

Mike Curry----- Kenya Journal July 2010

And so, yet another Kenyan adventure has begun. As I write I am sitting in the opulent Dubai airport waiting on my last leg to Nariobi. The journey began over 40 hours ago, but I am rested and refreshed. I am taking some sage advice from a counselor in my past: "he who burns the candle at both ends, is not nearly as bright as he thinks". I stayed in Dubai last night, got a good meal a good night's sleep and actually feel human headed into this assignment in Kenya. Usually, when the plane lands in Nairobi, I have that dull headache, trouble focusing and a singular vision.....find a bed and a shower. I think I will actually be able to function today!

I am always confronted with the oxymoronic nature of my life and ministry. I drove to Houston in a new, air conditioned vehicle. Never check the price of food on a menu, simply order what appeals to me. Go the front of the line at the airport to check in because I am a "priority" customer (with labels like gold, platinum and preferred). Then sit in a climate controlled state of the art jet and am waited on hand and foot by paid servants. All of this while on my way to minister to the poor, the orphans, the street children and our pastors who live on a fraction of what I make in a week. I'm not preaching this morning. Not trying to shame you or me. I'm just contemplating.....it is a strange life indeed.

The team of 10 high school seniors and their leaders will arrive in Nairobi late tomorrow night. Today will be a day of rest and preparation for me as I double check our transportation and the myriad of details that must come

together to make the trip as comfortable as possible.

The students have no idea what they are in for. Neither do I, for that matter. But I do know that the culture, the poverty, the neediness of these people and the rich warmth of their love for and worship of the Father will confront each of us to the marrow of our souls these next few days.

My role on this trip is to make sure the team and leader are positioned for maximum ministry and to try to ensure their safety and comfort. Once I am convinced they have their "Kenyan ministry legs", I will leave them in the able hands of their student pastor and our Kenyan staff here. Then Bishop Ben Bahati and I will begin our separate adventure of traveling to various local ministries to help, encourage and assess the needs there. I will preach multiple times. We have three localized pastor's conferences scheduled. Much of my time will be spent listening, evaluating and seeking the mind of Christ regarding the myriad of needs that will be laid at my feet in the next few days. ALL of our pastors needs are legitimate. ALL of the needs at the feeding station and orphanage are legitimate. ALL of the individual needs presented to me deserve to be met. And in God's timing and His provision, I hope they will be. But.....I got over any messianic complex I had some time ago, and I have finally convinced our staff (most of them, anyway) that I am not God's human ATM machine. They don't see me as their source, but they definitely see me, our ministry and my link you all of you wealthy Americans as a much needed resource.

Pray for wisdom and discernment for me as I try to listen with the ears on my heart as well as the ones on my head. My heart and brain must stay connected to make the decisions ahead.

I will update you later this week with photos and hopefully glowing reports of the goodness and provision of God.

Pray for the travel safety of the team members as they will be leaving the U.S. tonight.

Your prayers are my fuel, your gifts the foundation we launch from. Bless you.

You are loved and prayed for.

By Grace, your brother,

Mike Curry

Eph. 6:19-20



MIKE CURRY



"I ONLY KNOW OF TWO DAYS.....THIS DAY.....AND THAT DAY" MARTIN LUTHER

"...for He grants sleep to those HE loves".

Wednesday, 4:45 A.M. The psalmist was never more right than when he penned those words above in Psalm 127. After a hot shower, a good meal and a hearing Teresa's voice on this amazing World Phone gift to me, I fell asleep sometime before 10 P.M. last

night. Six hours and 45 minutes is a great night of sleep. What a gift to begin a day that will not end until the wee hours of tomorrow morning.

I just read an email from my friend Jonathan Cortes (Advancing Native Mission Southeast Asia). He is

reporting of God's moving in Southeast Asia and the all the work that is going on there. The I read a report from an itinerant youth speaker in Colorado about all God is doing as he closes out the summer schedule in America with students. While I sit here waiting for



PEDDLING HIS WARES



FELLOWSHIP RENEWED



KINGDOM PARTNERS

He who watches over you will not slumber

the sun to rise over Nairobi the team that will soon join me is scattered over the skies of Europe making their way to Kenya. Joseph from Memphis is sleeping in a chair somewhere in the Paris airport waiting on his connection to Nairobi. He will arrive tonight at 8:30 P.M. The nine members of the Church at West Mountain group from East Texas are closing in on Frankfurt Germany where they will change plans and continue on to Addis-Ababa before finally landing in Nairobi tomorrow morning at 1:00 A.M. When they land it will have been 48 hours of travel for them. I know the beds and the showers at the Hampton Guest House here in Nairobi will be a welcome comfort to their aching muscles.

