

News Update – November 2007



Dear friends,

This is special message to thank as many as have prayed and/or supported us during our trips and needs in different ways. Thank you very much - the Lord heard you.

We have just been reflecting on the career of David, a man after God's heart – God was with him, because his focus and trust had been in God. David was successful – it's mentioned several times in 1 Samuel 18 – but success only landed him in trouble as Saul became angry, jealous and afraid. Many years of danger, hardship and struggle followed before God was ready to give him the kingdom for which he had been anointed. Through all of this David maintained his God-focus and faith, waiting for God to remove Saul rather than taking the opportunities he had to do it himself. In Grace & Light we see David's as an example to follow. We too face opposition and difficulty, and we do not see everything we would like to see coming to pass, but like David we want to remain faithful even when it is not so easy.

Praise God with us that he has started to take us to the next stage of the vision he gave us four years ago: Grace & Light is now genuinely international. In early October Dr. Hopkins and I traveled to Chad to train our first two volunteer teams in Ndjamena. On our last day there we were able to help them enter their first church: 153 out of the 350 people in the church tested, most of them were open with their HIV status meaning they are Grace & Light members. Please pray that they will set an example of sharing life in Christ that other churches will be eager to follow. Pray too for the team leaders, Archippe and Patrice, and for the four people who committed themselves to being board members, and to the task of organising Grace & Light in Chad.

Since then another team has been trained in Nigeria, at New Bussa near Kainji in Niger State. Commit them also to the Lord. We have recently been involved in encouraging the team at Maiduguri, and most other teams face similar problems. Making teams effective by surmounting the many different problems they face is one of our biggest challenges.

The continuing shortage of funding doesn't make the task any easier. Pray that we will use the money we do have in the best possible way, and that God will entrust us with more. I am glad to know that we are already achieving our goal of using little to do much.

We have friends in both France and the United States who have volunteered to set up Grace & Light in each country, initially with a focus on fundraising. Like our Nigerian teams, they are all doing it in their spare time alongside many other things – and it isn't easy to move forward in such circumstances. We face the same situation in England with our volunteer team, trustees and the committee that needs to be set up to oversee the implementation of ministry: only God can bring

everything together. We praise him for Oakham School in the English Midlands, which has made Grace & Light its main charity for this academic year – it is with money that they have raised that we are able to purchase test kits to keep the work going. The chaplains have invited me to spend some days with them in January to help them put across the case for Grace & Light. I also hope to spend a little time doing some ministry things. We also thank God for the regular and ongoing support we receive from OM and AMEN – you are making a difference.

The annual staff development retreat has just closed. We thank God for our Nigerian staff team of nine, and pray that God will increase our faithfulness and fruitfulness in the coming year. Pray too for God's leading as plans are made for 2008. Our programme officer, David Abidan, has resigned in order to undertake further theological study: please ask God to bless him and also to lead us to the right person to continue where he stop. We are hoping for someone who already has considerable experience of leadership in ministry and deep spiritual maturity.

With much love in Him,

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