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Dear Fellow laborers in the Lord's work,

01-04-06

We hope you all had a wonderful CHRISTmas season and will have a most blessed new year. We certainly want you all to know that we remember you in prayer often and thank you for remembering us. We also want to profoundly thank you for the financial love gifts that have helped keep Goff Ministries functioning. We ask God to bless you back abundantly in whatever way you need to be blessed, and we're confident that He will!

As you know, Vaughn, Irene, Ephraim, and Benjamin left for the Amazon the end of October. Vaughn's newsletter follows after this. Please read it, it will bless your heart. First though, I'll catch you up on what's been happening here in the U.S.

Larry, of course has been traveling all over to the church and home meetings. He went to Arizona in November to renew fellowship with old friends from 30 years ago. Just before he left, he had a tremendous dream that he wants to share with you. "In this dream I was being stoned. There were great stones coming at me. I was easily able to dodge them. The strange thing was, that that I didn't see anyone throwing the stones. This was on a street where the buildings were about two stories tall. To my left, there were three other men, also dodging stones like I was. I didn't recognize these men, so a little later I talked with them. I knew in my spirit that they were peculiar, different type men. I asked them, "Are you guys angels?" They looked at each other as if to say, should we tell him?" Then the three faced me and one of them spoke and said, "We are angels." Then I said, "I am so honored and humbled that you came to me in my dream. They looked at each other and smiled. The one that was speaking said, "You have it completely backwards, it is OUR honor and privilege to be with those servants of Christ who walk by faith." They said, "We have seen the Lord every day since the day of creation, but you have never once seen His face and yet you still believe. We do not bring the Lord nearly the excitement by our service to Him as do those who serve Him, strictly by faith, without ever having seen him. Tell the Body of Christ to study the account of Jesus and Thomas. "When I awoke, I was so filled with the Spirit that I wanted to mark the time. It was 2:30 A.M. Nov. 25th. Since then, the Lord has revealed to me that the stones were attacks of Satan, and it's obvious that the shield of faith will quench all the fiery darts of Satan.

Brothers and Sisters, I want to share with you some important things that will protect you in the days to come. It is so important that you receive all the strength from the Lord that you can possibly have. The Word says that it is HIS Joy that gives us our strength. And the way we can bring Him the most joy is to see sinners repent, for "there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repents than ninety-nine just!" This is also the strategy to keep principalities and powers of darkness on the defense. We who are filled with the Holy Spirit should never be in a state of mind of defending ourselves, but rather in a state of mind of offense, attacking, setting captives free from the powers of darkness. My granddaughter, Esther, and I experienced this so much over the holidays as we went out witnessing 5 days straight at midnight till 4-6 am. As we prayed with many individuals seeing them set free from the powers of darkness, we were filled with such anointing we could hardly contain ourselves. I don't believe we would have noticed if the Devil did attack us! Hallelujah! That's the joy and the strength you receive, that's what I'm talking about. I know that not every one can go out at midnight to hard places to witness, but just do what you can do, take every opportunity to witness one on one to any captive of Satan. This is the way to quench the fiery darts of Satan. If you are being attacked in any way, then the way to fight back is to witness to someone about Jesus. Then not only will you not notice the attacks, but you will be filled with joy and strength, and heaven will rejoice!

Larry has also make two more trips to the New Orleans area to minister. Then he and I (Betty) made a trip to Louisiana. I was so happy to see my dear friend, Juanita whom I have known since the 6th grade and not seen since 1957. We shared some wonderful times as children and now as sisters in Christ we are still sharing some wonderful times together. Juanita has Lymphoma cancer in the 4th stage. Please pray for her. She is undergoing chemotherapy right now, and later radiation. We went there to uplift her and her husband, Nelson, but they up lifted us with their great faith in the Lord. We know God is well able to heal Juanita, so believe with us for this healing miracle! She is a very anointed singer and musician and has a Bluegrass Gospel Album out. It has been a blessing to us.

Larry will be ministering around Abilene this next week and then he will return to Arizona to minister in a couple of churches there. We also are continuing our ministry to the Northwest Territories Canada by phone. We try and talk with most of the brothers and sisters at least once every two weeks. Winter is a hard time for them so we try to keep them encouraged. Rabbit and Teresa are doing well, winning more people to Jesus. Pat was able to really lift up Jesus at a scientist's conference where he gave a speech. Glory to God! They were there to discuss why it's so warm in the Arctic this winter. Pat related it to the end times according to the Bible. They all say they can't wait for Larry to get back up there! Praise Jesus!

Esther is doing great at college; she made the Dean's Honor Roll! Yea!! Praise the Lord Jesus! She is a bold witness for Him on campus. Keep her in your prayers as she tries to win these students to Christ. She has thoroughly enjoyed going out witnessing with Larry during the holidays.

Well, I'll close our portion of this letter sending you all much love and prayers. May God bless and care for each one of you. I will update Vaughn's letter at the end of it.

