



James in Nigeria

Greetings! The last couple months have been an amazing time, the highlight of which has been a trip to Nigeria. I just wanted to share a few stories from that trip to encourage and show you some of the amazing things that God is doing. This update is a bit longer, but I promise you that it is worth the read.

For those who were praying for the logistics, THANK YOU. I have never had such a hard time getting to a country. I ended up having to spend more on getting my visa than on my plane ticket and almost didn't go as a result. In fact, I made my mind up to not spend the money one morning and for the rest of the day experienced a heavy depression and was sick to my stomach. Upon praying more about it and listening to counsel from friends, I changed my mind to go and an amazing peace & joy flooded over me. As you will see, I am so glad I went as it was a transformational time.

First, a tiny bit of background. Just over 2 years ago the Nigerian government brokered an amnesty with the about 65,000 militants who were fighting for proceeds from the oil that is on their land. In many cases the militants were better armed than the military and both sides were grateful that all the bloodshed & kidnapping would end. YWAM Nigeria has played a key role in the amnesty and in the training of the now "ex-militants" since that time. Every 6 months the government puts 1,000 of the militants through a rehabilitation program and during & after they ask YWAM to disciple and train those that are willing.

I had the privilege of going to speak on Sin & Repentance on the first week of their current Discipleship Training School (DTS)

with 30 students, half of whom are ex-militants. Normally DTS' are full of young, passionate Christians, but on this school only a few of the students were Christians before coming. Most of those that weren't ex-militants were working through other addictions or rebellions.



Me & some of the Ex-Militants



Before they were "ex-militants." They lived on rivers and traveled on boats like these and were just as well armed. They wore charms like in the picture to devote themselves to the water gods in order to be bulletproof — images from Getty Images



Abiye

I have taught all over the world, but have never had the joy of working with a group of young people who were so "raw." **While they were militants living in the bush, murder & kidnapping were the norm and they took part in cannibalism & human sacrifice.** Many of them begin around 10 years old and by the time they are 18, they have seen & committed horrors the likes of which we can not imagine, let alone see. Most come to their DTS without even knowing why they are there. Many said they came to get away from the constant demonic attacks that plagued them or because a friend had done it & they had seen their lives completely changed.



A bush refinery like the one Abiye had — image from Getty Images

Abiye, is one such man who came on the Saturday before the school. Upon arriving he was scared of the strange place with all the Christians & ran back to his friends who were in the bush refining oil taken from the pipelines in giant barrels to sell illegally, an extremely dangerous way to make money. An hour before he arrived, their "refinery" exploded and one of his best friends —



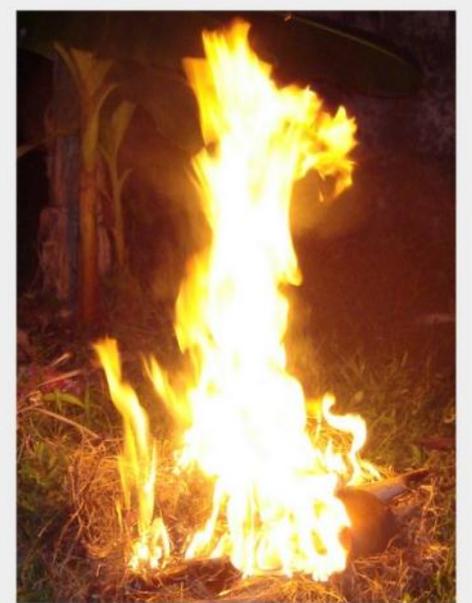
Victor's Journal: Notice the gun, machete & cigarette

died instantly and the other was in the hospital dying of 3rd degree burns covering his entire body. **When Abiye arrived to see him, even though the boy was not a Christian, he warned him, "You must find God!"** Abiye immediately got back on the bus for YWAM. I met him that day and I can't describe the mixture of fear & hardness in his eyes as he had no idea what he was doing, but within just a few days he had given his life to Christ.

We went big picture through the first part of Romans looking at Sin & Salvation and by the 3rd night God had really been moving in the hearts of many **and half of the class came forward to give their lives to Christ! It was an amazing night!** I have never had to teach on sin & repentance that way before. **Instead of dealing with lying, cheating, stealing, etc, we were addressing mass-murder, rape, cannibalism, & human sacrifice,** among other things. And some of them still had their m60's, AK47's, or rocket launchers buried back home, so repentance, turning the other direction, had a very practical meaning. At the end of the week it was great to see their journals that they write in each week. One of the guys, Victor, shared about his past life and the freedom that has come in Christ. He drew a picture of a cross and then drew a picture of the things he was repenting of, a gun, a blood covered machete, and a cigarette!

Even with the joys of salvation, also was left the reality of just how bound they were to their past. Immediately following class, one of the boys got into a fight with another at dinner because he only got half a portion of noodles. **His response was to go look for a machete to actually kill the other boy,** with every intention to do it had it not been for the intervention of others and the school leader, Modesta. One of the things that gives me so much excitement is to look at some of the former ex-militants who have already graduated from this school who are so on-fire for God and so excited to serve Him, and to know that these guys are going to be in the same place soon. Most of the graduates if you talk with them you would never believe their past, they are some of the most gentle and joyful people you could ever meet.