Kenya, Southeast Asia, the U.S., Paris, Frankfurt, Addis-Ababa.....all over the world people waking, lying down, moving about in ministry. And the one who called us to all of this....."**...He who watches over you will not slumber....**"

That simple truth resonated with my heart this morning. I prayed for the team last night.....and then fell asleep. I prayed for my wife and family, friends and supporters.....and then fell asleep. Sweet sleep that was a gift from God. But doing that wonderful "time-out" I was "unavailable and off duty" for you or the Kingdom of God. The Father didn't sleep last night. He will not sleep tonight. His eyes are crossing time zones quicker than the jets which fly into the sunrise and the sunset.

I woke this morning with the team on my mind. I know the aches of their muscles from being cramped into modern torture devices called airline

seats. I know the burning behind those blood-shot eyes, the dull headache, the queezy stomach from too little rest and the industrial airplane food they are trying to digest. I know the racing of their minds as they try to grasp what awaits them in this new and strange land and culture. I know the anxiety of will they be able to do it.....will they get sick....will they be fearful when ministry time comes.

I know these things this morning and am praying for the team....AND I AM JUST A MAN!!!! How much more is the heavenly Father aware of our needs, our specific location on the planet he made for us, our desires, our fears, our excitements.....and....our disappointments.

Pray! Pray for airline connections. Pray that luggage will appear on conveyer belts. Pray that agents of the enemy will not be placed in positions of authority as customs agents to harass the team tonight. Pray for our drivers that are making their way through the treacherous Kenya highways to meet us this evening. Pray for Pastor Richard and Helen and Ben and Pastor Sampson and Pastor Alfred and Rebecah as they make final preparations for the work the team will help with in the next days. Pray for the supporters back home who financed this Kingdom adventure. And pray for those who are praying.....that they don't grow weary.

But they will. They will grow weary. They will fall asleep. And that is as it should be. For while I am blessed by your prayers, your gifts and your love.....I simply can't depend on you!

Not always. Because you CAN'T be there ALWAYS. But there is one who can. I pray that He is your comforting presence today. He is mine this morning in a fresh way.

I lift my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; Indeed, He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you—the Lord is your shade at our right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

NOW.....it's off into the city to meet with my and Jesus' common enemy....the money-changers!!

Much to do before I fall back in bed tomorrow morning around 2:30. Hopefully with team and luggage in hand.

I will try to write once more before we leave for Kitale. The internet service will not be conducive to updates there.

By grace, your brother,

Mike Curry

Eph. 6:19-20

Mike Curry----- Kenya Journal 3rd. Edition

Sunrise in Kenya. Bacon frying.....eggs cooking.....french toast on the way. Our last “western” food here in Nairobi before we head up country.

Today the true adventure begins. Everyone has rested and healed up from the long flights. All the supplies for the week have been sorted into their proper containers. The last minute training was taken care of yesterday and this team is “chomping at the bit” to get to the work. And there is plenty of it!!

Several on the team stayed up most of the night praying. Not planned.....not programmed.....they just felt the need to pray. Now that is an exciting team. I can't wait to see all God has for them (and me) this week.

We know we will minister at the orphanage, the feeding stations and school and preach in at least four churches on Sunday. Then Monday and Tuesday our pastor's conference schedule has grown and we will do three conferences simultaneously in three different cities. Probably well over 100 pastors and leaders. This is the “mother's milk” of ministry in Kenya. These men are hungry for training, teaching and encouragement. I love this environment!!!

Then when we return to Nairobi at the end of the week there will be one more day of pastor training and conferences along with some work with a start up feeding station and school.

Today we drive up-country for 6-8 hours. These guys have no idea what they are in for. They will be tired, but their eyes, minds and hearts will be filled with the scenery of this beautiful country and these wonderful people.

