

The Williams Family

Planting churches in Ghana, West Africa

The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways. (Deuteronomy 28:9)



March-April 2012

Our God is Awesome!

My pastor has said on several occasions we should try to reserve the word “awesome” for God. His Omnipotence, His Omnipresence, and His Omniscience are Awesome! I personally witnessed these qualities of God on my trip back to Ghana in March. Let me tell you a little of the story to try and show you how Awesome our God is.

Reunion

My main purpose in going on this trip was to see where God would have us start our work in the near future. But we (my friend James Handrich and I) did take time at the beginning of our trip to visit the work in Kumasi (that God allowed my family and I to have a part in founding,) and the village church in Adwafo that God enabled us to start during our last term in Ghana. It was such a wonderful time filled with so many memories. It was also very exciting to see what God is doing through the village church and Pastor Collins (national pastor). Pastor Collins has started four more churches in the area and is training men to pastor those churches. Praise the Lord!

AWESOME

After visiting with my friends in Kumasi, we were geared to visit several cities and see where God would lead us. I didn't have anything in particular that I was looking for, but was praying that God would make His path plain. We found some properties for sale on the other side of Kumasi from where we were before and booked a meeting with a realtor to see if God would open a door for us in this way. However, on the morning we were supposed to meet, the realtor didn't call and did not show up. So we left Kumasi and headed north to Techiman to visit a missionary that I had previously met. He had recommended to me several cities that needed a good church. At the top of the list was Tamale, a large city in the north and currently the fastest growing city in Ghana. It was also interesting to me that two of the missionaries I talked to in Kumasi had also suggested Tamale. Anyway, because the realtor didn't show up, we got an earlier start toward Techiman and were able to spend invaluable time with Bro. Steve Volante who has been a missionary in Ghana for seventeen years. Initially we were frustrated at the realtor for not showing up, but later realized, had the realtor shown up as planned, this special time with Bro. Volante would have been missed and we were thankful that God had intervened. After visiting with and seeing the work of Bro. Volante, we started out for Tamale. Our original plan was to go there for two days and then return to Techiman for Sunday then visit some other cities. However, God in his Awesome Providence made Tamale the only city we would visit.

OMNIPOTENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE

The morning of our travel, we decided to take a private car, rather than a taxi, from Techiman to Tamale, a four hour trip. We waited at a certain junction in Techiman until we found someone going north to Tamale. The national pastor who was helping us was a bit concerned about the situation but finally decided it was o.k. to go. When we entered the car, the man in the passengers seat said, “Don't worry you are safe.” To which I replied, “I know we are safe, our God will keep us safe.” Little did we realize God would prove to them and reinforce to us that yes, He truly could and would take care of us and keep us safe. We hadn't travelled for more than forty-five minutes, when we were stopped by the police. (story continued on next page)



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Our driver had been going 92km/hr in a 50 km/hr zone. To make a long ordeal short in writing, we soon found out our driver didn't have a drivers' license for Ghana, as he was from Burkina Faso. However, with a little cash he persuaded the police to let him continue. We had no sooner left the police station when our driver began to drive quite fast. Once again he was pulled over, but managed to buy his way out of the situation again. We soon came to a customs check point and our driver parked out of sight, grabbed a bundle of cash and went inside, he soon returned and sped off. Upon entering Tamale, he avoided another police checkpoint by riding the bumper of the truck ahead of us and from that point on, the details in my mind start to become a bit blurred as our driver suddenly began to drive extremely fast. I initially thought he fell asleep and was going to wake him up when he began weaving in and out of traffic, forcing oncoming traffic to swerve around us on the right, nearly hitting several bikers and pedestrians, and playing chicken with big trucks coming toward us. Wondering if the police were again chasing our driver, we turned around to see a policeman on a motorcycle indeed chasing us. We began yelling at the driver to stop as he continued his high speed race. I realized that this man probably wouldn't stop until he either evaded the police, or we crashed and surely would be killed and I prayed, "God please keep us safe." We were doing better than 70 miles per hour in downtown Tamale and needless to say- we were scared. Finally, the policeman was able to get around us and force our driver to pull over, which he did, but then whipped the car around to head back the other way. For some very strange reason though, he suddenly stopped as we were again yelling, "STOP!". Our immense relief was short lived however, as we now began to worry as to whether we would be linked to whatever it was that this man was doing, obviously illegally. Thankfully, God in His Omnipotence caused the Policeman to treat us with such gentlemanly kindness that we knew God was caring for the situation. The policeman even called us a cab, and instructed the driver to take us wherever we needed to go. When we finally arrived safe, but shaken, at our hotel, I told James, "Well, at least we know God doesn't want us dead."

