

January, 2006

Blessed New Year!

It's time to go back to Congo. On February 8 we leave for the 8500 mile trek to the bush of Africa. We don't want to go without your blessing, your prayers, and your financial backing. Half of a year will have passed by the time we return! By staying away too long, we give Satan a foothold: more time to roar confusion, discouragement, accuse the brethren, whisper lies, and reek havoc among our staff who are composed of diverse tribes. We never know what will have transpired in our absence, so better to have shorter than longer intervals between our times there. Will you pray for us to be circumspect in our going and joyously embrace all that this trip holds, whatever that may be?

Through your prayers we have seen the Hand of God dispel our enemies, disarm Satan, unleash His glory with great power and might, and unite us with our national staff of 101 men and women who serve Him daily at Nkara, Iwungu, and Gombe. We go in the Name of God whose right hand is full of righteousness, Ps 47:10. We pray Isaiah 31:5 and insert ours and our staff names in this verse: "Like birds hovering, so will the Lord of hosts defend (us); He will protect and deliver (us). He will pass over and spare and preserve (us)." Our Lord God is a Mighty Warrior, and so we remind ourselves to "Let be and be still, and know (recognize and understand) that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations! I will be exalted in the earth!" Ps 46:10. He will choose how He will be exalted, and we want to be able to go with His flow.

Evangelism, the Women's Literacy Center, the three Bible institutes, our staff and a myriad of other involvements and interests await us. Radio Nkembo continues to bless hundreds of thousands of people ten hours a day, seven days a week in the middle of no where on the mission station of Nkara. Letters continue to pour in. Students continue to come to Bible school. Some have been turned away at Nkara because the dorm is so full. No staff member has died this year. Oh! the mighty grace of God that He continues to give without end. Isn't it mind boggling to think that the Lord has an endless supply of love, grace, and mercy? He just never says, "That's enough for today. You've had your fair share"?!! His mercies are new every morning. Great is His faithfulness.

To you we owe deep gratitude for the way you stood with us in 2005. We still are indebted to MAF and are behind with national staff salaries, but considering what the arrears were in August, there has been tremendous progress. We thank God that we can be extensions of you, and remind you what Hebrews 6:10 says, "For God is not unrighteous to forget or overlook your labor and the love which you have shown for His name's sake in ministering to the needs of the saints, as you still do."

In His Grip,
Jim and Nancy Smith