

Journey Together

(A Monthly Prayer Guide for Dale & Florence Johnson's prayer partners)

October 2009

Faith Journey

Wow...I almost couldn't believe what I was hearing. As I sat in a hot, dark house with a heavy heart at a local Bible school, I was stunned. Could faith in God be that overpowering and all-consuming? I still have a lot to learn.

It's certain; sometimes we missionaries are taught and ministered to more than we can teach and minister to others. Coming to Africa has given us the opportunity to see extreme faith in action and meet giants of our faith hidden in the African bush. It's such a huge blessing that we can never forget.

In Oswald Chambers' *My Utmost for His Highest*, he makes a statement about our discipleship of Christ: "And the strictness of the rejection that He demands of me allows for nothing to remain in my life but my Lord, myself, and a sense of desperate hope." (Sept 27) How can that really be true? Is it true of me, or do I hold on to more?

Here's the story. Last weekend, we had our board meeting for the CAH. We had several out-of-towners come in for the meeting, including Albert, the director of the main evangelical Bible school in Fada, which is about 5 hours away. The night he returned home from our meeting, his 14 year-old son died suddenly and unexpectedly. We could hardly believe the news, and felt terrible that Albert had missed his son's last two days on earth.

So we went to Fada to visit Albert's family and offer our condolences. As we sat in the family's living room, I really didn't know what to say, so they did most of the talking. They explained that, while the death of their son was difficult, they had to believe that God could redeem the situation – that God had a bigger plan for them. They cited ways in which their Lord had protected their family and prepared them for their son's death. No, it didn't seem fair that their 14 year-old would be taken from them so suddenly...but they knew that they had to trust God and wait on His consolation and redemption.

As I left, I thought, "Wow, I don't think I could react with that much faith and maturity." Sure, maybe after a couple of months, the edge wears off of our emotions. But I could see that their emotions were still raw, just a few days after the death. Nevertheless, their faith is not based on emotion, but in a deep trust in the Lord.

It's one of the great perks of missionary life. We get to see some "extreme faith", and learn from Christian brothers and sisters from all over the world. Here's a family who can meet Oswald Chambers' challenge.



Caleb explores our pastor's rice fields

Life Journey

Personal and ministry-related events to pray for this month

October 2: First day of school at the CAH deaf and blind school; Caleb, too will be attending the local Christian pre-school.

October 14?: Jeremie from Switzerland joins us for an 11-month term in Mahadaga

October 25?: Betty returns for another 6 months in Mahadaga

Prayer Journey

Weekly prayer topics to guide you in your prayers

October 1-7: Wisdom, discernment, wisdom, discernment...we could never have enough in the daily situations we face here.

October 8-14: Pray for perspective and direction in our daily activities; that we wouldn't be distracted by circumstance

October 15-21: Continue to pray for the unity of our ministry team in Mahadaga (a prayer near and dear to our hearts)

October 22-31: Pray that we wouldn't lose motivation and energy coming up to our departure

Specific prayer requests and praises

Praise for a safe trip to Niamey in Niger and a great (but short) visit with Andy and Leron from CURE International

Praise that Ounteni, the deputy director at the CAH, is just about back to full health

Praise for good health for our family, even during this bad "malaria season" (and despite fatigue)

Praise for the Lord's faithfulness in hearing our prayers, even the "small" ones, and answering them, even when we don't recognize it.

Pray that we would finish our first term well: for Dale, that he would be able to finish 2010 planning for the CAH and performance evaluations for all 34 employees; for Florence, that she would finish newsletters, Bible study materials, and packing up the house

Pray that details of our trip home would come together – that all of the tickets, flights and visits would be planned before we leave.

Pray for the ailing finances of the CAH – we have a new school year and lots of new cases, but need to have the funds to continue

Pray for Albert Yonli and his family as they continue to mourn the death of their son.

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