

May 2013

Mission to Cameroon



**Hope Outreach
International Ministries**

Sharing the wonderful hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Part One

Jeff Folz

Greetings from Africa!

Well, the Cameroon Missions Team has completed our first week of providing medical outreach and sharing the Gospel. We have been working hard each day, from sun-up to sun-down, in fairly high heat,

and with no running water (and several days without electricity) - but we are having a GREAT time serving the people of Cameroon!

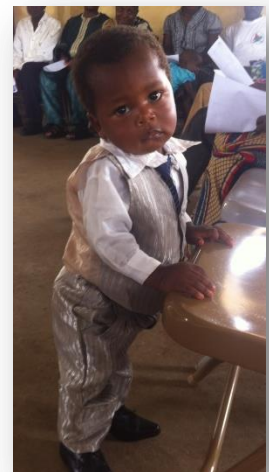


We spent the 1st week outside of Buea in the village of Bonjongo and will move to the town of Wotutu for our next week's outreach. During the days we provide medical care, counsel, prayer ministry, & Love on their amazing people. Then each evening we support Hope Outreach with their powerful, gospel crusades (Julius is quite a fiery, passionate preacher!) So far we have seen about 200 come to Christ, people have received healings, and the Holy Spirit has worked through our team to extend His Kingdom.... Pretty stuff!



Please continue to pray for us as we begin this next week with more of the same, as well as working with a couple orphanages. It is such an honor to serve in this land - to be His hands and feet. We are so Blessed to be here!!

Thank you for all your Love and support.





Part Two

Pamela Wood

Today marks one week on the ground in Cameroon and it's been a whirlwind of emotions. The transition from the polished climate controlled plane to the airport in Doula shocks the senses. I guess any new world traveler experiences tension at the thought of going through customs in a land where language can be a barrier and you are clearly the anomaly. People were, on the whole, friendly and welcoming, including the boys curbside who were adamant that they would help me with my bag! I had been advised that this would happen, but I was still very grateful that Julius had been able to meet us personally, as my soft heart would have been easily moved to accept their offer. Travel to the Chumbow's home in Buea was an eye opener to non western traffic. Eventually, we reached our quarters and were warmly welcomed by the members of the team who arrived earlier and all of the women helping at the house.

We had two days at the clinic in Bonjongo and they were wonderful. Paula quickly brought me up to speed on how to run pharmacy and work with the nurses to ensure the patients got the best possible information on the medicine so it could have its best effect. That freed Paula to work in her passion of counseling. Brian was quickly appointed crowd control, but it was unnecessary as the villagers coming for care were happy to see us, grateful for the care we were providing, and eager to meet us and shake hands. I am ashamed to say that I don't think I have often welcomed visitors to the States the way I was welcomed here. It was as if I was meeting my great grandmother and about to go home with her for tea and banana bread. Conversation has been easy, despite the language nuances of English/Pidgin/French we are throwing together. If you have never truly felt that all of God's children are living together in the palm of his hand, I encourage you to consider coming to Africa. It was humbling and exhilarating all at once to be daughter, sister, aunt, and mama to those I met simply because we were children of God together.

Leaving the clinic shows us in a sorry state, hungry, tired, sweaty, aching backs and yet with the sweet satisfaction of knowing that lives have been improved while we were here. Brian and I could not have had this effect on our own, no matter how big the hearts, so we are very grateful that God moved so many hearts to donate toward this effort of sending us and place funds in the hands here to purchase medicine, rice, salt and more. I wish I could bring you all back to see what your gifts are doing. Pictures will have to suffice for now, so here is a sampling of what we're experiencing on the ground.



Families register each morning, taking a number so they know if they'll be seen that day. Pharmacy is the last stop after blood sugar testing, weight check, nurse, doctor, eye glasses, and counseling. Our focus is on whole healing and restoration, so medical care is only the first step. We are fortunate to be here with HOPE where we have not only nurses, but a plethora of pastors ready to counsel patients on the true and complete healer, Jehovah Rapha!



