

February 2000

Aja Harvest Work Report

Murphy, Christine and Stephen Crowson

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Work Activities

Week 1 – February 1 - 5

- Maturation meeting with Hunba congregation. 6 Christians present. I taught a lesson on prayer.
- Worked on 1999 Team evaluation report.
- Devotional with Fon team.
- Attended a funeral. One of the daughters (eight years old) of a Christian couple from the Bajame congregation died unexpectedly. It was the first Aja Christian funeral that I have experienced. Approximately 60 Christians were present.
- Four days of language study.
- One team meeting.
- Lesson preparation and memorization for maturation lessons.
- Maturation meeting with Gbakonu congregation. 15 Christians present. I taught a lesson on prayer.
- Continued work on Old Testament Story book.

Week 2 – February 6 - 12

- Area-wide worship service with the Djoumahou, Hunba, Avedjin and Dadahoue congregations. 85 Christians present. Three baptisms. I gave a short lesson on the importance of prayer to the new Christians.
- Cotonou business. Three days.
- Two sick days.

Week 3 – February 13 - 19

- Two sick days.
- Three days of language study.
- Continued work on 1 John translation.
- Maturation meeting with Hunba congregation. 11 Christians present. I taught a lesson on the Greatest Commandment.
- Three team meetings (two translation and one business).
- Aja Leadership meeting. Christians from five congregations met to discuss how to “bring out” a baby. When a baby is born the Aja traditionally have a ceremony to name the child as well as call upon the spirits to protect the child. The ceremony is very pagan and Christians cannot participate. We began a discussion on a culturally appropriate way to “bring out” a baby that would be pleasing to God. The opportunity presented itself for me to talk with them about church leadership, unity among congregations, church organization, as well as man made laws which are supplemental to the Bible. My Aja speaking abilities were stretched to say the least. But in the end they understood the points I was trying to convey.
- Continued work on 1999 team church growth, evaluation and planning reports.

Week 4 – February 20 - 26

- Lesson preparation. Vocabulary on “Daniel in the lion’s den,” and “Jealous God.”
- Worship with Dadahoue congregation. 35 present. 1 baptism.
- Two days language study.

- Maturation meeting with Hunba congregation. 10 present. I taught about evangelism, sharing one's faith and what they can do so that others in their village will repent. We also answered many questions that some of the new Christians had. We also confronted one man who "repented" but hasn't stopped worshipping his idols.
- Four sick days for Christine. She came down with her second case of Malaria.
- Two team meetings (one translation and one business).
- Funeral at Eglime. One of the Christians that I've been working with from the Eglime church died unexpectedly. He died on Friday and they buried him on Saturday. 300 people (200 pagans and 100 Christians) attended the ceremony. It was an incredible time of witnessing to the village. Many heard the Gospel for the first time.

Week 5 – February 27 - 29

- Worship with Eglime. 55 present. I taught a lesson on the life of Paul and his desire to be with the Lord (Phil 1:18b-26) and a lesson on Daniel and the Lion's Den.
- Two days of language study.
- Lesson preparation for evangelistic meeting this coming Wednesday in the village of Ainahoue.

Culture Studies completed

- Food and Eating
- Gardens and gathering

Scriptures Translated

- 1 Samuel 16 – David (rough draft)
- 1 Samuel 17 – David and Goliath (rough draft)
- 1 Kings 17 – Ravens feed Elijah (rough draft)
- 1 Kings 17 – Widow at Zarephath (rough draft)
- 1 Kings 19 – Elisha (rough draft)
- 2 Kings 4 – Widow's oil (rough draft)
- 2 Kings 4 – Shunammite's Son Restored (rough draft)
- 2 Kings 5 – Naaman healed of leprosy (rough draft)
- 1 John 1:1-2:18 – (final draft)

I attended two funerals this month and witnessed God using the Aja Christians to comfort and give strength to one another. They proclaimed their victory over death. Death is perhaps one of the greatest fears that the traditional Aja have. But God's love is casting out their fear. It was amazing and encouraging.

All three of us were sick this month. Stephen and I with sinus infections and Christine with Malaria. But the Lord healed us all and today we're enjoying good health.

Tomorrow I will begin a new preaching point in the village of Ainahoue. I'm excited. I've been teaching for several months in various congregations, this is my first time to begin an evangelist point on my own.

We are completing our church growth report for 1999. God is working wonders among the Aja. Thank you for making our work in this receptive field possible. You will receive the final report in March.

Christine (and baby) and Stephen are doing well. We are looking forward to a visit from my Aunt Rosanne next week. Thank you for your prayers and encouragement. The Lord is listening and He is answering.