I went to bed last night with a list of needs (personal and ministry) that was overwhelming. The amount of money needed to meet those needs, the relationships that had to be worked on to bring healing.....the tasks on the list were overwhelming.

I woke this morning and about 80% of all the needs have been met. I echo Teresa's (my wife) words in her last email before she fell asleep.....God really loves us.

He really does!! And I know you guys do to.

Thanks for praying. It will be a few days before I can update again.

You are loved and prayed for.

By grace, your brother,

Mike Curry

Eph. 6:19-20



MIKE CURRY



ONLY THE MERCY OF GOD
CHANGES THOSE WHO HAVE NOT
TO THOSE WHO HAVE

Pure and undefiled ministry

Saturday, July 24 3:00 P.M.

Finally!!!.....we get to the ministry field! After delayed flights, nights without sleep and bone-tiring fatigue, we finally made the upland journey by van from Nairobi to Kitale town yesterday. After a two hour delay sitting still on the

highway awaiting a fatal big truck accident to be cleared, we arrived last night at our ministry base in Kitale. The cottages we are staying in are vintage 1940 built for the former British business people who owned and operated this region then. But the cool

evenings (65 degrees) and the running water (occasionally hot) and a bed were a welcome refuge. The team was anxious to get to some "ministry" after days of travel. They would not have to wait long. As soon as we could throw our bags into our rooms, we were to



FATAL WRECK BLOCKS OUR WAY



ROYAL RECEPTION



A HELPING HAND

The unlikely-- receiving the unbelievable-- because of God's unfathomable grace and mercy.

to be greeted by the orphans here in town. As always, they greeted their new American friends with songs, poems and personal introductions of themselves by name and their "I want to be when I grow up" goals for life. The team fell in love with the kids immediately....who couldn't? But, it was Sammy who captured their hearts. He always does. In the photo below, Sammy is the boy in the blue shirt in the bottom right hand corner. Sammy has a learning disability and when I was here in February was in Nairobi having open heart surgery. Either of those facts (being learning challenged or having a heart defect) should have been a death

sentence for Sammy in this culture. He was simply a "throw away child". Well, he has NOT been thrown away. Sammy is the bright spot of the orphanage. Always smiling, singing loudly, even though he can't pronounce the words, eager with a hug or fist-bump. You gotta love Sammy!!! He is the poster child for a ministry like this. The unlikely receiving the unbelievable because of God's unfathomable grace and mercy.

I watched as the Americans stood embarrassed, then humbled as one-by-one, hand-made necklaces were placed on them by the children. As flowers were handed to the ladies on our team. As necklaces made of Christmas Garland we hung around the necks of the pastors designating them as honored guests. My, how quickly the tables had turned. The "ministers" were receiving the ministry.

**SAMMY WAS SIMPLY A
"THROW-AWAY" CHILD**



BIG FUN!

NEW BLING



MADAME REBEKAH



HONORED GUESTS



SERVANTS

I could get used to this. Might as well. I think this may be a lot like heaven.

And then it happened. The walls fell. The language barrier was gone. And the celebration of our bond in Christ began. As we sang with the children, watched them dance, listened to their poetry.....with each syllable , hearts were welded together. The runny noses, nasty hands and feet, soiled clothes and the threat of disease in these little bodies could not hold back the American team any longer. Hugs, smiles, laughter, hands held, love exchanged. It was a “Holy-hootenanny”! The when the gifts for the staff were brought out, we lost all control. The church from Texas had collected costume jewelry for the ladies

AMAZING WHAT A LITTLE LOVE AND ENCOURAGEMENT CAN DO.

and I learned that “bling” is a common language among females world-wide. You would have thought we had taken them to Tiffany’s!!! There was even dancing!!! Just pure joy. Not so much for the jewelry. It wasn’t that valuable. But the joy that someone cared. That they were not forgotten, stuck here on the back side of East Africa ministering to slum children day after day. Amazing what a little love and encouragement will do.

Oh there are still tremendous needs. I’ll write about them later. Right now I’m going to enjoy the short break before the open-air evangelism meeting and savor the scene of those kids with their first sucker and those ladies dancing in joy with their new adornments. I could get used to this!! Might as well.....I think this may be a lot like heaven!!

CELEBRATION



TIME FOR NEW SOCKS



NEW SWEATER?



