely back to Guinea after all the traveling and vehicle issues
- God's ever-present protection in spite of potential unrest
- the S family's continued interest in Jesus

Please join me in praying for:

- Wisdom and boldness in sharing the love of Jesus with friends here
- God to open doors for faith conversations with a neighbor with questions about Christianity, but is fearful of others knowing about his interest
- God's mercy on the people of Guinea; this is the "hungry season" and food and fuel prices are extremely high, with other prices rising also
- God to provide a man to continue the Jesus conversation with the Fulani men in the market
- God to provide a language helper for me when I move to Mali