



MISSION TO THE MAKUA

Cultivating Christian Communities

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The Exorcist

Jeremy, Martha, Luke and
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Prayer Requests

1. Wisdom to know what to teach and how to mentor people here.
2. For perseverance, joy, and fluency as we all learn Makua.
3. Women here. That a movement would start in which women turn their lives towards Jesus and minister to other women.
4. For the church in Opacho to grow in spiritual maturity and to reach out to their community.
5. For physical and spiritual health for everyone on the team.
6. That the new children's bible class at Opacho would be glorifying to God.

Just the other day everything was happening as normal. We woke up, we ate breakfast, we greeted our house worker, Ali. But today, instead of being cheerful, he mentioned that his sister was sick with "the devil". He actually used a makua word I did not know but when I pressed him for another meaning he said she was doing things she normally did not do- like stealing or insulting people. She was also sick with some pulmonary illness which they also attributed to the possession. Ali asked if he could be excused that afternoon to attend the dance for his sister that would make her better. I said yes and asked if I could attend to pray for her. He consented.



At five, we left home on bike and went into the bairros of Montepuez where we were supposed to meet up with a witch doctor who would perform the ceremony. I, like many other westerners, was very suspicious of what a witch doctor could do for anybody.

After a couple of hours of waiting at the home of Ali's sister the witch doctor arrived, somewhat surprised to see me. He began the ceremony soon after and covered Ali's sister in a white sheet while she sat down and held onto a lit piece of incense. The crowd of women invited to participate sat around her and started chanting and singing songs. Some time later Ali's sister began to sway around in a circle under the sheet and began to moan. This too went on for a while until she reached out from under the sheet and grabbed Ali's hand. This was his cue to stand up and give her counsel and reassure her about his support of her. In turn many women stood up and did the same- all the while she sat under that white sheet.

I was sitting ten yards away watching all this and praying that the Lord would give me wisdom about what to do. Was this to be a power encounter with spiritual forces or was this a learning time to see the spiritual bondage that people are in? Then, as if it were normal, they asked me to come and say something. I lifted up one last prayer trusting that the Lord would put on my lips what I needed to say. During my turn I asked them to stop chanting and said I was going to pray. I lifted up a simple Makua prayer (since simple was all I knew) asking the Lord to heal her because he was the only one with the power to do so and had already done so before. With that I sat down until it got really dark and I excused myself to go home.

What became of her? Well the next day I asked Ali how his sister was doing and he said she was better. I praise God that he had something to do with her. She like so many here are caught up in fear of the unknown- of sickness, demons, witchcraft, etc. Pray as we get further into ministry that we would be a bright light shining in immediate contrast to the great darkness here. JS





Ladies' Ministry

This year I have made a commitment to work closely with the ladies at the church here in town. This mainly consists of going to a weekly bible study and then visiting the ladies in their homes on other days. I have spent time with these ladies before but I want to invest even more time and energy into that this year.

The bible study was normally held in the church building and just a few faithful members were attending. This year we have decided to rotate meeting in different ladies' homes. This has already made a big difference. It makes for a much more relaxed atmosphere, one in which we can have fun and enjoy each other's company. The ladies also get to know each other better since we are in each other's homes and we are able to show

hospitality towards each other. With this format other neighbors feel more comfortable to join in, as well.

The ladies have asked me to speak several times but I told them up front that I would be happy to speak, but only once I could do it in Makua. That time has arrived. I have been able to teach several different times in Makua. Please pray for wisdom for us as we are often put in situations where we are asked to speak. There is so much to teach and it is difficult to know where to begin. Pray that the Lord will speak through us and touch people's hearts and lives. Pray for women here. Unlike other countries and people, men are much more attracted to church and the gospel here than women are. Pray that we will have wisdom to know how to reach women here with Jesus' good news. MS



Arturo, Cornelio, and Luis— our readers at the Opacho church.

The Reader

How did the early church handle being in a situation where there were very few bibles to read and just a few people that even knew how to read? People trained to read scripture. We are in the same situation here in Montepuez. There are just a few books of the bible translated into Makua-Metto and only a few people can read.

We have been really blessed in the last few days that the bible translation group here has decided to print a lectionary. This is a book with the date of each Sunday this year followed by a healthy portion of scripture in Makua-metto to be read publicly. They also put on a short training for people from different churches to attend and learn about the role of public reading of scripture. The men from the churches where we attend, such as Opacho

and Montepuez raved about it. For them it is like hearing the scripture for the first time, since it was in their own language. Genesis 1-11, James, and some portions of Matthew and Mark were included in the book- most of it previously unprinted, so we are getting our first look at these scriptures in Makua-metto. This is great news for us, too, as it provides a practical step in training leaders to stand up and talk about the word of God in their own language. JS



Festivities

My parents were able to come and spend Christmas with us this year. It was so wonderful to spend time with them and to watch them interact with the kids. Luke and Andrew really enjoyed being around "Pawpaw" and "Grandma". We enjoyed showing them our home here for the first time. We hope to see more of them in the coming years since they have moved to Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and are a little bit closer to us. However, it still took them 4 days to drive home from here.

We celebrated Andrew's second birthday this month. What a joy to watch him turn 2 years old! We set up ours and the Howell's kiddie pools and let the kids have a swimming party. They had a blast! Although it may be cold where you are, we are right in the middle of the hot summer months here. We are praying for another great year for Andrew. MS



A very hungry caterpillar cake