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Standing in the Need of Prayer.

1 message

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STANDING IN THE NEED OF PRAYER JANUARY 12, 2018

Save the Date to Pray!

One of our supporting churches recently contacted us with information related to their upcoming Mission's Conference. As I read the description, I felt that it described perfectly what we are facing this next weekend. They said, "Our Sunday services will be centered around the theme of Stepping into the Impossible, knowing that not any of us can accomplish great things.....**but God can!** They went on to ask us if we had a story of an impossible situation in our work, that was only made possible by God's intervention that we would share it for their conference.

As we consider this next weekend, we see more impossibilities than possibilities. We thought if we shared our situation, you could pray with us, and we could all rejoice when God intervenes.

We Agreed...

When a friend asked us if we would consider taking the "Purity Retreat," that we do for adolescents in Miango, to Abuja to his church, we looked at each other and thought "Why Not?" It would require two days of travel, a day or two to teach, and the opportunity to speak and influence youth about a greatly neglected subject in Nigeria: Sexual Purity.

Our materials were already prepared and we knew we were already teaching the same materials in Miango, so it seemed as if it was a simple way to please our friend and influence the youth of his church. We knew he went to a large church in Abuja, so the group would be larger than our normal groups, but we figured we could work that out. We tentatively set it for January or February.

Our Expectations:

We thought we would have plenty of time to be ready after the Christmas rush. We thought we would be meeting in a larger "city" church with electricity. We figured we would be able to find a place for Julie to stay (possibly with our friend) while we spoke. Although we were not fond of traveling in Nigeria, the trip to Abuja was not unknown to us and we considered it was doable. We began considering how to make our hand-held object lessons and illustrations work with a larger group. We pictured a group of 100 or so youth in attendance.

The Challenges:

- **TIMING:** We returned in December and we heard on the 18th of December that the retreat was already scheduled for January 12-14. Because Christmas is so busy with the widows, and we follow Christmas with the SIM conference, we found we had very little time to prepare for this weekend. Even now, we are adapting our materials under a tight deadline.

PRAY THAT OUR CREATIVITY WILL BE FLOWING AS WE PREPARE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE POWERPOINTS AND ILLUSTRATIONS FOR OUR MATERIALS.

- **TRAVEL:** When we returned in December, we discovered that the trip from Abuja to Miango took 5 hours instead of the normal 3 due to the deterioration of the roads. The rough roads resulted in back pain for Ruth because of holding Julie in the back seat. This trip will go the full five hours down to Abuja, but then will take us further into an undeveloped area outside of Abuja. **PRAY FOR SAFETY AS WE TRAVEL--REMEMBER THIS IS THE ROAD KNOWN FOR ARMED ROBBERIES AND KIDNAPPINGS. PRAY FOR RUTH'S BACK TO ENDURE THE HOURS IN THE VEHICLE.**
- **VENUE:** The retreat will take place in a rural setting. In a building that has not been completed--no windows, no doors. Electricity will be by generator (Will the generator work? Will there be enough petrol for the generator to stay running? Will the generator run lights or when it gets dark, will we lose the ability to see our notes well?). **PLEASE PRAY FOR THE DETAILS OF ELECTRICITY AND LIGHT.**
- **TEMPERATURES:** Abuja is probably 20 degrees hotter than Miango. The "bush" setting means no fans, definitely no air conditioning. **PRAY FOR ALL OF US AS OUR BODIES ADJUST TO THE INCREASED TEMPERATURES AND THE DRYNESS & DUST.**
- **JULIE:** Julie will now lie on a blanket on the ground while we speak. We have the mosquito net frame that we have used for many years in Miango churches to keep the flies off of her face while we speak. Steve and I will have to play "pass the baby," if she is grumpy because she is hot or hungry. **PRAY FOR JULIE AS SHE ADJUSTS TO NOT ONLY A NEW SITUATION, BUT A NEW SITUATION THAT IS HOT, NOISY, & DUSTY. PRAY THAT JULIE WILL BE A MINISTRY OF HER OWN TO THE YOUTH THAT SEE HER AND OBSERVE HER DURING THE WEEKEND.**
- **ATTENDEES:** We have been told there will be 200 people in attendance. They will not only be teens--but the youth could be anywhere from young teens to singles in their 40's. With the last phone call we found out that there will also be married couples in attendance. This is an English Speaking Church--but will they readily hear our English? This is always a problem. **PRAY THAT THEY WILL BE ABLE TO HEAR AND UNDERSTAND. PRAY THAT GOD'S WORD WILL IMPACT THEM IN A MIGHTY WAY.**
- **SCHEDULE:** Our normal Purity Retreat is four 90 minute sessions that contain "fun activities" among the teaching. We have been assigned two sessions, each will be 2 hours in length. The youth will be getting up at 5:00 a.m. and by the time they reach our session at 11:00 a.m., they will have already been "in a church" setting for 2 hours and 45 minutes. They will not get lunch until we finish at 1 p.m. **PRAY ABOUT THE JAM-PACKED SCHEDULE THAT WE HAVE SEEN. WE DO NOT SEE TIME TO EVEN SET-UP BETWEEN SESSIONS. PRAY THAT IN THE LONG SESSIONS , THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO HOLD THEIR ATTENTION.**

