

A Call to Prayer

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“In the same way, let your light shine before men that they see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16

God and His ways continue to amaze me. My friend YD has often mentioned she'd like me to go with her to greet her family in another town, but I don't often travel there. Another thing she and her husband both mention frequently is that I don't lie; I do what I say I'm going to do. Sadly, that is very uncommon here, which is why they noticed the difference almost immediately. Not long after, they started asking me basic questions about my religion. They said they knew I was a Christian even before I told them because I didn't lie. Their observations continued over several months.

The day arrived in November when I had planned to travel to YD's family's town, so we planned to go together. What I thought was going to be a simple trip to a nearby town to greet my friend's family and meet her long lost daughter turned into something of potentially eternal significance. I had already thought through whether or not to try to tell a Bible story on the way, but had decided against it since driving here requires 100% concentration and at least one set of eyes. About 10 minutes into the hour and a half trip YD says, “My husband wants to know what your religion is all about. So tell me everything. I'll go home and tell him what you said, and if he likes it, we're in.”

I almost had to pinch myself. I kept thinking, “THIS is how it's going to happen?!?” At the moment the whole thing seemed so abrupt. Despite my surprise and unpreparedness to explain all these details (in Maninka), I tried to cover all the foundational things about our faith that would be important to know for someone considering a complete change of life and

worldview. These are the times when all I can do is pray for God to provide the words, and that it would be correctly understood by my friend. So we started with God creating the world and the fall into sin, God's plan to send Jesus to save us, His life, death and resurrection so that we could be forgiven and go to be with God forever in heaven. I was talking about our sinfulness, and how when we believe in Jesus, He stands in our place so God doesn't see our sinfulness, only Jesus' holiness. At the end of an hour or so of trying to explain things, her response was, “So Jesus is the Way?”

Again, I was dumbfounded. First at her comprehension of my words, but even moreso by her profound understanding of the concepts I was trying to express. It was so exciting to see the Holy Spirit at work so clearly. YD went home, explained things to her husband, and asked me to come and get them the next Sunday because they wanted to come to church! Not only is it extremely rare for someone to make a public appearance at a Christian worship service so quickly, but the fact that the husband and wife came together to worship was a first in this area. It's exactly what we hope and pray for, that families would come to worship God together, so it was a very exciting day. Please pray for this family, that the Holy Spirit would be working in their hearts and that their interest in Jesus is genuine.

Out of sheer amazement that this all happened so quickly, I couldn't help but ask YD some questions. I found out that they had lived in an apartment building in another country previously where Christians gathered for worship, and knew the pastor of that fellowship, which had positively impacted them.

The thing that struck me is that so much of their information about Christianity came not from asking about our doctrine or theology. They based their decision of the rightness/righteousness of our religion ENTIRELY upon the actions of those who claimed to be believers. Think nobody's watching? Think again.

The following quote from Thomas Chalmers sums it up pretty well. "Every man is a missionary... He may be a blot radiating his dark influence outward to the very circumference of society, or he may be a blessing spreading benediction over the length and breadth of the world. But a blank he cannot be."

I know the thought of sharing a "testimony" or any other verbal form of evangelism is an intimidating thought for many. I'm not saying those things shouldn't be shared. They NEED to be shared. However, we must not underestimate the power of non-verbal witnessing through example. For those who have (or know) children, what are kids more likely to do? A) What you tell them to do or B) What you do? Kids aren't the only ones watching to see if we act like who we claim to be: children of the King.

God sent Jesus in human form to a broken world so that we could see God's perfect example of how to love one another. That unconditional love ultimately resulted in the torture, death and resurrection of God's sinless Son. The world has seen nothing like it before or since, but they can see His image in those who follow Him and practice His loving example. As we prepare to celebrate the coming of God's incarnate Love into the world, may we be reflections of His lovingkindness to a world desperate for love, hope and peace.

Merry Christmas!!!

To support my work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to: LCMS World Mission
1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

Make checks payable to LCMS World Mission. Mark checks "Support of Andrea Herman". Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS World Mission Web site, www.lcmsworldmission.org

Prayers

Please join me in praising God for:

- continued peace in our country
- the ability to focus on ministry despite the political distractions
- reuniting YD with her daughter, after she was kidnapped as a baby 10 years ago!
- the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of YD and her family, that they would continue to seek God and eventually baptism
- the total healing of JK's 6 month old baby's hand, which was severely burned a few weeks ago
- the safe return of MK and her daughter (after being gone nearly a year)!
- small improvements in the marriage situations of MK & JK, that God would continue to bring healing
- leading me to women eager to hear God's Word
- the opportunity to participate in the wedding of a dear friend and my home church's annual mission festival in the US in January

Please join me in asking God for:

- His continued miraculous intervention, providing peace here
- a full recovery for Guinea's president, who was shot in the head in early December
- open hearts to hear and receive His word and Spirit
- His wisdom and words as I share the hope I have for eternal life
- His intervention in struggling marriages here, that He would change the hearts of those who are not honoring their spouses
- Comfort for KK and her family, whose sister just died in childbirth, as did the baby.
- His provision, comfort and peace for the family who lost one of their week old twin sons while I was with them. May God open their hearts to His love and hope (the mother refused my offer of prayer, saying we didn't believe in the same God).
- peaceful and fair elections in the near future
- His provision for me to make all my flights (especially those with very short layovers) as I travel during the busy holiday travel season
- His mercy in the form of unseasonably warm weather so I don't freeze to death in MN in January