Larry, Betty and Esther

12/08/05

Dear fellow servants in Christ Jesus,

Lift your hands toward heaven and give a giant hallelujah! It is now official; I have my Brazilian permanent resident visa. It was only through a miracle that it was approved this soon. When Irene, the kids and I boarded the plane for Brazil, we fully expected to have to live out in Boa Vista for two months or more in order to complete the in-home visitation requirement that the Federal Police was lacking before it could send my visa application to Brasilia for review. Upon our arrival here in Boa Vista we immediately started looking for a house to rent so I could notify the Federal Police in order for them to schedule an in-home visitation with us. Finding nothing after a few days searching, I decided to go down and give them the address of the house where we are staying with a sister in the Lord, just in case they might do the visit quickly. I went down on a Monday morning to give them our temporary address. About 3:00pm that afternoon, I received a call from them and they told me that, after looking through my case file, they found out that it had already been sent to Brasilia. When I heard this, I was a little nervous because I knew that without the in-home visitation requirement fulfilled, my application would positively be denied. I prayed about it and decided to go down the next morning and find out what happened. The next morning, I went straight to Iramita, the agent that has been handling my case. "What happened?" I asked. "I thought you had to do an in-home visit before you could send my application off to Brasilia?" "Well," she said, "it says right here that an in-home visit was performed in August and it was satisfactory to fulfill that requirement. Your application was sent to Brasilia October 5th and was published in the national daily journal on October 25th." I took a big gulp. "What does that mean?" I asked. "It means," she said, "that your application has been reviewed and has been approved!" I could not believe my ears! I lifted my hands to the Lord and praised Him! It usually takes two years or more for a permanent visa application to be reviewed. Mine was reviewed and approved in less than a month! Praise the Lord Jesus! Thank you all for your continual prayers for this, I know that it played a big part in this wonderful miracle.

Now that this battle is over, I feel as if a heavy burden has been lifted from my shoulders. There are still many battles ahead, but I know that the Lord will continue to make a way through all of them. We are still here in Boa Vista though. Now that I am a permanent resident, my American driver's license is no good anymore. I need to get a Brazilian driver's license in order to be able to drive the truck back to the mission base. I have filed an application with the local transit authorities asking them to recognize my Texas drivers license as qualification enough to issue me a Brazilian license. If all goes well, I could have my license by the middle of next week.

Wow! So much is happening so fast, and yet there is so much to do. I think of all the work ahead, both physical and spiritual, and it seems that time is flying by so fast that there is no way that I will accomplish half of what I would like to accomplish this year. Brother Ciso came to Boa Vista last week to take back the monthly support we provide for those working at the mission base. He told me that all the people are anxiously awaiting our arrival there. We are hoping to get back to the mission base next week, as Christmas is right around the corner and we're expecting over one hundred people to travel to the mission base to celebrate in the new Umana building. We will need at least a week to get settled back into our home and prepare for such a large crowd. This will be a wonderful time of worshiping the Lord in the morning, playing native games such as archery and tree climbing during the day, and watching bible films at night. We are expecting the whole Carafauyana Indian village to come this year. Little by little the Carafauyanas have been turning to the mission base to learn more about Jesus. I hope to be able to devote more time to them this year to help them grow in the Lord.

Brother Ciso also told me that many of the pioneering Brazilian families are asking when I can come show gospel films in their area. This an open door to start evangelizing amongst these people that live miles and miles from nowhere down little dirt roads in the jungle. Many of them spend months or years never coming out to a town. It has always been one my desires to reach them with the good news of Jesus and shine the light of encouragement into their meager existence.

We have a lot of physical work to finish this year as well. The Umana building is not completely finished yet. We need to put a raised floor in before next rainy season when it is possible to flood that area if we leave the floor at ground level. We need to raise the floor about 24 inches to be out flood danger. We plan to build a 24-inch tall brick wall around the perimeter of the Umana and fill it with dirt. On top of that we will pour concrete. I plan to leave strategically placed holes in the concrete that removable wood poles can be inserted into. These poles will serve as hammock poles that visitors can tie their hammocks on to sleep at night. When needed, the poles will be removed leaving the Umana completely open for any other use. Our school, which is currently in our house, will also be moved to the Umana once it is completed.

One of the first things that absolutely must to be done is to improve our food situation. As some of you know, I found out this year that I have sustained high blood pressure. We found out last week that Irene has elevated blood pressure and high cholesterol. The high protein and starch diet that we have at the mission base now is just not what we need in order to stay healthy and capable of continuing this work. I have known this for some time but have not focused on it because the spiritual needs of those coming to the mission base have been all consuming. I can procrastinate no longer; I must take care of this issue. I need to be able to grow fresh vegetables at the mission base, and I have a confession to make, I have not had a lot of success at growing things. The Bible says that the Lord knows what we need before we ask, right? Well, a couple of months before I discovered that I have high blood pressure, the Lord put a man named, Jose (Joseph, in English), in my path that has been working for 30 years with the Brazilian government in the area of Amazon agricultural improvement. You would probably guess that I met Jose here in the Amazon, right? No. Guess where I met Jose? In Lubbock, Texas! He is there working on a sort of exchange of ideas program between the U.S. and Brazilian governments. I would have never met Jose; if it had not been for a tornado that dropped out of the sky and destroyed an experimental crop he was doing research on, forcing him to stay in the U.S. for another year. Now if you can't see the Lord's hand of provision in this yet, let me tell you the rest. Jose has a son that is getting his masters degree in agriculture at the University of Manaus, with an emphasis on Indian Black Soil. The Indian Black Soil project is researching how some native Amazon Indians tribes managed to take the normally nutrient poor Amazon soil and turn it into some of the richest soil in the world. Both Jose and his son (Juca) have opened their hearts and their vast knowledge of agriculture to the Amazon mission base and me. Juca is planning to visit the mission base this summer and give me some on site direction. With their help, I know we will be able to grow all the fresh vegetables we need. I praise the Lord for His provision!

