

May 6, 2008

Dear Friends and Family,

Thank you for your prayers for me as I've traveled to Belize, begun work for PTEC (Belize Presbyterian Teacher Education College), found a house and bought a car. The first months here have been a whirlwind of activity in every area.

After taking the first week here to rest and settle in a bit, I began setting up and meeting with all the teachers enrolled in PTEC because they had assignments due. It was so good to reconnect with them. Three of them are siblings and all of their children (9 total, I believe) came down with the chicken pox. Here they were working full time and trying to complete course work for 2 classes and all their kids with chicken pox. I am glad to say they have all fully recovered after a month of sick children.

Would you pray for these teachers as they try to complete these assignments by the end of May? After two months of meetings and preparations for the kick-off of the new year at PTEC, we were informed that the government has asked us to close PTEC. I have chosen to quote Carla Stevens' comments on the situation:

“There are many mixed emotions after receiving the "final word" from Belize officials telling us to close the Presbyterian Teacher Education College. What does this mean? Can we still have classes, but with no college credit attached? Will anyone come if there is no hope that the government will recognize the credits earned? And now the rumor has it that the government is going to make it easier for teachers to get an "official teaching degree" (provide more colleges, possibly during the summer??)--but those courses will not be taught from a biblical worldview. As you can see, much is up in the air. Oh, yes, my favorite place to be!! Not! We will be meeting next week with the General Manager of the Presbyterian schools in Belize to discuss options. Please pray for clear direction and faith that rest completely in our sovereign Lord. On a positive note, I talked with a 9th grader at church this past week and rejoiced to hear how happy she was with "life" at Cornerstone Presbyterian High School. She loved English and social studies, but she especially enjoyed her Bible class! It was one of those moments when you know that God is at work --Even though some things seem to be going the wrong direction, you have to stop and say, thank you Lord that this young girl is learning about You and loving it!”

As you can see the challenges are great. ***Please pray that God would give wisdom and discernment to the Belize Presbytery and to those of us in MTW working with the teachers in our schools.*** God is most definitely at work here in Belize *and* where He is at work, Satan is attempting to stop Him. We know that God cannot be stopped. ***Please pray for us as we meet this Thursday with General Manager, Rafael Ku, to determine the role they would like us to have as we move forward.***

This past Friday I had the opportunity to work with the teachers and administrator at Concepcion Christian School on “*What Is an Effective Teacher?*” and I was very

impressed with the qualities they listed for an effective teacher. We discussed I Corinthians 10:31, 32 and I Peter 1:5-11. They are verses that guide us all to be effective in whatever we are doing. After our discussion, two teachers came up to me separately and asked if I would teach them how to integrate the Bible into all they teach. What a blessing that they desire to teach from a Biblical perspective. The need is great!
Pray that God will equip us with creative ways to do this.

I also want to tell you how grateful I am for God's provision of a car and for those of you who contributed to the Car Fund. I was able to purchase a 1998 Toyota 4Runner. It is white, 4-door, 4 cylinder, and automatic with 98,000 miles on it. I really enjoyed the experience shopping for a car here, even though I had dreaded it. Two days were spent looking at cars. One day with my team leader and another with our assistant team leader and a Belizean mechanic. I watched as they checked out everything about each car. They did everything but disassemble the vehicles. You were praying and God provided. I am so thankful for your willingness to follow God's call to give. Thank you for the privilege of watching God work in and through you.

At Pre-Field Training in Belgium we were repeatedly reminded to "look, listen, and with-hold judgment." I confess that I am struggling with this. At times I find it easy to do that, but at other times I fail miserably. It is very difficult not to judge based on our cultural norms. *Please pray that I will seek Christ and that in so doing, will see through His eyes and heart, and not my own.*

You are all in my prayers. May God hold you close to Himself and draw your near.

In His Hands,



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Pictures are on the following page.

