

Medical Mission to Kenya with World Christian Outreach Summer 2009

By Kris Dodson

About a year ago my husband, Ray, who is an ER nurse, was describing to Stan Herpick, the president of World Christian Outreach, a wish he had. He shared his dream of putting together a team of medical experts and going on a short term mission trip to Africa. Stan enthusiastically passed on Ray's idea to James Kariuki, the director of New Dawn Orphanage and Community in Kenya. A year later, all of their



collaborated efforts culminated! On July 1, 2009, eight of us from Napa, CA partnered with several dedicated Christians from Kenya to not only treat the poor medically, but also preach God's Kingdom and administer healing through prayer! We experienced and delivered the power and love of God in very special ways – it was WONDERFUL!

Thika Prison

We were all shocked at the prison experience – but in a great way. Yes, it was primitive, but there was joy there! We women were ushered through the locked doors to the women who began singing praise songs in worship. About half of the women are saved! Kathy Luce and I spoke and Janet Newman got a scripture, while praying, that she shared with the ladies. We asked the ladies if they wanted prayer and if we could lay hands on them. They eagerly came forward. Violet Votaw said that she felt the power of God go through her while praying for one particular lady and she knew something was happening – either salvation or physical healing. After prayer, that woman got up and testified to giving her life to Jesus!

Mark Luce spoke to 700 men, all sitting shoulder to shoulder and knee to back on the ground filling the entire courtyard. Mark had the privilege of preaching the gospel that resulted in 60 men making decisions to give their lives to Christ! In prayer before the trip, Stan had been told by the Lord that many people would be saved on this outreach – we saw the manifestation of that promise during the very first day!

My favorite time was when we crammed 10 ladies into a tiny room and sat in chairs praying knee to knee with the individual lady prisoners. Some told stories of being falsely accused or being separated from family who did not even know they were in prison. We met mothers who did not know who was taking care of their babies that were left behind when they got caught in a crime. One precious 18 year old was raped by five men and then imprisoned when the men twisted the story and accused her of trying to smear their reputations. She is in prison waiting for her trial. She became a Christian while in prison and miraculously has forgiven the men. She was asking for prayer that the trial reveal the truth and she be set free. I asked the Lord for a verse for her and I got Psalm 33. In that chapter it states that the Lord loves justice!

Supernatural Healing

Philip, a teenager, came for prayer for his eyes, chest, and stomach. When I placed my hands on his chest and back, they got very warm. I asked Philip if he felt anything while I was praying for him. He said that he felt warm. I said that I thought God was doing something because my hands felt unusually hot. He said that he felt warm all over. I asked if it usually hurt to breathe and he said yes. I asked him to take a deep breath to see if it hurt still – and it did not hurt! I asked excitedly, “Really?! Really?!” Then I cheered, “Well, let’s pray for your eyes!” So I placed my hands on his closed eyes. I thought he might have vision problems so I asked him to look near and far to see if he could see well. He said that

he could always see well, but that his eyes ached. Then he said, “They do not ache anymore!” Yay!! That was soooo exciting for me!!!

Displaced People

After our time at the small church in Matathia, our team went to an IDP camp. Internally Displaced People from the crisis after the Kenyan elections over a year ago, are living in tents on a windy, dusty, arid plain at the bottom of the Rift Valley. They have no running water or sewer. These people had jobs, homes and farms, yet greedy and murderous neighbors from a different tribal background, incited by some political leadership, ran them off of their land. Most of them are too afraid to return to their rightful homes. Our team gathered under a large thorny acacia tree, where a church has been started, and we began our day with teaching about the Kingdom of God. Mark was inspired to teach this lesson throughout our entire ministry time. It was so “right on!” We would also introduce ourselves and share testimonies or sing. I got to share with the IDPs a picture that the Holy Spirit gave me right before we left on our trip. While praying, I saw, in my mind’s eye, a whirlwind, which was the Holy Spirit, and the whirlwind was actually a needle with a long piece of thread spinning around. It was sewing together two separate pieces. I felt like God was telling me that He is mending what has been separated – specifically the different tribes. (We can continue to pray that in!) What was challenging was to share the message of their need to forgive those who caused them to be where they were. I knew it would be hard, and I assured them that forgiveness did not mean they were declaring that the hurt done to them was not wrong – but that forgiveness means handing over the offender to the righteous judge, God, who will handle it, not themselves.

