

In the beginning was the Word and The Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the Beginning. Through Him, all things were made. Without him, nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness and darkness has not overcome it.

The commission of the Streams in the Desert 2017 mission trip was to bring the Light - the Stream to Ghana, to come alongside those planted there by God to sow for the Kingdom. The Light of Christ in us is the stream in the desert to those who do not know Him.

We had three stops in Ghana; Accra (the capital), Tamale, and Mole Park. The commission of the trip was always at the forefront of our day – the Spirit of the Lord guided us in our encounters, both ones that were intentional on our part and ones that were not. We thank the Holy Spirit for the vigilance He put into us to step into the opportunities every place we went – those appointments that God had already ordained for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. I ask for Mercy for those we missed.

The majority of our time in Ghana was spent in the Muslim villages of Tamale (in the northern region of Ghana). Ghanaian people are rich in language and tradition. Tamale is predominantly Muslim. In Tamale, we came alongside Pastor Ilolo and the Great Mission World Outreach Ministry, Pastor Bright and the Great Commission Church, and Pastor Adam of Hope for Life Ministries, and their ministry teams.

It was inspiring to experience the unity and extent of their labor for the salvation of souls in that land. A testimony to the power of unity! We witnessed their perseverance in Muslim communities to bring the message of Christ's love and peace. We witnessed fruits of their labor and ours by God's Amazing Grace.

In the book of Mark, *the disciples asked one another, who will roll away the stone from the entrance of the tomb?"* God asks, "in My Power, will that be you?" When you meet that appointment to show up at someone's tomb with the intent

to reach that person, His Power is faithful to roll away the stone. For *The light shines in the darkness and darkness has not overcome it* – this is an eternal truth. Praise God.

The only way that I can explain the warm reception that we received and the harvest that was reaped in the Muslim villages of Tamale is to testify to the relationships that had been nurtured by the Tamale team - the work of God's Grace had gone before us through them.

His Own Hand had prepared the soil for the seeds we were to drop and the seeds already planted that we were there to water. We walked in the wake of His Grace and Mercy. I learned that He will not send us where He has not already gone ahead of us.

What did we do?

Our days in Tamale were spent visiting seven villages (Daylvoyili (Da voy lee), Kpatiyam (Pa ta ya), Kuswagu (Coos swa goo), Dungu (Dune goo), Sankpala (San pa la), Kumnayili (Koom nye lee), and Chenagbuni (Chena – boo –nee). The visits consisted of:

- Teaching the children in school – schools that were rough benches in the shade – doing the alphabet with them and singing with them. Kids were incredible – so eager to participate.
- Visiting the chief of the village (called Palace Evangelism) – going into his home – introducing ourselves and sharing prayers and songs – no chief was spoken to directly and they say very little - in Kuswagu we were very late and, for me, it was hard to know what the chief was thinking – we apologized for our lateness – he responded by saying what would he do? [I want you to take in this response] How can a blind man lead? A blind man needs someone who sees – what we had was light to him and that they needed that light. He gave us permission to go amongst his people and spread the light – amazing! – another chief in another village came out to us when we were with the women and spoke to us directly to pray for his

new baby (breaking all custom) – again, amazing, This just does not happen! and

- We did what was called house-to house evangelism – while one part of the team was teaching the children – the rest of the team got into groups of 2 or 3 (the team there translated our English into Dagboni or Gonja – two of many native languages of the Northern region - and set out into the village on foot going house by house. We were greeted with open minds and open hearts. A-maraaba is Welcome– Naaaa is the response to this and other forms of greeting. Despa is Good Morning to which you respond Naaaa; Antere – Good Afternoon; A yuli? What is your name? N yuli Lori. Many offered us some of the little food that they had. They were always eager to find a place for you to sit. Men, women and children listened, received prayers, asked for prayers, and gave their heart to the Lord. We kept going from house to house as long as we had the light of day. In the background we could always hear the call for prayer by the mosques.
- God made a way for us to be on the radio with Pastor Adam Brown’s Show which is broadcasted far beyond Tamale. Praise God. We have that recording for anyone who would like to hear it.

Where did we go from there?