Another project we are praying that the Lord will allow us to complete this year is the clinic building. Countless people have been attended to this year by the clinic, which is currently also housed in our home. The microscope the Lord provided last year has been a priceless tool in the hands of brother John who can perform exams for Malaria, worms and parasitical infection. We can treat most minor infection, sicknesses and lacerations at the mission base clinic. If a person comes to us with a condition that is beyond our ability to treat, we arrange for transportation to the nearest government facility that can treat them. Some local doctors have expressed an interest in performing medical missions to the mission base clinic if we can provide them with adequate working conditions. Our current plans for a small brick clinic with ceramic tile floors and counter tops with a stainless steel sink, should suffice to meet our needs and those of a visiting doctor. We will pray for an examination table once the clinic is finished. We thank the Lord that He has enabled us to help so many with such limited resources, for He has truly increased them as He did with the loaves and the fishes.

Excitement is coursing through my veins as I think of all the wonderful work ahead this year. Like a hunting dog straining against his leash in the early morning ready to start hunting for his master, I feel there are great things to be done for the Lord this year. I know the Lord has had a reason for us to stay out here in Boa Vista so long and I see some evidence of this in the lives of people we have ministered to while here, but I can't wait to get back to the mission base. Well, I must now bring the letter to a close. I close my eyes to whisper a thank you to the Lord for all of you who have been so faithful in your prayers and financial support to this ministry. I pray the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ over all of you in Jesus name.

Your servants on the front lines in the Amazon jungle,
Vaughn, Irene, Ephraim and Benjamin

01-04-06 Update: After Vaughn got his permanent visa and drivers license, they planned to head for the jungle the next morning. They took the family they had been staying with out to eat as a thank you for all their hospitality. As they got out of the car upon arriving back at the house, a dog grabbed Benjamin by the arm and bit him about three times. It looked pretty bad, all bloody and bruised. I'm sure poor little Benjamin suffered a lot. I have been dog bitten and it hurts very badly. Anyway, Vaughn immediately called us for prayer. He also sent out an Email for prayer. The next morning Benjamin's arm was so healed it looked as if a rose bush had scratched him! Glory to God! Thank you Jesus! Isn't God wonderful? Thanks for all those prayers. They were answered!

They loaded up the truck and made it to Baliza, where the pavement ends, and bought all the food supplies. But it started to rain heavily as they got onto the dirt road and continued to rain all night. So, they staying in Entre Rios with our son, Victor's, in-laws for the night, as it was too late to get the supplies upriver in the canoe. Actually it rained for 7 days straight, 10-12 inches a day. This is supposed to be the dry season so the was a freak rain. It completely destroyed the road. The government had not done ay roadwork since the end of the last rainy season so it was in bad shape anyway, and this bad rain finished it off. The truck barely made it to the river.

Upon arriving at the mission base Vaughn found that the well was dry and in need of repair, so he had to return immediately to Baliza to buy cement and materials to repair it. All the men went with him to buy their own supplies as they had been stranded back at the base without a way out for quite some time. Again it was hard going on the horribly muddy road, but on the trip back they all had to dig the truck out many times and just as they got to the river the transmission broke. The truck is not 4-wheel drive and we can see now that we desperately need one with 4-wheel drive. The Lord has provided some funds to add to what Vaughn can sell the truck for, once he gets it fixed, so do be praying that he will find the right vehicle to meet the need there in the Amazon. God knows where it is and just the price we need it to be. We will be using the funds that were donated for Larry's new boat motor, so do be praying also that God will replace that money so Larry can get the motor he needs. At present, Vaughn's need is much greater. The Lord is good and He always meets the need! Hallelujah!

Pray also for these heavy rains to stop, as it will be difficult to get their fields planted and will also make the mosquitoes worse, which in turn make the danger of malaria worse. Vaughn, Irene and the kids can no longer take the malaria medicine as it is poison and was building up in their systems and damaging their bodies. They need prayer for protection from malaria very much. May God put a bubble of protection around them that no mosquito can penetrate!!! For all those at the mission base also!

Vaughn said God blessed them with a kill of 4 pigs just before CHRISTmas, so they had plenty of meat to feed more than a hundred people that came to worship with them. They held many services, showed many movies, played many games and had a wonderful time of fellowship. Praise the Lord!

That's about all I can think of right now. Please remember to lift them to the Lord daily as they serve the Lord Jesus Christ in a very primitive place. Pray for their health too. Thanks and God's blessings back upon you each one!

Betty (for Vaughn and family)

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