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Subject: Greetings from Lomé Togo

Dear Brethren in Northern California,

It has been two weeks since I was with you in Orinda, and I wanted to send a Sabbath Greeting and let you know I have been thinking of you.

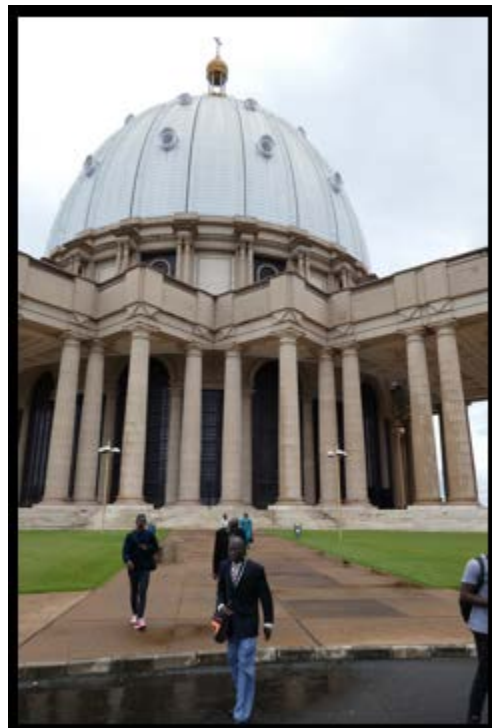
We just wrapped up a very good three-day conference in Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire. We covered topics on communication, financial management, the role of women in the church and family, prophecy studies in Daniel 2, and leadership principles related to how Israel's kings were to conduct themselves. I posted a photo of the group on my Facebook page and we will get some photos added to our local SF Bay Area website.

Last Sabbath, we enjoyed a potluck meal in the newly renovated church hall in La Mé. This would not have been possible with our old hall as there wasn't enough space. The rain was heavy at times, but we now have a covered veranda where brethren can talk. Church started at 10:00 am and we didn't leave until 5:00 pm. Mr. Mabout and I also baptized two people that afternoon. I have included a photo. It is hard to find deep enough water, but God provides!





On Sunday, we visited the "Basilique Notre-Dame de la Paix" in Yamoussoukro, the Capital of Côte d'Ivoire. It is supposedly the largest Christian building in the world, larger than St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. It is a beautiful structure and well maintained, but it is hard to imagine how much money was spent on this building in a country that struggles with so much poverty and basic infrastructure. It is quite a contrast as well, given that the current President is Muslim and returned to the country from his first pilgrimage to Mecca on the day I arrived in the country. Thousands of people lined the streets waving flags to welcome him. Just the week before was the Muslim festival of Eid-al-Adha when the streets were filed with the blood of sacrificed sheep. I missed this festival, but our pastor Moise Mabout said it was quite a sight!



What a world it will be when Christ returns and brings true worship and peace to so many struggling countries. Instead of every man for himself which is so prevalent in African, it will be every man and woman looking after his/her neighbor. Putting others interests ahead of their own. I hope you are praying for that Day every day. The power of your prayers cannot be under-estimated. This example was brought home to me today at the airport heading to Togo.

We had waited in line for about 3 hours to check-in for our flight – literally standing. When you are waiting that long (and there is no internet!), you end up talking to the people around you, and we had some nice conversations as we passed the time. We finally checked in, and as I proceeded to security a man of European descent came running up to me. I had seen him and his family in the terminal over the previous hours. He asked me if I was Pastor. A little surprised, I said “Yes”. He then explained that he and his family were having some difficulty getting a flight out of the country, and his daughters were feeling very anxious, and he asked if I would pray for them. I said yes, and we held hands together in the terminal, and I ask for God’s guidance in their situation. After the prayer, I hugged the man and smiled and shook the hands of each of his daughters. It was a situation certainly that I don’t encounter every day.

How often have we literally stood with our brothers and sisters in the church and prayed together? This shouldn’t replace our personal prayers with our doors closed in our rooms, and we should not pray to be seen or to impress with our words, but how many opportunities do we miss to pray with others? Before I spoke at the General Conference of Elders, Ben Light who was my co-presenter suggested that we pray together in the side room. I was encouraged and felt God heard our prayer. Maryse and I prayed together with the Kubiks before they headed to the airport after their visit to Northern California. My father-in-law asked a prayer for me as we stood together before getting in the car and going to the airport. And in Acts 21:5 Luke wrote that as Paul left the city of Tyre, the men, wives and children accompanied them to the edge of the city and they kneeled on the shore and prayed.

This man wasn’t embarrassed or afraid to ask for prayers. I learned something and I hope you can consider the power of praying together when things are tough, before a trip, and before a big event or just because. I believe God will honor these special prayers.

Happy Sabbath

Tim Pebworth