FIRST SUCKERS



NEW PLAYGROUND



Open air evangelism raises your dependency on the presence of God unlike any other ministry venue

Open air evangelism is totally unpredictable. You don't know if there will be a crowd. If there is, you don't know if they will listen or understand. You wonder will it turn violent? Is it safe.

Pulling into a slum unannounced with a worship team, sound system and a bunch of white folks preaching and sharing testimonies usually draws a crowd. You're just never sure what the Father intends to do with that crowd. To me, it is the ultimate test of obedience as a preacher. I go...I tell...I leave the results to God.

I GO...I TELL...I LEAVE THE RESULTS TO GOD.

Today the crowd was smaller than usual. There were more children than adults. There weren't as many men present as we would have liked. It threatened rain all afternoon. The sound system was weak. The team had no experience in this venue so they were understandably nervous. AND GOD MOVED ANYWAY!!! Dozens raised their hands indicating they wanted to receive Christ. After the invitation was more clearly defined, there were nine souls remaining at the base of the temporary platform who went for follow-up counseling saying they wanted to follow Christ. What about the other dozens? Only God knows. That's O.K. Only He saves anyway. The team did their part. They went, they preached, they testified. And God....He ALWAYS does his part.

Bed time. Can't wait to hear the reports from the 4 churches tomorrow.



OPEN AIR



STUDENT TESTIMONY



PASTOR CHRIS



LISTENING



AMERICANS IN AWE

A timely reminder of where I came from

Sunday, July 25, 5 PM What a gift God gave me today. I travelled to a small village in the bush named Number One (can't make this stuff up!!). The rest of the U.S. team stayed here in Kitale to preach in two slum churches and the large tent church in the market place downtown. It is the first time the team will be "on their own" and I know God will use my absence to raise their trust level and increase their aggressiveness to minister.

My ride was 30 minutes late. Not bad for "Kenyan time". As I climbed into the early 90's model Subaru, I knew the adventure had begun. The pastor immediately began to apologize for the dirt and dust inside the vehicle. **THIS MAN LIVES 6 MILES FROM THE CLOSEST BLACKTOP....**I told him there was no problem with the dirt.....it just showed up a bit more on my white skin and hair. He appreciated the humor and relaxed a bit. I **DIDN'T!!!** As soon as we got into third gear, the real wheels were wobbling so bad I was sure they would fall off at any moment. I asked the pastor if there was a problem and he assured me there wasn't. **THAT WAS NORMAL!????** Then I had to laugh out loud. As we approached the first police check point the pastor said, "pastor Mike, you need to pray.". I said, "what are we praying for". He answered, "I only have a temporary driving permit and it has expired. I have not had the money to get my permanent license and I just learned to drive a few weeks ago. Also, I have two good tires and two bad tires. If the police inspect the tires, they will write me a citation."

Perfect!!! A driver that doesn't know how to drive, rear wheels

bent so badly I wasn't sure the rear end was following the front end, and no valid driver's license. We were waved through that and every other checkpoint. I began to ask the pastor about his car (it is highly unusual for one of our pastors to be able to afford a vehicle). He told how he and his wife had started some small enterprises to save the money to purchase the car. It had taken them three years. He then asked me to pray again. "Pastor, I am so glad God provided me a car. I am now able to visit all 11 of the churches that I oversee in our region without having to walk or take public transport. But pastor, I need to service the vehicle and I can't afford to do that. I had no idea it was so expensive to maintain a vehicle."

No kidding, I thought. Especially one with about 300,000 miles. The conversation took me back to the early days of my ministry. When I got ready to purchase a vehicle, I never even looked at anything that had less than 100,000 miles. No point. We couldn't afford anything newer than that. Then I thought of that night when I slid across the Mississippi River bridge sideways on the ice with tires so bald you could read a newspaper through them. Then I thought about all the times God had provided new tires for my worn out vehicles. All the times church members had come up to me during meetings and told me to take my vehicle to their mechanic and have it repaired. And then I smiled as I thought about the two brand new vehicles that are provided at no cost to Teresa and I by a generous supporter. **This was a "no-brainer"!**

I said, "Pastor. Here is some money. When you drop me at the hotel go to

town. There is a station just beyond the tent church. Have them put two more new tires on your car. Ask them to find some rims that are not bent and put them on the car. Have them change the oil and do all the maintenance work on the car that is needed." I saw his lip being to to quiver and he politely, but not very convincingly resisted. "Oh, pastor! That will take a lot of money!". Before he could say anything else I stopped and simply said, "that's O.K. , God has plenty!" Once again, the support you sent me with met an unexpected need.

