

“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

September 2007

Steve & Patricia Phillips

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Most of Steve’s publications, including *Workers Unashamed* (now including *phase 2*) and *Black but Lovely: Thoughts on the Song of Songs*, can be read and/or downloaded by visiting the [Gospel for West Africa website](#), Then click on the [Publications tab](#), and select from the titles offered.  
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Dear Brethren,

Jesus is unlike the prophets of old. They, like the moon, only reflected for a season across the night’s sky upon this darkened world light derived from the sun. When its monthly cycle had run its course, it vanished, only to be succeeded by a new moon in its wake.

The Lord Jesus is categorically other than these periodic and temporary representatives of God. He is the Sun of Righteousness, risen in its strength [Mal.4:2]. These are His own words: “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the Light of life” [Jn.8:12].

The moon is cold and lifeless; no man can grow his crops by the light of the moon. But the Sun sends its life-giving rays upon every man in every land. In its brightness we can progress upon our path without stumbling.

The radiance of the Sun outshines all that of the moon so that when it is risen, we cannot see and do not need the light of the moon again.

No prophet ever dared to speak a message like that of Jesus because they themselves were not that light; they only reflected the light of Christ. He is completely different than any other man and the servants of God

themselves. If you will walk in His light, you will see clearly the straight path for your feet, leading to everlasting life.

This impromptu message was preached and interpreted into the local dialect to some 15 Muslim men who had gathered for a traditional naming ceremony eight days after the birth of the child. Several imams and sheiks participated, contributing selected Surahs from the Qur'an and blessings upon the baby boy.

Following prayers in Arabic and partaking of an idolatrous sacrifice prepared in a calabash [which we declined], I was asked by one of the imams if I had a word for them from God.

For most, this was the first time that they had heard a gospel message. At least four of them had been preached to on other occasions by brother Peters and others who are with us.

Afterwards Musa Mohammad, the father of the newborn, implored me to stay behind in order to hear more of the Word of God. We were joined by Sheku Kamara, and for 45 minutes the nature of sin and of Christ's substitution of Himself in our place was carefully explained.

As Musa understands English, we had him read for himself the various passages from the Scriptures. We left him with a copy of my book, "The Gospel for Muslims," along with a New Testament. He urged us repeatedly to come and see him again in order to hear more of this "good news." By God's grace we shall.

We had a wonderful time with four young men from ACTS in Yakima, WA. They are helping some Sierra Leonean believers in establishing a church fellowship in Regent, our former place of residence before moving to the bush in the provinces.

Several of the brethren that we had been meeting with when we had our house church meeting there are now attending this gathering. We were greatly encouraged, as their teaching is sound and Christ centered, quite in contrast to much of what prevails in the West African context.

It is very encouraging to us to witness how the Head of the church coordinates the members of His body to plant and water while He causes the growth. Our children and the disciples with us greatly enjoyed the three days they spent with us here.

Early in July our personal vehicle was involved in a single car accident. On the muddy unpaved road near our home during heavy rain, we met

with a section of washboard which sent the vehicle from side to side. When it hit a deep pothole, it rolled over two and a half times, coming to rest on its side in the ditch on the other side of the roadway.

All the children were on board, along with Gladys and Peters. Seth, who was standing in the bed of the crewcab, was thrown out and, as far as we can tell, actually had the truck roll over on top of him though without touching him in the process.

The roof was crushed, nearly all the glass shattered, and the doors jammed and dented, but mechanically it escaped damage. With many thanks to God, all the occupants sustained only minor injuries and all have recovered with no residual effects. We are in the process of having the vehicle repaired presently and hope to have it back within another week or so.

Things have been very tense and uncertain in the country during this election season.

About two weeks ago now my briefcase was stolen from me in broad daylight within sight of some 50 onlookers who offered no assistance to recover it or apprehend the thief.

Thankfully, brother Williams and Ruthman, who were with me, were able to retrieve the bag. Ruthman sustained injuries from the thief who pursued him, though he is quite alright now.

A politically motivated riot broke out below us on the streets when Williams, Peters, and I were again in Freetown on September 1st.

We were at the internet café on the second floor and witnessed the conflagration of stones, machetes, clubs, knives, and guns. There were several injuries, some serious.

When the guns began firing we flattened ourselves on the floor until the police who eventually arrived had ceased firing tear gas and ammunition. All of central Freetown shut and bolted their doors along with the thousands of street traders who packed their wares and ran in terror for safety.

We bless the Lord for His marvelous protection both during the rioting and in allowing us to reach safely back home that very evening to our village 105 km from Freetown.

I will not be able to send this to you until after the runoff elections take place on the September 8. We are praying that there will not be manipulation of the results as the populace is at the boiling point and will undoubtedly spill over into widespread violence if that occurs.

We are so appreciative of your continued prayers for us as we endeavor to preach the Word of God and raise up faithful men for the work of the gospel in this part of the world.

**Love,
Steve and Patti**

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