Miss Jerrice Prince grabbed me during a lull in the clinic on Saturday to take me to a house behind the building where we worked. The women were preparing lunch and were eager to test my cooking skills. I admired the aroma of the ginger and garlic they were preparing, sampled the roasted plantain from the fire, and then they all had a good laugh that I wasn't strong enough to stir the big pot of cassava they were cooking.



I so admire the people here for being strong and yet maintaining soft hearts for the Lord. They are living difficult lives and are blessed to have the encouragement of their village churches who pastor them faithfully. Many of the people we meet during the day are returning in the evening for the crusade meeting and seek us out to let us know they've been touched by the ministry. The two girls in the picture above were from Bonjongo, but came to Wotutu because their families were active in ministry and include the children in the activities. They were eager to tell the stories in their Salvation necklaces and receive a sticker for their efforts. There is a children's program in the evening

alongside the adults, so the Gospel message is accessible to all.

Last night in Wotutu, I stepped out and joined the children's event and had great fun. The Holy Spirit is a palpable presence here. There is life in the air, with all of its positive and negative experiences. Everything feels bigger, stronger, louder, sadder, happier, more intense than at home, no one holds back. I pray I will be able to hold on to that increased awareness when I return home. While I've been



typing this, the girls here at the house have been working on my hair. They've given up on cornrows for my white curly hair and have settled on a single fat plait and turban. Off to outreach to dance before my Lord!



Part Three

Jerrice Prince

Wow! What a journey thus far. Started with delayed flights, and I really had my doubts if I would even leave New Orleans, but God had the path already paved for us. He routed us in a different direction, but we arrived safely (without luggage, but it eventually came a couple of days late).

The clinics have been great. The village people of Bonjongo were simply lovely and appreciated everything we did for them the first week. And the Crusades each evening were awesome as we watched God's hand move upon the area.



We began in the village of Wotutu this past week and have been looking forward to what God has in store for us. Even while passing out tracts and inviting the residents to the outreach, a man asked Pastor John and I how to know this God – and we led him to the Lord.... Awesome!

Bonding has gone extremely well. The people on the ground here in Buea have opened their arms and hearts to all of us. What a Blessing.

Keep us in your prayers as we continue to be obedient servants, called by the Lord and sent out with your prayers and support. Also, please pray for the people we are ministering to, as a curse was placed on this region years ago.

Thank you and Love to all.

Jerrice





Part Four

Paula Stone

So, here I am, a first timer as an International traveler on a mission's trip to Africa. Everything will be a new adventure. The longest I've been on a plane is 5 hours, and this flight was a total of approximately 14 with one layover.

We arrived at Duola airport around 1:00 am Monday morning, prepared to encounter a flurry of people in an area with limited capacity. Though tired from a very long flight, our adrenaline rose to the occasion, as we scrambled to be alert, vigilant and ready to maneuver a very crowded space, with Julius as our fearless leader. Thankfully, and by the Grace of God it was not what we expected, the crowds were no longer a "threat" and pockets of space to move around made the transition a little less daunting, and our concern for our luggage, less imminent. Managing the "bag boys" was another story, they were persistent in their attempts to make money. Their efforts proved futile.



We made it to the parking lot, where we were strategically assigned to our vehicles. The vehicles left to initially go in two different routes and to reconnect at the first "check point". Jerrice and I were in the back seat, quiet as 2 church members, as we wondered about our fate. It was a bit unnerving as we felt like "valued" cargo that required such security measures to ensure our safety while in route. But as we soon learned, being in the city at that time of the night made us vulnerable and potential prey for the opportunistic. The armed patrolmen who stopped us at three different checkpoints did not elate our feeling of apprehension. It was during these times, that I realized that a warm smile and a firm hand shake could get you far (Smile). I never knew what Julius said to the patrolmen, but we were soon on our way. After a very precarious ride (bumpy roads, dust, and driving at fast speeds, sometimes on the opposite side of the road), we arrived at what would be our home for the next 2 weeks (in Buea).

