



Partnering with Ghana Christian University College in West Africa through Education and Christian Community Development

Kimberly's January 2009 Newsletter

Happy Birthday to Me!

Having arrived in Tamale on Wednesday night, January 7th with Amy, Kim and Renee' (on a 13-hour bus ride) and with lots to do the following day to help the Ruffs get needed household goods, I didn't expect to do much celebrating for this year's birthday. I was okay with that since I was with friends.

Getting around Tamale that Thursday was so different from Accra (where I live). It took us less than 12 minutes or so to get from the Ruff's home to the Melcom's store (similar to a Wal-Mart but also really different). If I were to go to Melcom's in Accra, it would take me no less than one-hour and perhaps upwards of one and a half hours because of distance and traffic (mostly traffic). Once in Melcom's, we started looking for items on Amy's shopping list. If we were able to find a particular item, we had to let one of the workers know so that he or she could write down the item number and the quantity we wanted to get (at that point we were not allowed to take the items off the shelves). There was one such worker in each of the various departments who would hand us a separate piece of torn paper for the

things we selected. By the time we all gathered at the front of the store to pay, we had accumulated at least four or five pieces of paper.

After the cashier rung up everything and the Ruffs paid for their purchases, we then had to take the receipt back to each of the departments, show it to the worker as proof that we had paid, and then search again for the items we had selected and paid for—if the worker had not pulled the items from the shelves and put them aside. I was rather fortunate to have had someone in the bed & bath section put on a guarded shelf the five black, terry-cloth bath towels I had picked out (the only ones available). Otherwise, can you imagine the confusion that would have ensued had someone else purchased those same towels and returned to collect them before I did? However, even though Amy and the others showed the girl the receipt for the towels, she would not release them until she saw me.

After gathering all of the purchased items, we met back up at the front of the store where we had to place everything on a table and show the receipt to a check-out clerk before we could leave the store. I think we all agreed that shopping at Melcom's was one of our least favorite experiences.

Personally, I was really glad I had done all of my shopping for household items at Wal-Mart and brought them with me. Although not every store and shopping experience in Ghana is like Melcom's, all are the same in terms of pricing—goods imported into the country generally are priced two and three times as much or more than they are in the States. For instance, durable 12-bake muffin pans cost around \$20 at the Game store here, but sell for under \$8 at Wal-Mart.

Still, with all of the nuances we encounter on the mission field, we learn to have a better appreciation for things so often taken for granted.

That evening, we met up with Kingspride and Priscilla Hammond and their children at a local restaurant to celebrate my birthday. No, it wasn't the Macaroni Grill, but it was fun just the same!



From left to right: Rick, Elise, Priscilla, Kingspride, Benton, Renee, Kim (back row); Terry, Amy and Me.

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My Wilderness Experience

I don't know why but I'm still amazed whenever God either prepares me for something to come or confirms His presence in my life during challenging seasons. With the onset of Thanksgiving and then Christmas, I experienced one of the greatest challenges I've had to face as a single missionary on the field—feeling quite alone, isolated and somewhat down. It was when I completed a bible study lesson on January 23rd from Beth Moore's study, "A Woman's Heart," that I realized I was in the midst of a wilderness experience.

The year 2007 was different; my first year in Ghana and away from the States during the holidays. As a newbie on the foreign field, I was pretty much in the "honeymoon" phase of missionary life; experiencing everything with wide-eyed wonder, excitement, anticipation, and expectation. But when the honeymoon was over, I was faced with the reality of my situation. Things weren't working out according to plans, people let me down and others didn't measure up to my expectations (realistic or unrealistic). As well, I was confronted with my own shortcomings, mistakes, and sometimes un-Christ-like attitude. By the end of 2008, I found myself in a desert place,

pondering what I was made of and what would be revealed of my character. I remember praying and asking God to let me know that He was still with me, caring for me and providing for me. The only thing I seemed to hear from Him was, "Be still, and know that I am God!"

Being still is not one of my more positive attributes, but I knew that God's plan in having me here in Ghana during this season of my life was strategic in that there was no where else I could go. I kept replaying over and over a song by Story Side B, "Be Still." Every morning, I listened to the words through tears, knowing that God was somehow speaking to me: *"I remember all the times, the good times and the bad, I'm still holding on to you. Some days I want to run, sometimes I come undone but I still belong to you. That's how I know that, when I feel like caving in, my heart, my soul is wearing thin, I just want to give up, nothing seems at all to add up. Can you hear me Lord? My face is down upon the floor. Is that your whisper in my ear, 'Be still and know I'm here!' . . ."*

Then, on the 23rd of this month, in a lesson entitled, "A Glimpse of the Wilderness," I re-learned that it was God who had led the Israelites into the

wilderness following their exodus from Egypt, using the occasion to uniquely reveal Himself to them. As a people without a home, the Israelites came to know God in the desert as El Elyon (the Most High), El Shaddai (the Caregiver), Jehovah-Shamma (the Lord is present, and Jehovah-Jireh (Jehovah will provide). And that's when I really began balling. I knew at that point that God had led me into my present wilderness experience to reveal to me that He is El Elyon, El Shaddai, Jehovah-Shamma and Jehovah-Jireh in my life. All I have to do is be still and trust that God will continue to work out everything for my good—as one called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28) and for His glory.

In the meantime, through recent visits from the Ruffs, the Oteys, and my friend, Pat, God has been supplying me with a bit of companionship. And my gratitude goes out to all of you for your prayers, cards, snacks, DVDs, birthday presents (would you believe some friends sent me Macaroni Grill meals in a box?) and emails (when I can read them) to let me know that I have friends and supporters who really care about me and love me. May God continue to bless you for being a blessing to me!

Financial Recap January 2009

| Receipts | | Expenses: | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Avalon Church of Christ | \$ 1,100.00 | 100 - Salary | \$ 540.00 | 550 - Postage in the U.S. | 94.97 |
| Christ Temple Cathedral | 80.00 | 110 - Medical Insurance | 398.70 | 650 - Supplies in the States | 91.00 |
| Faith Community Church | 150.00 | 130 - Social Security | 140.00 | 660 - Mission Phone | 63.26 |
| Green Street Baptist | 125.00 | 141 - Roth IRA | 250.00 | 661 - Internet | 107.61 |
| Living Water ABF (Southeast) | 100.00 | 150 - Housing | 160.00 | 740 - Home Office | 100.00 |
| Southeast Christian | 500.00 | 200 - Education-Books (cultural) | 21.74 | 800 - Car/Transportation | 76.09 |
| St. James Missionary Baptist | 200.00 | 320 - Hospitality | 163.37 | 806 - Car/Vehicle Maintenance | 40.22 |
| Individuals | <u>\$1,680.00</u> | 450 - Evangelism/Compassion Proj | 176.09 | 820 - Travel Fees/tolls | 10.87 |
| Total Receipts | \$3,935.00 | 470 - Joint Team Projects | 725.00 | 880 - Home Service Fund | 250.00 |
| | | 490 - National Co-Workers | 117.39 | 920 - Banking Fees | 50.04 |
| | | | | Total Expenses | \$3,576.35 |

Send a personal letter or card to Kimberly at:

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