- **EQUIPMENT:** We have put a lot of our information in powerpoints. This will allow for everyone to see, as well as hear the information. Of course this is reliant on power being on and the equipment functioning properly. We have concerns that the brightness due to no windows, no doors, and some incomplete walls may prevent the powerpoint from being seen. Our biggest concern is that the speaker system will be a good enough quality to allow everyone to hear when we speak and when our video plays. **PRAY ABOUT EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS. PRAY THAT THE EQUIPMENT WILL NOT PREVENT THE MESSAGE FROM BEING HEARD.**
- **FOOD & WATER & BATHROOMS:** Not knowing the safety of water and food that may be available, we are planning for our food to travel with us. Sandwiches and water, formula & bottles, will be packed to make sure we stay healthy. We have no idea what bathroom facilities will be--a tree or an outhouse. Even if a facility exists, will they be available when you have 200+ people. **PRAY THAT THE DETAILS COME TOGETHER AND THAT ALL SUPPLIES NEEDED TRAVEL WITH US.**
- **LODGING:** Our friend went to visit the retreat site because he was concerned for our safety. He reported the site is secluded, but fenced similarly to Miango compound. He did not recommend that we stay on the retreat site, but return to the city following our final presentation. This means night travel of maybe 45 minutes after dark on Saturday evening. Night travel is not recommended except in cases of absolute necessity. Following his advice, we are considering it to be a necessity. **PRAY FOR SAFETY AT NIGHT AS WE TRAVEL.**
- **SATAN'S INTERFERENCE:**
 1. Monday morning--we had a logistical argument that clouded our anticipation of the weekend and soured our relationship for several hours.
 2. Tuesday morning--Lami who works for us had a death in the family resulting in her being off much of this week. This makes more pressure at the office because Ruth must be home with Julie. We also spent time greeting at the family home.
 3. Wednesday, we had students looking for money for school fees, and a funeral, but it still has been a profitable day--much has been accomplished. Finally, tonight a friend came by with her baby for a quick delivery from headquarters. While talking at the door, Steve saw a viper four feet behind her. She obviously had crossed its path as she came. Thankfully, he was able to kill the snake with no harm done. **PRAY THAT WE WILL BE RELYING ON THE LORD AND ACCEPT THE INTERRUPTIONS TO BE FROM HIM. PRAY WE WILL WORK AS A TEAM AND THAT ALL THE DETAILS WILL COME TOGETHER.**

At times we feel that we are facing an impossible situation, at other times we are excited and preparing for "The Adventure" of 2018. We are sure that God's presence will be with us this weekend as a result

of your prayers. We are praying that we will be a winsome witness of God's love and that this will be an opportunity for many young people to hear God's Word and make decisions to follow the Savior.

In His Care,

Steve & Ruth Porter

P.S. I hope to take lots of pictures and video clips to show how God intervenes to make an impossibility possible!



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