The gates opened and we entered to meet a "staff" of warm and friendly ladies who were eager to assist us with our items in getting settled, at least for the night. These ladies faithfully served in many capacities (cooking, cleaning, shopping, and so much more). They were the warmest and most inviting people I had ever met. I didn't feel like a stranger or a guest, but family, and sister, or mother perhaps. And while some minor difficulties existed as we tried to understand one another, it did not disrupt our ability to connect at a heart level, and language was soon no longer an issue. They spoke French, English and Pidgin.



The next morning (Tuesday) was filled with planning activities. We walked to HOIM's Outreach's Clinic, which not far from our home. We met Dr "Al" who ran the clinic with a nurse and other staff. We took inventory of the medications, personnel, equipment (glucometers, Blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, etc), and we developed a preliminary floor plan for the workflow that would guide the influx of patients who would come to receive medical care and spiritual counsel at the first village of Bonjongo.





Another part of laying the ground work was to visit the Chief of the Village of Bojongo. This was a very important aspect that would affect the impact and level of receptivity we would have with the villagers. It also provided an avenue of communication as the Chief sent his counselors back to their respective areas to share with the villagers what was available to them this week and encouraged them to participate. It would also carry an inherent message of protection us while in his Village. One could see the observance of

protocol and cultural traditions. As we arrived at the Chiefs Palace, we all were directed to a seat and the Chief was centered in the front area. Introductions and speeches were made and presents (rice, beans, books, bibles, etc) offered. The Chief was very welcoming, open and supportive of our mission.

By Tuesday Jeff had arrived and Thursday, Pamela and Brian were on board. So the whole team was together.



So for the next 4 days (Wednesday – Saturday) from 8am – 1 (sometimes 2:30) we set-up and ran the clinic. The stations included registration, weight, blood pressure, blood sugar, doctor visit, eye exam, counseling and then the pharmacy where they received their medications. We had help from some local nurses and student nurses, an optometrist and

Pastors, who provided spiritual guidance that in some cases led to presenting the Plan of Salvation. The Pastors were knowledgeable of scripture and passionate about their “call”. The clinic ran pretty smoothly and was a blessing to see so many receive care for their medical needs and even more exciting to witness people give their lives to Christ. We also provided oral hygiene products (toothbrushes, toothpaste, soaps, lotions, deodorant, etc) as well as clothing, toys and education materials.



Each day after the clinic, we would pack-up the medications and return home for what was to be a break before going back out for the

evening Crusade. However most times this break turned into a planning time for the next day – ensuring we had enough supplies and making improvements to our process, an opportunity to walk the village handing out gospel tracks, visiting orphanages or the homes of some other Cameroonian family.

The same process occurred the following Tuesday at the Village of Wotutu. Over the 8 days that we provided aide through the clinic, we served over 1000 patients, and several gave their lives to Christ, some overcoming some pretty significant strongholds (sorcery, witchcraft, etc.) and others converted from other religions to Christianity.



The rough and bumpy van rides to the Crusade were overshadowed by the singing and praying that occurred enroute. It was all so natural to them. Their vehicle seating motto was "There is always room for one more". Now isn't that just like the Kingdom of Heaven. The Crusades were nightly from about 5:30 – 10pm. If you consider "African time", this means, the people started arriving around 7ish. But the rejoicing of the people was infectious, the messages were powerful and the presence of God was almost tangible, like falling rain that refreshes the soul. It would be an understatement to say that it was a "lively" service. People were being healed and delivered from all kinds of bondages. The curse on the land at Wotutu was being broken and people were experiencing liberation. Many came to Christ on each of these nights.



Saturdays were African night and so were dressed accordingly.



