

July 12, 2006 – Update from Devin Smith, in Mozambique with Charles Woodrow

Friends and Family,

I have not asked Charles if he has sent an update to the church, but I figured it wouldn't hurt to send one myself. We've been here for almost three weeks, but we're only coming on our first full week in Nampula itself. Most of you probably know that we were delayed again and again on our way to Nampula. Charles was not discouraged, but anticipated it to some degree. He hoped, of course, that this trip would go exceptionally well, and we'd get there in the anticipated 36 hours. Well, the Lord promised we would have trouble in this world, and I think the roads of Mozambique were designed to this end. Nevertheless, we were all thankful and relieved to arrive safely in Nampula. And the Lord maintained our countenances throughout.

This past week has been consumed with putting things in order on the compound here. Beginning today, we are beginning to set up for the Fiel Conference. I will spend a good portion of the coming week taking inventory at the bookstore and preparing the books for transport to the conference. Charles has told me of the countless preparations he needs to make in the coming week--they are too many to list here. Please pray that all would come together for the conference.

I have already arranged a translator to accompany me for some evenings at the conference. I plan to conduct several interviews with attending pastors. I want to have a fuller picture of what ministry is like for them, and also what the Fiel ministries have meant to them. I don't believe the translator is a Christian. He speaks English very well, and I'm hoping it will be an opportunity to minister to him as well.

The speaker will be coming in a week or so and will lead some evangelistic meetings in the town. We have arrangements to make for that as well. Pray that God will open the hearts of some Mozambiquans to respond to the gospel of his grace.

Lord willing, I will speak twice in church and twice at a missionary fellowship meeting. There are many missionaries here who have come within the last year. Very few of them attend a local church regularly. Those that do attend a local church are finding the ministry is often poor, even apostate in some cases. Pray that my messages would be an encouragement to them, and even more that we would be able to encourage them face to face when we get to meet. We have such an opportunity tonight. It's the 8th, but all of the American missionaries (and a few Canadians) are having a 4th of July get-together. I don't know if there will be fireworks. I think we'll have trouble in the town if we do.

I'm amazed at how many Reformed Baptist missionaries there are being drawn to this place. I can think of two that I've met, three that are here that I've heard a lot about, and many more that are very interested in coming. One of them, Henri Van Der Walt, and his wife, Melani, have become especially dear to me. They are with New Tribes, and they seem to me to be of a very excellent spirit. They have four kids, similar in age to my own. You don't get to see many missionary kids, because most of them are farmed out to boarding schools or family. I understand why they do this, but I don't sympathize. Henri and Melani are an excellent example to me of a couple that is making it work for the whole family. Their kids are doing very well. I get the sense, more and more, that they are very interested in working more closely with Charles.

Finally, please pray for our dear families. Pray that Amy and Julie would have the strength and spiritual resources to do "double duty" with the kids. We miss them very much.

Sorry this is so long. Probably only a few will actually read it. I hope the prayer requests will at least be conveyed to all, and my thankfulness for the prayer and support.

Our love and prayers go to you as well. May God greatly bless you all this summer in Jesus.
For the King,
Devin and Charles