On the fourth day, two of the ex-militants came and brought Modesta an idol that one of the boys had been laying awake doing incantations to each night at midnight. He was scaring them and they didn't trust him as they had given their lives to Christ. I arrived to see an exhausted Modesta, sitting with the boy. I sat down and she told me they were sending him home because he refused to burn the idols and she told me she could barely stand from exhaustion so asked me to "handle it" so she could lay down. She handed it to me and left. William had come to YWAM because of constant demonic attacks that leave him waking each night with cuts all over his body. He was a witch doctor priest, who we came to find out had given himself over to every kind of demonic witchcraft we could ever imagine on top of all the other things the other militants were involved in. (At one point I had to laugh as I was asked if it is true that in America there are Satanists who worship Satan. They were shocked to find out people did that, yet even the most hard core Satanist has never done a fraction of what these guys have done and would be scared to death of them!) **William was convinced if he burned the idol he had he would die.** I got him to agree to give me the idol if I promised to store it for him until he was ready to burn it himself. He assured me he never would, but gave it to me anyways. I soon realized the problem with my promise as I was leaving in a few days and I went and asked others to store it for him, but all refused as they wanted nothing to do with the idol. When I shared with him how I had no fear and could sleep with it under my pillow he freaked out and told me it would turn into a cobra and kill me if I did that! Let's just say I prayed a little extra that night as I slept with it next to me :) **The next day the Lord had worked on his heart amazingly & he went home to gather all of his other tools of witchcraft and we had an amazing celebration as we had an extended time of deliverance and then had a bonfire where we burned all of the stuff as he gave his life to the Lord!** This man had endured so much and been taken to the deepest depths that Satan could pull him, doing unthinkable things without conscience. When we started asking him what type of things he had given himself to in the area of satanic rituals, etc, I realized the correct question should have been, "What haven't you done?", as he shared things I had never even heard of. **It was one of the most powerful and amazing experiences I have ever had in 14 years of ministry, to see this man come to know the Lord and truly turn from his past, life totally changed!**



Pictures of a time of praying for the witch-doctor, some of his "tools" that he brought to be burned, and bonfire celebration to destroy them all at the end

Throughout the week, they kept singing a song there with just two simple sentences, "Our God is a miracle worker, Our God is a glorious God." I sometimes didn't appreciate the song because of the prevalence of the prosperity gospel and how it is often twisted to refer to only gaining material things. But I was later humbled and now that song is among my favorites that I sing all the time. In all my years in missions I have witnessed with my own eyes so many kinds of miracles. I have seen blind receive sight, mute speak, deaf hear, a withered arm regrown, & unending financial miracles, etc, **but I have never seen miracles**



Kelvin's sister takes one of many pictures of him as she can't stop smiling at the changes she sees

like I saw this time in Nigeria! To see a group of people whom Satan had surely declared victory over so radically changed was so incredible. These are young men whom most of the world including their own families had given up on. During the week one of the ex-militant's sister stopped because she had heard her brother had changed. She had not seen him in two years and didn't think it was possible. As she got out of the car she burst into tears just looking at his face. I was confused, she just kept looking at his face crying and saying, "Eh, your face has changed!" She could tell by his eyes, that the hardness and the evil were gone! She didn't even have to talk to him. She kept taking pictures with him and calling her family to report to them the reality of what she was seeing!



"Momma Modesta" & Me

I could go on and on with other stories as there are so many more amazing things God did and I'll leave more for when we return around Christmas. But suffice to say, this trip was amazing and I am already trying to figure out when I can get back. I'd like to go twice a year as they have asked me to come speak on each of their schools. I didn't even share about the other incredible things that happened that week as I was also working with the Bible School there and the trip would have been a great success even if I never met the militants because of the other things going on!

One of the greatest highlights of the whole time was meeting Modesta. She is the DTS director there and has become the mother of all the ex-militants. I wish you could meet her. She has the perfect balance of tenderness and strength. She can out-love and out-shout any of them. It is so great to watch these hardened ex-militants follow her around like kittens following their mother. They have never experienced love and acceptance like they do from her. They all call her momma and so many of them say they never want to leave. The only problem is that Modesta has to work half-time as a worship leader at a church which keeps her running back and forth and working late at night. She has no time to rest and is constantly exhausted. I was so blown away by her heart for these guys, the impact she is having, and saw her desire to devote her full attention to them that I inquired how much it costs for her to live there. She told me she would need to raise \$150 dollars to be there fully for the ex-militants. I felt so strongly convicted at that moment that I was supposed to take on a "faith project" and trust God for the money for her. I committed to giving her \$150/month for the next 2 years and that I would trust Him on her behalf. I can't express the joy & relief that this brought to her, **but now our faith project begins** as we need to raise an extra \$150 a month. If anyone would like to be a part of this, please let me know.

For those that are still reading, I hope you have been blessed by hearing about what God has been doing and what he continues to do. I could just keep writing for pages about what happened and what God is doing there. Right now the need for discipleship & training there are almost insurmountable compared to the resources to do it. Sarah didn't appreciate it when I wrote her from Nigeria saying I wanted to look into permanent residency and moving there :) as we have many commitments here in South Africa, but I am so burdened by what God is doing there and can't wait to get back again.

Thank you so much for all your prayers & support!

James & Sarah Lunn
www.ToMakeHimKnown.com



Praying with the students on the final day after a symbolic time of "Nailing our sins to the cross" before burning all the papers

Contact Us:

Mailing Address:
Unit 62 Bayview, Gill Rd.
Muizenberg, 7945 South Africa
James@ToMakeHimKnown.com

For Financial Support:

To Make Him Known
16115 Larch Way
Lynnwood, WA 98087
You will receive a tax-deductible receipt