On average we got about 5 hours of sleep a day and the physical discomfort created by the environment (hot and dry weather, no running water or electricity, the food, etc) and exhaustion were constant, but none of this diminished the honor and pleasure that I experienced in sharing life with the people of Cameroon. These people in the midst of their poverty would give you whatever they had to show their gratefulness, love and appreciation, to these "wealthy Americans". Reminds me of what Jesus said about the woman who gave her two coins, "*She has given more, for she gave out of her poverty, and you gave out of your wealth (paraphrase)*". I guess I felt that way when a mother gave me bananas to express her gratefulness for or aide -or any of the moments when someone wanted to give us something – They gave so much more than we offered. How can you fathom this, except to say that they have learned that whatever the circumstance – God's grace is sufficient and His love knows know measure.

There is much that I will absorb and learn from this visit, and I want to thank you for your support, prayers and encouragement in making this opportunity a life changing event in my life.

I had the opportunity to briefly interview one of the Pastors who providing counseling at the clinic. I believe you would appreciate hearing from his perspective:

Question: What is the impact of HOIM?

It's a great work, wonderful; we have never had this opportunity in this place. Others have come to preach only and they left our people skeptical. HOIM's approach is so welcoming. No one can miss the purpose – so real and beneficial. The people "see" more "Truth". It's practical, and tangible from the Bible. Even the government has not been this helpful. They ask for money that people do not have. But with HOIM, they see the love of God through the Gospel, medical help and all the other gifts. The impact will be felt from now for years to come. Our Joy.

The past visitors were unable to reach some nobles. HOIM's strategy and effort enables the invitation to be widespread to all levels of society – a wider work is being done. Resistant people are coming forth. It's miraculous.

The people do not esteem the Pastors here as doing something important. They will do anything else to avoid responding to a gospel invitation. Through HOIM's efforts, no life has turned down the invite. At 2 am in the morning, Pastors are at the clinics praying for the day, the work. The patients show up early. It's been the best ministry outreach endeavor.

Questions: What is the impact on the local Pastors?

The people see other Pastors and missionaries believing and they see it as being real and as a result, are more open. HOIM's ministry validates the efforts of the local Pastors. The people see the consistency i.e. What HOIM does, we do. The people have confidence in the collaboration that HOIM has forged with local Pastors and this partnership frees them to be more open with their needs and receptive to the Gospel. It becomes real to them.

Question: How does the Crusade impact the overall mission?

Massive turnout because of the day activities (clinics), they want to hear the undiluted Word of God. Want to see- if it is going to work. People have been respected and they are happy. The people are not distant, challenging, rejecting or augmentative. The ground is prepared.

To see a chief give his life to Christ, praying and sitting among the people is unheard of. Formerly the chief found it humiliating to sit among the "subjects". Personally visiting the chief has soften their hearts and this encourages others to come.

Part Five

Brian Wood

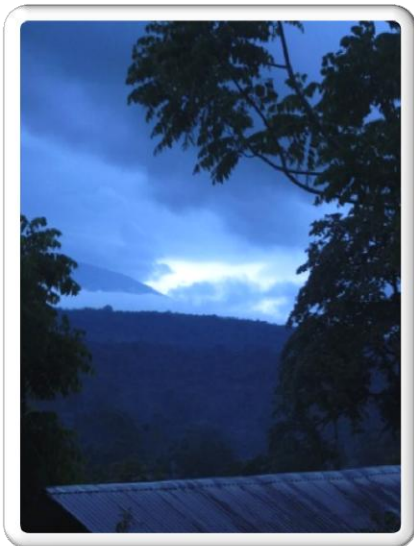
Hello, HOIM supporters! I suppose through procrastination, the honor of writing the last of the teams updates falls to me. Well, we've been home for a week now so maybe that gives me a slightly different perspective. I think the rest of the team has done a pretty good job talking about the specifics of the trip, what we did, where we went, and so on. So instead, I'm going to focus on some of the ways that the trip affected me.



Like Pamela and Paula, this was my first-ever international missions trip. Talk about jumping in with both feet! It was also an amazing experience. We were overwhelmed with the hearts and spirits of the people we met. I think Pamela summarized it best when she spoke to the people in Wotutu during one of the Crusade meetings:



"Some people in America said we'd be bringing God to the people of Cameroon. But truly [they] have showed God to us."



