

## Dispatch Nine – Packet Two

09.22.06 East Africa Mission Dispatch #9 Packet #2 From Nigeria...

"Packet Two"

**Picture #5** Udobong, John, Sammy

**Picture #6** A wonderful response. From a church of 250 we had over 50 attend

**Picture #7** "What is responsible for the your reverence of the Word of God, for its centrality in your ministry?"

**Picture #8** My time in the Word and prayer remains vital and the sustaining "tool" in this ministry.

09.16.06 - Saturday

Up at 5:30 a.m.

Spiritual preparation for one day FDS. Here in Lagos "early to rise" is not a problem. The pagan mullah's begin their demon chant about 5:30 waking both the dogs and the roosters. I redeem the time though by having a good time in the Word of God. Whenever I hear their hellish cries throughout the day I plead the blood of Christ on their behalf that they might be released from satan's snare. A dog knows no other nature than his own so it is senseless to be angry at it, in the same way these poor men do their master's bidding and my response is pity and prayer, claiming II Timothy 2:26, "and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."

We arrive at the church at 8:00 a.m. with people already beginning to trickle in. By the first break over 50 have arrived for the one day Family Discipleship Seminar. The pastor takes me aside during the lunch period to share with me, "We have been waiting for this. It is one of the great needs of our church!" and asks if they block out a week, if we would return to do the another full FDS. God indeed blessed and we know this is because of your faithful prayers.

09.17.06 - Sunday

Up at 5:30 a.m. again to first do spiritual battle with the forces of darkness and then to turn my attention to the spiritual preparations for the days ministry. I am preaching on Ephesians 5:22 - 6:4 The Doctrine of the Christian Family. The response to yesterdays conference continued with standing room only for the church and overflow seating provided outside for the youth so that all married couples might be seated inside. There is a strong response to the Word of God and at the close of the service opportunity is given for repentance and rededication. A number of couples respond and there is a real sense of God's presence as affirmed by the testimony of many. At lunch the pastor leans close to me and asks in a sincere and earnest manner,

"What is responsible for the your reverence of the Word of God, for its centrality in your ministry?" Domonic and his wife, the sponsors of the conference continued on this vein by adding, "We feel like one of the reasons God has brought you to Lagos is to re-center our focus on the Word of God." They go on to say that the past marriage conferences they have been to have been filled with personality tests, surveys, statistics and creative ideas but scarce on the Biblical foundations upon which these tools must stand or fall. More and more we hear this statement and often the question which goes with it.

As I reflect on this a number of things come to mind...

First is the grace of God. In an age when the Word of God is pushed aside as too offensive or too difficult or simply not engaging enough - "people will not longer sit and listen to the Word of God, they need something to engage their attention". Eleanor and I praise God that He has preserved us from this tendency. So first and foremost we attribute this to the effectual and persevering call of God, that by His grace we have been blessed with a high and holy view of His Word. As God the Holy Spirit assures us in Philippians 1:6, "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus."

Next, I must attribute this to Sam Clark, missionary to Mexico and for whom my son is named. I had the privilege and blessing him early in my ministry and each year as he came through Texas on his furlough he would visit us in our home. There he would pound home to me the great reformed doctrines, the supremacy of the Word of God and press me to read the classic puritan and reformed authors, who would in turn do the same. He first and foremost stressed that any man of god must be a man of the Word of God.

I am ever mindful of my brother Rob's exhortation concerning time in the Word. It was my sophomore year in college that he warned me concerning "The bareness of the busy life", that you must always make sure you are taking in as much as giving out. This has been driven home to me by the most recent book I have been reading. In it is stated of the great Bible teacher and preacher D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones...

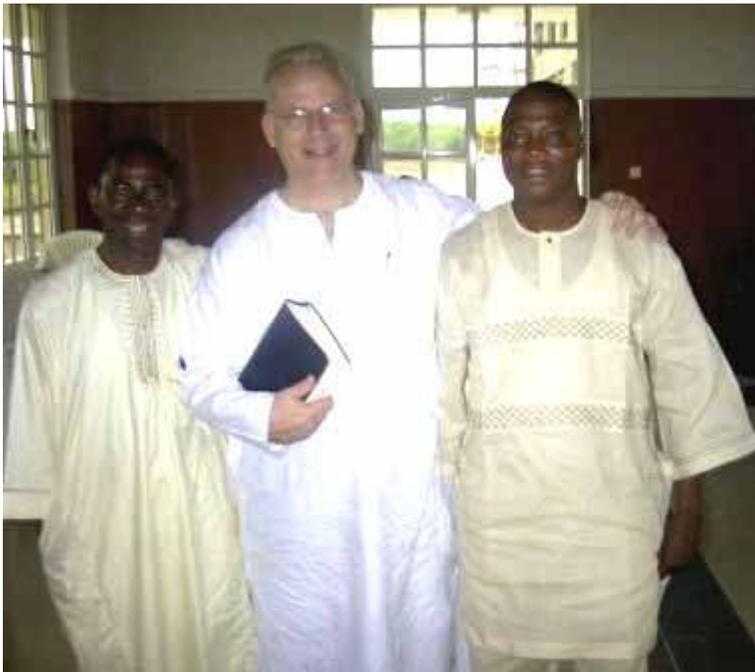
"You will always find that the men whom God has used signally have been those who have studied most, known their Scriptures best, and given time to preparation.' And Chief place went to reading the Bible itself, and in the first instance, for his own spiritual help, not to 'find texts'. He aimed to go through the Scriptures every year, omitting nothing -

'That should be the very minimum of the preacher's Bible reading' - and his ability to quote Scripture from memory in the course of preaching was one consequence of the time given to this practice." D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The First Forty Years*, by Ian H. Murray, Banner of Truth Press, 1982, pages 154, 155

By the grace of God, by the men God has brought into my life, by the sound counsel of my brother, by the example and exhortation of great men of the Word as preserved in their biographies, by these and by the simple love of God's Word that He has engendered in me and yes, by your effectual prayers, by these we are kept on course.

I close now with this reminder that we minister by the grace of God and by the empowerment and protection of your constant and faithful prayers.

By His mercy,  
II Corinthians 4:1  
Rev. John S. Mahon  
Grace Community Int.  
Lagos, Nigeria



**Picture Five**



**Picture Six**



**Picture Seven**

**Picture Eight**