OMNISCIENCE

I had done some research before going to Tamale and had several hotels written down that we were going to check out. Yet God in His Providence allowed the car chase to take place to show us His protecting hand and also to guide us to a different hotel that was central to His all knowing plans. While being chased by the police, I somehow noticed a sign for a Picorna Hotel. When the Policeman asked us where we wanted to go, I blurted out the only hotel that came to mind, "Picorna Hotel". After getting our nerves settled down from the police chase we ventured out from the hotel and found that we were smack in the middle of Tamale. The next morning we asked God to somehow show us if this was the city He wanted a work to be started in. Before we left the hotel I had the idea to find the chief's palace and see if somehow God would allow us to see the chief and open a door. When we looked on the map I was amazed to see that the hotel we were staying in was just down the street from the chief's place. We headed out to see what God would do. After walking for a few minutes James said, "I'm sure it was right here somewhere". As he said this, I saw a man coming down the street so I stopped him and asked, "Can you tell us where the chief's palace is?" We were astounded when he replied, "Yes, I am from there, come with me". He took us directly there and asked us to wait outside. He went boldly inside and soon returned with the chief's "mouthpiece" (You can't speak directly to the chief, you speak to him through a man called his "mouthpiece".) I told him we were praying about starting a church in Tamale, and wanted to have the chiefs blessing. The man responded that he was sure that could be obtained, but if we wanted a confirmation
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from the chief, that he would be willing to help us, we should come back on Tuesday of the next week because the chief was leaving for the funeral of another chief and would be gone for several days. We returned the following Monday all excited for our meeting on Tuesday. However, when Tuesday morning arrived, the chief's aide called me and said that the chief was not back yet from the funeral that he was attending as he was still sacrificing(this custom is still practiced when someone of importance dies). We had to fly out Monday afternoon so we tried to see the chief on Wednesday morning but were told he only meets with His Cabinet on Wednesdays. We were told we could come on Thursday, but I told the aide that we had to fly out on Wednesday night. He said, " It is o.k. You can see him when you get back. You have taken the first small step and that is very important. You are coming here to start a family and you always start with a small family, but by the grace of God your family will one day be very big."

At first I was so confused and frustrated that God had led us to the chief, given us an appointment with him, and then it didn't work out. However, as I reflected on it all, I realized that God had opened a door in Tamale that otherwise would not have been opened and in so doing, He had caused us to not be able to visit any other cities on our trip. God had brought us safely to Tamale, placed us in a hotel right near the chief's place, led us to his aide and mouthpiece, given us an understanding of the area, closed the door for all other cities, thus revealing the open a door in Tamale. We truly saw first hand the AWESOMENESS of God. We experienced that He not only has the power to keep us safe, but that He rules and reigns in the hearts of men. We experienced that He knows everything and can put all the workings of free-will man together to fulfill His purposes, and that He can guide us through his Holy Spirit if only we ask. We also experienced that He is everywhere. While there, we experienced some spiritual battles that I had not faced since I left Africa in 2009. I am talking about the presence of evil. We were talking with Bro. Volante about this and discussing how certain powers have domain in certain places. However, no matter where we go or whatever principalities and powers we meet up with, all we have to do is speak the name of our God and they have to flee or submit because our God is Omnipresent and His power is supreme. Every morning in Tamale we woke to the sound of the Muslims praying over loud speakers. They were calling for their god over and over again; this they did five times a day. My heart was saddened for them to think that they have to spend all day calling for their god and that he never answers them. I am so glad thy Christ liveth in me, and when I call, He answers.

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Pray that I will be able to go to Ghana again in June and meet with the chief. Pray for this meeting.
2. Pray that God would show us His timing as to our return to the field.
3. Pray that God would continue to take care of all the details as we prepare to go, and as we move back to Ghana.

For His Glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael Williams'.

Michael Williams and Family

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