From the moment we arrived in Cameroon, it was clear that this was going to be an experience like no other. From getting through and out of the (hot) airport, to the traffic leaving Douala, to the steady climb up the mountain on the roads to Buea, there was no question we had come to a new place.

Meeting the local team in Buea was comforting, as we could tell right away that these were people of God who would go out of their way to take care of us.

One thing that strikes me about the way our days were spent was the usefulness and need for both parts of the mission, the medical during the day and the crusade meetings in the evening. Interestingly, while there are practical aspects to each mission, the main focus is the same: demonstrating God's love to people. Love through the physical care we hope to show them during the medical clinics and then the spiritual care offered at the crusade.

And they are intertwined. With spiritual and emotional counseling during the medical mission and with prayers for healing during the crusades, HOIM is really demonstrating that God's love is for the whole person.

Going to the two villages of Bonjongo and Wotutu demonstrated to us just how purposeful the work of God can be in accomplishing his plan. Though they are only a few miles apart, the villages had a completely different spiritual feeling.

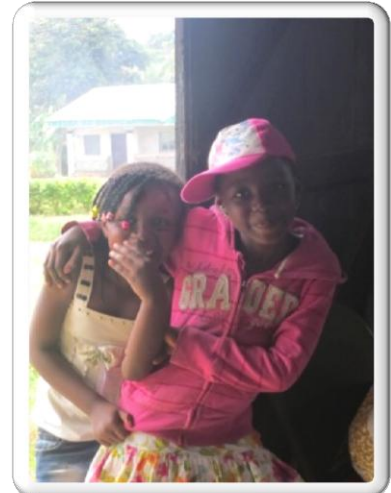
God moved powerfully in Bonjongo in the lives of individuals. Many came to Christ or renewed a commitment to God during our time there, which can't help but have an impact on the community.

In Wotutu, though, the feeling was much more corporate. God was moving in the village itself, making changes to the community as a whole. Indeed, the vision we received the first night of the Crusade was of the sun rising over the village after a long, and difficult night. We left with the feeling that God was indeed renewing the very land and people of Wotutu. I want to encourage all of you to remember the people of Wotutu especially in your prayers. There is still much for God to accomplish there.

Another area that touched the entire team, and particularly Pamela and I, were the children. From the little ones that

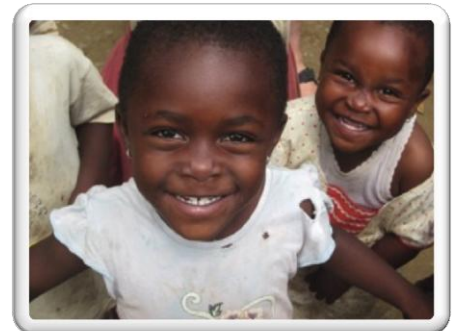


would run up to and hug us whenever we arrived for clinic, to the classes of four and five year olds at the little two room school behind the clinic in Wotutu, the powerful sense of God's love and purpose in their lives was strong. Here are children who are by any sense we would use quite "poor", but they radiate such loving hearts and open spirits.



Even in the orphanages we visited, we met children with enormous hearts and such strength that it's difficult to describe. The connections we made to the people and children of Cameroon will last a lifetime, certainly.

I could likely go on for many many pages talking about the specifics of the trip and the many ways that it impacted us and the people we met, and perhaps someday I will, but for now, I want to leave you with this:





The work that you support through HOIM is vitally important. Your prayers, contributions, and donations



are crucial to the lives of the people in Cameroon. But they are crucial to us and to you as well. We are all the children of God, one family, and one of the most important things we can do is to grow in and demonstrate love for one another. So through your support, you are instruments of God's love, and I want to assure you first-hand that it is felt. It's felt by the men, women, and children of Cameroon. It's felt by the pastors and the doctors and nurses. And it's felt by those of us fortunate enough to have been your representatives sent there.

From all of us that your love, prayers, and support sent to Cameroon this time and particularly from me with all my heart - Thank you. I pray God will bless you mightily.

- Brian Wood