I was sad to leave Tamale - we encouraged and prayed for the team on the ground there and exchanged phone numbers and emails – we made good and, I hope, lasting friendships in the body of Christ.

After Tamale, we traveled to Mole National Park – our guide and guard Abdallah gave his life to the Lord and is now in contact with us. Another opportunity to be a stream and we praise God. May God strengthen him to be a light for others.

After the Park, we returned to Accra. Jeffery, a brother and son of this ministry – a first fruit of the mission trip two years ago, was our guide. On Sunday we worshiped with his home church family and we were amazingly blessed. Our testimony is that The Lord moved mightily

amongst us. Praise the Living God. The Lord spoke to me saying “see my Faithfulness.”

Testimonies by some of the Mission Team -

Achley: What stands out for me were the people – how welcoming and loving they were.

Yolande: (given in person)

Harry: I call us the A-team because everyone was tenacious for the purpose of the Gospel. We were in one accord just like the days of the early apostles. Demons bowed to us, blind received sight, and the sick received healing. Everything seemed to have been planned. Everybody who saw us referred to us as Christians. They called us Lights (even the Muslims referred to us as light. A lot of Muslims gave their lives to Christ. The Muslim kings called us light and children of God. Some Muslims confessed that they are in darkness. God even gave us bigger platforms for the gospel like the radio and Facebook and connecting us to GLLBT for Christian print-media. (Explain).

Lori: For me, this was both a humbling and inspiring time. I worked alongside a woman by the name of Gifted. She came to Christ from a Muslim background and, in that choice for Christ, lost her family, everything. To see the grace in her that overrode her suffering was incredible. The team members themselves were so poor yet they carried themselves in the riches of being in Christ.

To witness the oldest woman in the village of Kpatiyam who had no use of her legs, sitting in the dirt outside her mud hut, who bubbled with the joy of the Lord and used her arms to dance and praise His Name. Her spirit was so beautiful.

To witness and work alongside the Tamale team who rise every morning to serve the Lord when they are hungry, thirsty, and tired – who do not know when they will eat next – with no complaints - whose own prayers have not yet been answered – whose hearts are grieving for their own personal tragedies - who put all that aside to serve the Lord God Almighty in faith – day in and day out.

To pray for the oldest woman in Kuswagu – to witness her courage to stand for Christ as a woman in a Muslim village – to see in the spirit how God will bless the generations that follow her because of her steadfast faith in Him.

To witness His Power breaking strongholds of spirits that came to steal, kill and destroy on young men and women; to see the darkness lifted off one young woman in Kuswagu after Sunday service there. To witness how God's Word was a life raft for them.

To see there was hope for all the Muslim children. To embrace them and pray over their little heads.

Ngozi: It was a wonderful experience that God granted us favor before the chief of Sankpala and his cabinet. They were very receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ. We were privileged to pray with the wives of the chief and their children. It was an ordination from God that the chief asked us to pray with one of his wives and her newborn baby. It's never done in the Muslim religion as no one, especially visitors, to see or touch a newborn baby from the king's palace until the day of naming. The Lord by His Spirit went ahead of us to prepare the land and the people to receive the gospel of salvation.

In Him was life and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness and darkness has not overcome it.

We give all the glory and honor to God for He is the Light that overcomes, the Light that saves, the Light that redeems. No matter what we hear and see in the media, we know from the book of Colossians, that *the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world*. We can rest in the Truth that His Light governs the day and the night – for all of eternity – and that no one is too far from Him by His Own Power and His Own Strength and His Own Love for His Creation.

We bless Him for putting Stream natures in us by His Spirit. We bless Him for the beauty of the mission that overcame the toil of the day. We met God there and God met them.

Please keep Pastor Ilolo, Pastor Bright and Pastor Adam and their teams in our prayers – that they may continue to run with perseverance the race marked out for them for advancement of the gospel.

And pray for us to be streams unto them to fill them so they may be streams to the Muslim population in Tamale and other regions. Where water is scarce, water is precious. Let us not fail in this duty for it truly is a season of harvest, by His Own Faithfulness.

We thank everyone on the ground here for the prayers which truly were answered, for in our hearts, we are one. God bless you all.