

June 14, 2008

Mark 12:30, 31

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."

"Let us sing a song to welcome our guest speaker today, our beloved Superintendent." No overheads, no power point, no songbooks, just an enthusiastic song leader who proceeded to sing out joyfully in the mother tongue of the superintendent, but not the same one as his nor the majority of the congregation.

I vaguely recognized the tune but not enough so as to be able to sing along in my mother tongue, its original version. However, my thoughts were too taken with the significance of the choice he had made for me to focus in on that challenge. While I was still pondering all of this, the song finished and the superintendent stood up to speak...but he didn't speak. He started to sing a song in the mother tongue of his host congregation. (They like to sing a lot here!) He paused after singing the first sentence to briefly say how much this song meant to him and why. Then he started singing again. Soon the entire congregation was on their feet, joining in with gusto, their faces radiating joy.

To tell you the truth, other than remembering the text and that he said that this was the theme chosen for this church year in DR Congo, I don't remember much about what else he said during his sermon. He and the song leader had already preached the best sermon through their actions of mutual love and respect.

Praises:

I'm learning more and more about trusting God no matter what the circumstances. He still loves me even if prayers aren't answered when and how I would first choose. So I'm still on my feet most of the time. Sitting is easier but not easy. He provided my with a nice new computer in a most amazing way, but not the return of my stolen one. Thank you for all of your kind encouragement and enquiries. It made a difference.

My new neighbour who combines spiritual depth and humor in a delightful way.

In spite of many, many, many challenges along the way, Bishop Joshua Welongo has completed five of the seven annual conference for 2008. Early May it took an extra 1.5 days to drive to the conference due to being stuck at least 8 times. They had to spend two nights in the 4 x 4 stuck in areas where there are still armed conflicts.

Bishop Emeritus Jason Byaene is back home after surgery in Kenya.

Prayer requests:

Now that I have a computer, there are many, many things to catch up on. However, I suspect that my health improved the last few months because I wasn't able to do computer work hours on end each day. May I find the right balance.

The Kivu West Annual Conference is June 19 – 22. This time the known travel challenge is that the road ends about 7 miles before they reach their destination. The rest of the way will be by foot. May it be a conference of great blessings as they evaluate last year and plan for this one.

We are still seeking the best way to make a significant spiritual impact on the lives of children sponsored through International Child Care Ministries.

Refugees continue to return from Tanzania. They have nothing. Their homes no longer exist. Sometimes their property has been taken by others. Their country has changed dramatically during the past 11.5 years they were in refugee camps.

Thank you very much for your continued support. May God bless you.

In His service, Linda Stryker