



"To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:79

Dear Praying Friends,

August 2011

The
Mike Leonard
Family



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The past few months have been incredibly busy continuing in our building projects as extra monies become available. Our roof is now complete, and we have a portion of the exterior walls built. We were also able to put in the base material for our driveway, some drainage trenches, and a portion of the block wall on the front of our property; all this, of course, being accomplished between rain showers. Our baptistery is now 95% complete and usable. We had several folks waiting to be baptized, so we had a special Sunday service with dinner on the grounds afterwards. Seventeen people were baptized, two of whom were saved in the service that morning.

Amidst the construction, an opportunity came our way about mid-July to save over US\$1000 per month on our rent and utilities. This opportunity needed a few minor repairs and a whole lot of cleaning. We now live a little farther away from the church in a 750-square-foot house with a fenced-in yard. The house is much smaller, but the yard space is a definite advantage. We also have four people from this village who have recently started coming to church and several others with whom we are trying to build relationships.

We are increasingly aware of God's hand of protection upon our lives. While settling into our new home, I noticed some electrical issues that needed to be dealt with. I brought it to the landlord's attention, and he said that he had recently hired someone to rewire the house. He asked if I wanted to get his electrician out to look at the situation. Reckoning that his electrician was the cause of the problem, I quickly decided that would not be in my best interest. I told him that I would look it over, and if the situation was too difficult, I would call my electrician (one who actually has a license). I thought that I should start by checking to see if there was a ground rod. Since ground rods are made of solid copper and very valuable to anyone willing to pull them out of the ground, I suspected that someone may have "borrowed" it. Of course, a ground rod is for grounding purposes and completely harmless, since there is no electrical current running through them.

My wife and I had some errands to run, so I gave our son Matthew the task to dig around the area where a ground rod should have been next to the house. About halfway through the day after completing other tasks, he came down with a stomach virus; and, of course, he was not able to finish the list, the ground rod being one of the unfinished tasks. A couple of days later, I gave him that task again as I was inside the house looking for any clues to the problem. A root had grown over the area where the ground rod should have been, so Matthew grabbed an iron bar and shoved it into the ground in order to break away the root. All of a sudden I heard a loud thud as Matt was thrown against the house, a short pause, and the sound of three grunting screams. I could tell by the breathy sound in his voice that he struggled at the effort to cry out. His mother was in the front part of the house and heard the clamor as well. I rushed outside and turned the

corner from the porch to the side of the house to see both Matt and Michelle lying on the ground with a look of horror on their faces.

Matthew, with both hands gripped tightly around the breaking bar and shoving it beneath the root, had made contact with electricity. The voltage locked up every muscle in his body. He told us later that he wasn't even sure if he was going to be able to cry out for help; he literally thought that his life was over. Michelle, out of pure motherly instinct, tackled him and knocked him away from the electricity and, of course, received quite a jolt from the current as well. After assessing the situation and clarifying that there was no bodily damage, we contacted our doctors in the States for further instruction. Needless to say, I abandoned my search for the problem and called for someone with more expertise.

My electrician came first thing the next morning and discovered that someone had crossed a hot wire with a neutral wire, along with a few other discrepancies. This caused the ground rod to have current running through it, most likely 220 volts.

The list of incidents which we have encountered over the past 12 weeks continues, but I will not bore you with all the details. I merely want you to know that your prayers do not go unnoticed or unappreciated. I know that people are praying for us. So many situations could be far worse than what they are were it not for the protection of the hand of God. A broken arm and a six-hour-trip to the emergency room, deadly poisonous snakes killed in our church building and one coiled up in my pulpit, thieves, parasites, tropical diseases, etc., etc. are all a part of our daily lives. We understand that the hand of the Almighty God brought us here and will keep us here safe and sound according to His will, and the fervent prayers of God's people help to make that possible.

We thoroughly enjoy the privilege to make much of the Lord Jesus. We are not discouraged about the service that God has called us to. At times we are heavy-hearted, burdened, and frustrated; at times we may cry, complain, and even question; but I can honestly and boldly say that we are most definitely not deprived of our courage and confidence. This is not because of our own personal strength and stamina; but it is due to the fact that our confidence is in the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and we understand certain truths found in His Word.

1. John 16:33, *"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*

2. Ephesians 6:10,12, *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."*

3. I Peter 1:6-7, *"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."*

4. II Thessalonians 3:1-3, *"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil."*

Thank you for praying about the sale of our house in the States. We have signed a contract, and it should be finalized in the next few weeks.

Thank you for continuing to pray that God would bring us men with a desire to serve the Lord. We now have about 12 men who are coming on somewhat of a regular basis. Some of them have recently been saved and baptized, some of them have recently rededicated their lives to the Lord, and all of the 12 are showing signs of a desire to enhance their personal relationships with Christ, although a couple of them have not yet committed to receiving Christ for salvation. Please continue to pray for these two, especially as the Holy Spirit continues to draw them and teach them truth.

God has also given us several families with a desire to follow the Lord. The Lord is bringing people into this ministry who are seeking for truth, longing for change, and desiring a personal relationship with Christ. Please continue to pray that God will give us wisdom and patience as we obey the Great Commission in teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded us.

I would also ask you to pray about our transportation situation. We are in great need of a second van. We have an opportunity to purchase a 15-passenger van here for about US\$3000.

For those of you who may not have been informed, our oldest son Chad is now in Bible college in Lancaster, California. I'm sure that he would appreciate any correspondence from you that could be directed his way. His contact information is as follows:

Chad.Leonard@students.WCBC.edu

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May God continue to bless you in all your endeavours for the cause of Christ.

Making much of Jesus,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Leonard". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Making much of Jesus,".

Missionary Mike Leonard