

Dear Friends,

We greet you in the wonderful name of Jesus and the joy of the Lord!

We'd like to give you an update on what has been happening in our lives since we last wrote a newsletter in July. We hope things are well with each of you; we would appreciate communication from you so that we can pray for you with our minds as well as our hearts!

It seems that we need to relearn spiritual lessons at times; the past four months have been a time of "spiritual instruction" for Jackie and me, as we have launched into this faith ministry of missions mobilization. One of these lessons that we have relearned can be stated this way:

"God is a VERY GOOD GOD, and the Devil is a VERY BAD DEVIL!"

We are pioneering in this ministry with AIMS; no one has gone before us to "clear the way"; though it is a ministry to the body of Christ, it is like clearing out a wilderness area and setting up camp. Any spiritual territory that has not been previously occupied by God's people is territory that Satan illegally holds. It must be possessed through faith and spiritual warfare like Israel went in to "possess the land" that God had promised them.

That land was rich, "flowing with milk and honey", but infested with enemies and giants who hated God! So Jackie and I believe that we are going in to possess some land on behalf of the body of Christ, that will make the church more effective and fruitful in accomplishing the Great Commission. And we have met and engaged the enemy!

But PRAISE THE LORD! We have, through the spiritual battle, met with (and become captured by) the GREATER ONE! The blood and name of Jesus have become more real to us. The fellowship of the Holy Spirit has become urgent and exciting; and the love of our Father is enveloping our souls.

The summer was for us a transition out of the familiarity of our local church ministry and involvements into the unfamiliar territory of the new ministry. Like all who respond to a call into something new, we had certain expectations of what should happen; but having vision from the Lord is like seeing a range of mountains ahead of you; because they are so large, they look closer than they really are. And you don't even notice the foothills that you must pass over; you are enthralled with the high peaks!

Moreover, there are a few valleys to cross. And so Jackie and I went through some valleys this summer. BUT...

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, FOR THOUGH ART WITH ME; Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me; Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil; MY CUP RUNNETH OVER!!!"

The resistance we faced this summer was seen in several dimensions. The worst of the battle was "between our ears"! The mind is a spiritual battle ground -- have you learned that? Paul said (II Cor. 10) "Our weapons are divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. Therefore we are destroying SPECULATIONS AND IMAGINATIONS AND EVERYTHING THAT EXALTS ITSELF AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. And we are bringing EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE TO THE OBEDIENCE OF Christ!!"

About the middle of September, I came to my "deepest valley", and was considering that I had made a mistake, that God had not called me to this ministry. As I sat in my office at home on that Monday evening, it was as if it all had died, and there was no hope. Even Jackie couldn't find encouragement to give me, but she did recommend that I call our minister friend, Fred Rodman. She knew that Fred knew how to get through to God -- maybe he could get through to me also! So I called Fred...

As Fred prayed, I knew that Satan was behind it all! The weight began to lift, and hope returned! At the close of Fred's prayer, he said "And Lord, give him a laughing spirit". Well, something was loosed in me immediately, and I broke out into holy, raucous laughter! I mean, I began to roar with joy that sent our cats running for the closets! Jackie came running to my office, wondering about my sanity, since she had left me thirty minutes before while I was "in the pits".

This went on for an hour and a half! Every time I thought about the Devil, I broke out in laughter; when I thought, "Satan thinks he's going to win...", I roared with joy to the point of falling off my chair!

Folks, I believe that our new ministry had spiritual birth that night with that holy laughter. The following morning, things began to happen that only God could arrange. And, one step at a time, we are "climbing those foothills" towards the mountain of vision that God has put into our spirits. The battle is still there, because we are in a war on behalf of the church and the unreached nations; but we are finding victory in Jesus, and by His grace will not retreat.

Will you enter the spiritual battle with us? The call to "missions" is first of all, a call into spiritual warfare. You can affect nations through intercession; and you will affect nations, I believe, by praying for Jackie and myself and our ministry with AIMS. AIMS is a "spawning ground" for world mission vision, communication, and mobilization. We are going to see the birthing and strengthening of many ministries that will affect the nations -- if we persist in prayer and spiritual warfare!

God is adding some unusual and precious people to our growing "core group" that meets regularly to help birth this ministry in prayer. One dear lady has committed herself to intercede for us for more hours per week than I know how to pray! This is a faith ministry for her; it is her full-time ministry to intercede, and she has

been in demand by other ministries who have wanted her on their staff as a prayer warrior. Also, with us is a former missionary to Haiti, a former missionary to Afganistan, a young businessman who runs his business to support world missions, and several ministers from the area. These are from more than half a dozen different churches around the Twin Cities.

As God leads, we believe this small beginning of prayer for the nations will expand and become an ongoing ministry throughout our area. Would you be part of this intercessory army to pull down strongholds over the unreached nations?

We are having the first of (we believe) many AIMS events to spread world vision among Christians. It is titled, "Serving God through Business", a Saturday meeting at the Calhoun Beach Club in Minneapolis. Gil Hill, chairman of the board of AIMS nationally, and Tom Jennings, head of YWAM's new "China office" in Hong Kong, are our guest speakers. Business entrepreneurship is a tool for frontline, pioneer missions in many nations; we hope to be an ongoing encouragement to business people who have a heart for reaching the world for Jesus.

I want to remind you that we are unsalaried in this ministry; our financial support comes from those like yourself who want to see the church mobilized to the task of the Great Commission. We are trusting God for much more than we have yet seen, both in personal support and for the many ministries we hope to launch out of our office. We know that God is an abundant God, He is El-Shaddai -- "More than Enough". May He be that to you; may you prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers. (III John).

And may your family, ministry, and church abound in blessings, THAT ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH MIGHT KNOW THE LORD!

That all might hear,

John and Jackie
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