Tent to Tent Evangelism

At the IDP camp, we visited with families door to door – or tent to tent. I partnered up with Daniel, a young Kenyan man from the Matathia church. I asked him if he had gone door to door before to evangelize and he said, “No.” I told him I had not done it either, inferring that I was nervous, but he reassured me that God was with us and that He would help us and we could go confidently because of that truth! His response immediately encouraged me and we were welcomed into tents to offer words of encouragement, hope, and the Good News that Jesus redeems. We were welcomed warmly and were offered a stone or an upturned bucket as a seat in the dark and often smoky tent. One family we met had an unwed daughter who had just given birth to a baby three days prior to our visit. She sat on the ground with no back support with her legs straight out in front of her, holding a precious little baby. I can’t imagine what it must be like to live like that with no furniture or running water, or windows. And she had a smile on her face!!!

Many people explained that they used to believe in God but that they had backslid or they smoked, so they couldn’t be saved. I had to laugh when they would tell me these things. Because the Great News is that people who realize they are not good enough or have addictions are in the perfect position to enter into God’s Kingdom – I’d tell them that scripture says that the poor in spirit (those who realize they are spiritually bankrupt) are blessed because theirs is the Kingdom of God! Also, the story of the prodigal son and his father who runs to him upon his return is a great illustration of God’s overwhelming willingness to embrace anyone who has made poor choices in the past. He is the only source that can truly enable

someone to make good choices in the first place!~ Smoking, or any other addiction, does not have to be conquered by a person so God will accept them! Goodness by your own strength is not a prerequisite to entering the Kingdom. Come in lacking and let the Messiah conquer your messes!

Maximum Security Prison in Naivasha

It wasn't quite as scary as the scene in Lord of the Rings when Aragorn's army gathers before the gates of Mordor, but that's what I was thinking of when I first saw the maximum security prison! Long and tall grey cement walls with guard turrets every 50 feet and large iron doors the size of a house greeted us on property that housed 5000 inmates and prison workers. A funny thing happened when we were being introduced to the staff who would eventually lead us into the inner prison. When they introduce Violet, they pronounced her name as, "Violent." I had to correct them because it was just too funny! So we laughed together and entered the huge courtyard where men in grey and white striped uniforms were laying out their blankets to dry in the sun or carrying large loads of water or food in preparation for lunch.

Approximately 200 men, of the thousands, sat on the brown grass and we began our Sunday together with worship. The prison choir sang some very upbeat songs, complete with two old guitars and a drum set made from different sized buckets! The message on the Kingdom of God and redemption was proclaimed and six men immediately stood to confess their desire to be included in it! Afterwards, we set up the medical clinic. We were escorted to the end of the prison where we were led down a narrow hallway past men handcuffed together sitting on a low bench, waiting to be seen. I was told that these men were the condemned prisoners. I was shocked that several put out their hands to shake ours and had smiles on their faces.

God talks to a prisoner

I think the highlight for me on this trip was sitting knee to knee with the prisoners who wanted to receive prayer. After the prisoner was seen by Kathy or Janet, they would get any medications we had and then they would sit outside the pharmacy on a bench across from Violet, Sarah (our Kenyan sister) and me. We would hold their hands and pray for them regardless of whether or not they were saved, but we asked so we knew how to better pray for them. All of the men we prayed for who were saved became Christians while in prison. One young man told us an awesome story. He was not saved and had been in prison for a while. One night he heard a voice, which he knew was God, call his name and then said, "I need you." He told us that he was so afraid, and he started crying and asked his fellow cell mate to pray for him. The cell mate refused to pray alone and called some prison elders over. They all prayed for this man, but he didn't get saved then. Later, he heard God's voice give him just a scripture address – Matthew 11:28. He had to find a Bible and looked up the verse. It says, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest." He said that after that, he gave his life to Jesus! Isn't that amazing?! While in prison, serving a sentence for committing a crime, God calls out to a broken life and tells that man that he is needed and nothing he has done is too heavy for Him to not be able to handle. Wow! We got to see and touch redemption stories. It was so thrilling.

Thank You!

God set us up to minister to the individual in wonderful ways – and He partnered us up with some great Kenyan family members who were so gracious and giving. We all were stretched beyond our expectations, but were capable (by God's grace)! None of us had the credentials the Africans were giving us: doctors, counselors, pharmacists, etc. so we laughed and reveled in our newly promoted status – but we are just ordinary people, on an adventure with our Heavenly Dad who enables greatness through the greatness of His Kingdom in which we are ambassadors.