

“We do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as bondservants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Cor. 4:5)

“You also joining in helping us through your prayers” (2 Cor. 1:11)

West African Mission Update

December 2006

Steve & Patricia Phillips

Steve has recently completed a book entitled:

Black but Lovely: Thoughts on the Song of Songs.

This and his other publications can be read and/or copied by visiting the website:

<http://www.procinwarn.com/West-Africa/west-africa.htm>

and selecting from the titles presented.

~ *News From Patti* ~

Dear Brethren,

I have recently returned from a trip to Nigeria. Steve left two days after I returned, and has since also returned home here in Sierra Leone. Altogether it took about 38 days.

During all this time I have not had a chance to correspond with anyone outside of our vicinity, except a few phone calls. The trip itself was of the Lord.

The week before I left, I had come down ill which concerned me. I did not know if I could travel as sick as I was. But the Lord had other plans. It seemed evident that I was not getting over the illness, and that I was going to Nigeria.

So on Thursday the 6th of November, weak, dysenteric, nauseous and faint, I entered the plane with Temitope Peters. Off to Nigeria we went. I was able to eat on the plane, thank the Lord. The next day and a half I could eat small, small.

On the second day in Nigeria, at Peters’ home, his mother gave me an injection for malaria, vomiting and dysentery, and I ate within five minutes and then slept, woke and ate again and slept until the morning. She is a nurse, a kind woman and full of love and good deeds, bless the Lord.

I never felt ill the rest of the trip. For this I am thankful to our loving Lord.

Being by myself I kept my mind on the work. I did not want loneliness or fears to set in. Someone was always with me and the Lord kept me all the way.

There were about five Bible sessions with women during the 10 days I was there. Two other private sessions were held with two different young ladies, both of whom are considering marriage with two of Steve's disciples. Pray for these girls.

I am usually nervous in front of a group of people, and experienced this a bit, but the Lord took over these feelings and after the first few minutes, I had no more problems in this regard the rest of the trip. The Lord gave me words of encouragement for the ladies. They asked many questions, and He also gave me answers.

The topics were generally about submission, gentleness and quietness, women's place in the meeting of the Church, relationship to our husbands, and the godly lifestyle of women as found in Ephesians, Titus, and Timothy (notice the character of the widows in I Timothy chapter 5 and the converse in the young women who forsook their vow). Some references to Eve in Genesis and in I Timothy were covered also, as well as the purpose of the union of a man and woman.

Yinnkah set up a meeting with a small group in Ibadan. This was the first meeting. They were receptive and asked some personal questions to find answers to their particular situations.

Next was a large group in Benue State. It was in a distant village near the home of Moses and Agnes. They have been working with these people for some time. We had a fine time together, there were many questions and when we had to leave many did not want to see us part.

Then I was taken to Otukpo, fellowshipped with some believers on Sunday and met with a group of women there which lasted longer than expected, but all went well.

The last few days were spent near Ibadan in a town named Alabata. This was Titus' home and we held two meetings with the women there. They were very glad for my concern that all hear in their own language and that their questions be answered.

The wives of the brethren who are faithfully working in Nigeria for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ are Agnes, Dorcas, also Rachel and Blessing

(two by that name). I did not get to see Mary but she is a faithful wife who ministers to the women in her area being a helpmeet to her faithful husband Solomon. I do ask you to pray for her also.

Pray for some of the young women as well: Rose, Dukbe, Seun, and Titus and Dorcas' children (mostly girls, with one boy). There are others but I do not know their names. These women need your prayers to continue living according to the word of God, in gentleness and quietness, with kindness, love and good deeds, peacefully with their husbands and children.

**Love,
Patti**

~ News From Steve ~

The three weeks spent in Nigeria were overall very encouraging. Many of the brethren are faithfully continuing to preach the gospel and raise up disciples in various places. It was a joy to meet with numerous brethren that I had not previously known who have been blessed by the efforts of Titus, Yinnkah, Kunle, Moses, Tony, Oliver, Solomon, Dr. George, and brother Samuel.

The Lord is evidently using these brethren to carry on the work for His honor and glory and unto the spiritual profit of many.

I taught the Word virtually every day, often two or three times a day, which took me to six different states. They were very grateful for the expositions of the Scriptures and it was a great joy to be with these servants of God after one year's absence.

One of the remarkable encounters we had was when Titus and I went to Edo state.

Back in 2003 I met brother Samuel at a conference where I had been asked to speak on evangelizing Muslims. We discussed a number of things then and I gave him copies of some of my books. I saw him only one other time before we left for the States in 2004.

I learned later that He returned to his village and began to diligently search the Scriptures regarding the teachings that he had received through the books. He then contacted brother Adesina in Ibadan for copies of other titles which he took back to his place and began sharing them with some brethren there.

Over time, they all began to understand the spiritual nature of the church and the simplicity that is in Christ apart from denominational tradition. When they learned that I would be coming to Nigeria, they earnestly pleaded that we visit them as they had never personally heard me teach with the exception of brother Samuel. When we arrived, we were amazed at what we met.

Simply through studying the Word, they had made some major changes in their whole concepts and practices within their gatherings [there are seven "sister" churches associated with them].

They told us that they realized that the concept of a hierarchy of leaders lording it over the brethren was not biblical. They therefore tore down the altars in the front of their church buildings and no longer did any of the leaders sit apart from and exalted over the brethren.

When they realized the simplicity of worship from the NT, they decided they didn't need electric guitars and drum sets any longer, so they simply sold them all off.

When they studied the subject of Christian giving and its relationship to the OT law of tithing, they realized that compelling the brethren to bring tithes was not a Christian practice. Now they encourage one another to give freely to the poor and needy while supporting genuine servants of the gospel out of glad hearts.

There were about 10 of their leaders who gathered for instruction on New Testament leadership, prayer, and ministry over the three days we were with them. It was so refreshing to meet with sincere brethren who not only were hearers of the Word but actual doers of it.

Brother Titus and Yinnkah will be making another trip to teach again within the next month or so.

We thank the Lord for also making it possible to be able to reprint several of the titles that had been exhausted as the books are still very much in demand.

Back here in Sierra Leone, there has been a wide door for effective service open up in Bo, the second largest city in the country, situated in the heart of the Mende tribe of the southern province.

We spent three days there upon my return from Nigeria, and had the opportunity to preach to all of the prisoners in the penitentiary.

We conducted several Bible studies with interested students from the university there and I was able to do two live broadcasts on the radio station that covers the whole of the south. The open line question and answer session generated a considerable interest and I will be going once a month to conduct a two-hour Q&A over the air.

One of the brothers that I have been discipling had gone to Bo in October and began teaching a Bible study on campus. It was through that means that he met one of the lecturers, a sincere and godly Christian in his forties who had many questions about the nonsense of "prosperity" teaching rampant here in West Africa.

This brother, Ngegba [pronounced: gay-ba], has eagerly received the Word as a famished and parched man. He is with us now in our home as he wanted to spend the holiday season with us in order to study the Scriptures together and have his numerous questions addressed. It has been a real blessing for all of us.

We are trusting that the Lord will use this opening for the spread of true Christianity in this needy part of the country.

Thank you very much for your continued prayers for the progress of the kingdom of heaven in this part of the world.

**With all our love,
Steve and Patti Phillips**

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