

"I am not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." (Rom. 1:16a). God's power through his gospel is truly amazing! We are witnesses to this power not only in our daily walk with him, but in the events that take place around us. I want to relate to you one of those events that happened this month here in Guinea.

One of the leaders in the young church here has been and is still strongly persecuted for his faith in Jesus Christ. Some people refuse to do business with him, others who were once his friends no longer even greet him. Recently, one of these former "friends" who had been continually pestering our leader was on his way to Friday prayers at the mosque. "Hey, time for us to go to prayers, and you too!" he shouted as he passed. "Greet everyone for me," was the gentle reply given by our leader. Not five minutes after the ritual had ended this person returned to our leader and said, "You know, I really am more interested in the Bible than anything else right now, do you think you could get me a copy of one?" He had come to the right place! Shortly afterward Mr. K. (our leader) supplied him with a Bible in French and discussed some of the major teachings with him. We see the power of God in this person's desire to know more about the Good News and pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to draw him to the truth.

Of course not all people respond to the gospel in such an instantaneous way. Some of the people we have been working with for about two years have only just now expressed a more firm desire to be followers of Jesus. We rejoice in this news and pray for their continued growth in faith, and once again we witness the power of God at work.

We had hoped to open a new area of work some distance away from the town where we live, after receiving an invitation through the N'ko conference held here in Siguiri last month. However, the time that we were to have gone for a visit coincided with a severe illness I was experiencing. There's not a whole lot of travel one can do under those circumstances so we had to postpone the visit for another time. We are planning on returning to the U.S. later this month for continuing education. I am going through my second summer residency at Concordia University St. Paul in the Master of Arts in Christian Outreach program (MACO). We will also take some vacation while we are there.

This is also the last month we will have with our colleagues of 5 years, Jon & Sharon Oetting, and their three children, who are leaving the field in mid-June. Jon will pursue studies at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis to become an ordained pastor. Although this is sad news for our field, we've known about it for some time, and it was tempered by some good news this month. We are expecting the arrival of new co-worker on the field later this year! Her name is Andrea Herman and she will be working with Maninka women. Andrea has served as a volunteer in Guinea before and was here in January with a visiting team from St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Bloomington, Minnesota.

Please thank God with us for:

-His power in calling many Maninka to faith, some who have recently heard the gospel, and some of have heard it now for a while.

-His providence in supplying a new worker in the vineyard-Ms. Andrea Herman.

-The nine years of service the Oetting family has given to the Guinea field.

Please also pray with us for:

-Safety as we travel to the U.S. and blessings on MACO studies.

-For Ms. Herman as she gets ready to arrive in Guinea -For the growth of our young church and the people who have made more of a firm commitment to follow Jesus.

Thanks for your prayers and support of our work. May God bless you and show you his power.

In Christ,

Tim, Heidi, Philip & Leslie Norton

LCMS World Mission, Guinea, West Africa