



MARK
SABRINA

THE HOLMES FAMILY

MISSIONARIES IN NIGERIA, WEST AFRICA



JOSEPH
BRIAN VICTORIA

May/June 2011

Dear Praying Friends:

May of this year was quite an eventful month as we wrapped up the 4th semester of our Providence Baptist College and Seminary. On the 2nd Sunday, Truth Baptist Church celebrated its 5th Anniversary by canvassing eight areas to conduct outreach services, in addition to our regular meeting on the church property. Over 630 total people attended the assemblies; this number included the grand-opening attendance for Christ Baptist Church of Karshi, now pastored by a soon-to-be seminary graduate. One of the outreach ministries rejoiced in reaching over 100 people on our Anniversary Sunday; immediately we made plans with the people to start a church, and the next Sunday the chief from a neighboring village attended service at the new church and asked for a work to be started in his area! The 3rd week of May saw us fill an 18-passenger van to attend a national pastors' conference, which was held an eight-hour drive away; most of our seminary students and several pastors from Abuja attended and were blessed by the preaching, fellowship, and special gifts. Our whole family had the opportunity to travel during the last week of May to Missionary David Maskey's ministry for their ladies' spectacular and church preaching conference. We have especially enjoyed fellowshiping with their wonderful family and being a part of their great work each year that we have been in Nigeria.

Exactly six years ago, Sabrina and Joseph and I arrived in Nigeria and began working with a veteran missionary. Ten months later an assistant pastor of that missionary recommended someone he could trust to work in our house. Shem Daniel became the "guard" in our compound and promised our missionary friend that he would never run from any responsibility. I had the privilege of baptizing Shem; by the third month of our new work, he was the children's church preacher. During the inaugural year of Truth Baptist Church, Shem rejoiced in a new experience of winning a soul to Christ, labored to complete his initial Bible institute courses, and delighted in preaching his first sermon. Soon, he and the guard for the church compound became soul-winning partners; by the time the church was able to pay two staff members, there was no question as to who the pair would be. Pastor Shem became a very capable and respected Sunday school teacher, choir leader, church-service moderator, outreach director, and seminary staff member. Sadly, Pastor Shem died of hepatitis on June 14 at the age of 30. In his life, Pastor Shem Daniel provided an example of thoroughness in evangelism, care in visitation, zeal in preaching, faithfulness in friendship, love to his wife, strength to his children, and confidence in God. He was to receive his degree during our first seminary graduation next May; we planned to ordain him this August, and his goal was to start a church at the beginning of next year. Please pray for family of Shem in their loss; pray for wisdom as our church seeks to care for his wife and children, and pray for strength as we continue with tears to grow the work that Shem was a vital part in starting.

His for souls,

Mark Holmes



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