

Going Home and Making Changes

As most of you know I was back in the U.S. during the month of December and first part of January to take care of a minor medical issue. I find it interesting that when I return to the U.S. I always say that I'm going home, even though I don't really have a home there anymore. When I'm there I live out of a suitcase and whatever I can carry around from place to place in my truck. I go from place to place to talk about the work we are doing here, and rarely stay anywhere for more than a week at a time. But it's still home and it's still close to my heart. What makes it home is the many special people that invite me to be part of their family for a short time. Over the past couple of years there have been many of you who have taken me in, fed me, worked on my truck, even travelled with me, and provided the love and support that is what family is all about. Special thanks to those who gave me a place to stay on this trip and made me feel like family - Del and Love Hines (and Foster, who gives up his bed for me) in Greenbrier, AR; Jack Wilkie in Pritchett, TX; Chris and Shirly Brill (and Haden, who also gave up his bed) in Talala, OK; and Brian and Deann Wilkie in Golden, CO (who are truly my other family). And thanks to my brother Ken in Council Bluffs, IA, and of course my mom, Virginia Hielen in Gilbert, AZ who always takes good care of me.

I was blessed to be able to visit and speak at a number of congregations during my travels, including some congregations which I was able to visit for the first time. Thanks to the Guy church of Christ in Arkansas, Pritchett church of Christ in Texas and the Morton St. church of Christ in Denison, Texas. It was also great to have the chance to visit and speak with old friends in Mesa, Arizona; Lone Tree, Colorado; and at the Bear Valley Bible Institute in Denver Colorado. My greatest joy though comes from being able to spend time with my home congregation in Greenbrier, AR, even if it is just for a day. I look forward to making it back soon to visit those of you I missed on this trip.

Speaking of my next trip, I'll be returning home on June 6 in order to be a counselor once again at the Bear Valley Future Preachers Training Camp (FPTC). This will be my 5th year helping at the camp, which I believe is one of the great works in the church today - encouraging teenage men to become preachers and leaders in the next generation of the church. One of the changes I'll be making this year is to begin returning to the U.S. every six months instead of the originally planned every 10 months. It has been pointed out to me that I was running myself a little ragged and that I needed to take a little better care of myself, and hopefully this change will allow me to recharge more often in order to continue working here as long as possible. After FPTC I will be in traveling to Arkansas and then Arizona before returning to Ghana around the 9th of July in order to start our new school year at the Bible Institute.

Another change this year will be in the way I am reporting on the work here. It was also pointed out that my reports last year tended to be a little long as I tried to talk about everything we are doing in each report. So this year I'll try and keep each report shorter, focusing on just one of the areas of ministry we are involved with. But for those who still want more regular updates I have created Facebook pages for Tamale Institute of Biblical Studies (<https://www.facebook.com/TamaleChristians>) and Kingdom of Hope Children's school (<https://www.facebook.com/KingdomOfHopeSchool>) where I will be posting pictures, short notes regarding the work, and even some videos. If you have Facebook I hope you will check them out and like the pages. For those without Facebook I am working on how to post the same information on the T.I.A. blog page so it can be accessed by anyone. Hopefully by next month's report I'll have a link for this (if I can figure it out).

The work here continues, and I want to thank all of you who make it possible. Special thanks this month to the Guy church of Christ for supporting me for the coming year, and to the Mesa church of

the funds for Kingdom of Hope to purchase a grain mill that will assist the school both in preparing their own food as well as becoming more self-supporting. I also want to thank those congregations who have supported me throughout the past year - Colony church of Christ who have supported me since I was a Bear Valley Student, White Oak church of Christ, Leiper's Fork church of Christ, and Broadway church of Christ. A very special thank you to the Greenbrier church of Christ, who has been beside me every step of this journey. Going home will always mean coming back to you. Next month I will highlight some of the individuals who make this work possible. Until then, "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26).



Meeting with the leaders at the Kaadi church of Christ. Thanks to your gifts we will be helping the congregation roof their new building before the rainy season arrives.



Steven Ashcraft teaching Bible Geography at TIBS.



Our second classroom at Kingdom of Hope, the Jack Wilson Classroom, is completed and currently housing P2 students...



TIBS instructor Adjei Mensah visits with preacher Anthony about the shipment of tracts being sent to the church in Wa. Over 150,000 tracts have been distributed in Northern Ghana during the past 4 months.



...and construction has begun on our next classroom with the digging of the foundation.

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