

Thursday – May 19, 2011

RMNI – Dr. James Sutherland
2010 – 2011 Year End Report

Has it really been one year? I'm still pinching myself to make sure!! Whew! What a glorious year this has been. I am not the same person that retired in August 2009, nor the same person that landed in Sudan March 10, 2010. I have changed physically, mentally, and spiritually. My hopes and dreams for the Girls' School changes daily. I notice a handful of them really seeking to know more about Jesus. In my first year in Lohutok I primarily focused on the women by trying to witness and start a Bible Study. I failed at all attempts which was very depressing. This year I will begin a Bible Study a half an hour before morning assembly and announce that it will be on a voluntary basis only. Please pray with me for at least a handful of girls to come. Please pray for the destiny of Lohutok girls! One of my greatest challenges is to get them to understand that their path does not have to be marriage only. There are some very exceptional girls and I always talk about President Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson along with the first female governor of Sudan and of South Sudan after independence day. I try and drill the names of accomplished African women in their minds. Not only do they NOT believe their fate could be something other than marriage only, but the male and female teachers don't believe either. However, I will continue to show them pictures and tell them about women in the news, especially those in Africa.

Another great challenge for me is living and working with people of different life values and cultures. I am not in Sudan to change values and/or the culture of the people. I am here to point people to Jesus and let the Holy Spirit change them and I may not ever see any results but I believe God is a step in front of me helping me to plant seeds. When I remind myself of that fact I get all excited and the depression leaves me.

Dr. Sutherland asked me what I would say to African Americans about spending time in Africa. There was a time when I, a Christian, flat out stated "Why would I want to go to Africa?" I did not see the need and certainly had no desire to set foot on African soil. That was approximately 27 years ago and God used drastic measures to mold me, to fill me, and then to move me to South Sudan. There is so much joy in being obedient to the Lord's calling. I love the place where God has placed me to do ministry! I love the people, I love Lohutok and I love the weather. Now, as an African American, I have begun to appreciate, accept and love my ancestry! My father use to tell ME all the time "What you do not know would make a whole new world!" My first time seeing for myself black pilots was during my first trip to Sudan in 2006 and they were African. Recently, I discovered that a substantial amount of the slave trade did occur from the interior like Sudan. To my surprise, after explaining why my skin color was brown and not black to a classroom of Primary 6 students, one of the boys said "why don't you (Black Americans) come back (home)?" I encourage any African American to come at least once in your lifetime to help our people and just your presence is a huge encouragement to them; that first God cares and secondly that people of African heritage care. Many African Americans always boast of Africa being the Mother-land. In my opinion we must treat our Ancestral Mothers a little better than we do. Invitations by many Africans have been extended to all Black Americans to come, visit and share. They welcome us with open arms.

2011 Goals

1. Buy a printer for my laptop. It is too expensive to print and/or copy examination papers for each student for all the subjects.
2. Buy uniforms for the girls (50 in number)
3. Provide porridge for lunch every day.
4. Buy student books for Primary 5 level (15 books for each subject)
5. Start a school garden – this is probably the best solution to our feeding problem...so we welcome seeds to be sent to my address (P. O. Box 224, Kitgum Uganda, Africa) and priority list is as follows:
 - a. OKRA
 - b. Pumpkin
 - c. Onion
 - d. Egg plant
 - e. Squash
 - f. Leafy green vegetables
 - g. Green beans
 - h. Watermelon
 - i. Cantaloupe
 - j. Tomatoes

If anyone would like help fund one of these projects, please contact RMNI for more information.

This past year has been so rewarding for me with its challenges, disappointments and joys! I thank God for all the prayer support which is so important to me and this ministry. Please pray for the girls, the teachers, and me. I have been blessed with good health along with the many years of experience of other missionaries that I serve alongside. Lastly, I would like to request, family members, friends, brothers and sister in the Lord, senior citizens and anyone interested to write me letters of encouragement, wisdom, why your favorite scripture is your favorite scripture, how to start a camp fire without matches, advice on teaching Biology, and/or teacher/principal suggestions, etc. It lifts my spirits so much when I receive a box full of seeds or just a postcard!

God bless you!
Ellen L. Fox in South Sudan