The worship at the bush church in Number One this morning was amazing. I have been struggling personally on this trip. There is a family relationship issue back home that reared it's head just about the time I arrived in Kenya (imagine that!!!!). It has been a major distraction to my thinking and praying and a consistent thief of my rest. The accuser came in full force this morning as I prepared to leave for the preaching assignment. Typical accusations. "So, you're going to go tell them how to live the victorious Christian life? You don't look very victorious to me."

In my youth, I would argue with the accuser and try to defend myself. In these later years, I have learned that most of his accusations are laced with more than just a little bit of truth. So.....I thanked him. I thanked the accuser for reminding me of my desperate situation. My broken heart. My wounded spirit and bruised pride. And then I turned on my laptop and let some worship music wash over me.

I simply preached myself happy

In minutes, the fog began to clear. It was obvious where the Lord was taking me to preach from. I would preach about the unmerited favor and unconditional love of God. They don't hear much grace here in Kenya. (Come to think of it, we don't hear that much grace in America). It's more performance, self help, positive thinking that should lead to victory and prosperity.

The longer I preached, the lighter my heart became. I actually began to believe the words coming from my own mouth. I watched the crowd as first came the tears and then the smiles.....and then the lifted hands.....and then.....the shouts of joy as the message of God's unmerited love toward us stripped away every ounce of religious performance in the room. The pastor was so overwhelmed by the grace message, that he had to preach another 40 minutes just affirming what God had said to his own heart. **I simply preached myself happy.** There's no other way to describe it. The problem is still there. There is still a dull ache in the corner of my heart. But the truth is setting me free.

I am learning (fresh again) that it is not my "health" nor the condition of my heart that brings the power of God. It the presence of His Holy Spirit that empowers "HIS" Word and brings "HIS" truth.

I sure hate the process of this thing called dependancy. I sure love the end product of it!

As I sit here in my room writing, the team is out in the marketplace doing another open-air evangelistic rally. I didn't go. I want

them to "do it without me". I am trying desperately to model for our Kenyan leaders what I have taught them for years now. A very important part of discipleship is giving our disciples the opportunity to succeed or fail on their own. There is no classroom like the classroom of dependancy. If I thought I could "sneak in" to the marketplace and watch, I would. But I don't think this much white skin and white hair can be very easily hidden. I'll wait.....and pray. I know the report around the dinner table tonight will be lively.

Sunday, July 25 8:35 P.M. There weren't enough words for the team to tell all they saw today. The team divided into three teams and ministered at the two slum churches and the tent church in the Market in Kitale. They tried.....they just couldn't express all they saw and experienced.

They did realize how valuable it is for us to spend the money and time to come visit these people. The encouragement that comes to them from just seeing our faces.....knowing there are others across the globe who know about their work, their lives, their needs.....it brings a strange but amazingly strong encouragement.

I am seeing the deep gaze in some of the teams eyes now. That gaze that is beginning to assimilate what they have seen and is now moving into the danger zone.....**what is my response to what I have seen and experienced.** This trip will cost some of these college students their lives (as they knew them). For the rest, they will never look at the world, a meal, a hot shower or a smoothly paved road the same again. For all of them

and me.....we are just beginning to understand the amazing love that God has for **ALL** of his children.

And me. I am proud and pleased. Proud that I obeyed God and came. Pleased that I have been able to invite others to share in this amazing ministry field.

Tonight is a strange night for me. They come several times in a trip like this. At the end of such a spiritually adrenaline fueled day, there is always that "reentry drop-off". I am having that now. The room is quiet. It is lonely. I miss Teresa. I want access to the internet so I can send this to you and you can join me in rejoicing and praying for all the Lord has done and what he will do with the remainder of our schedule. But.....it's just me. Hopefully sleep will come easy tonight. It will be a cool night tonight. The thermometer on my alarm clock reads 67 degrees already. The rains are coming. It will be in the upper 50's before I wake. Thank God for the gift of the Masai warrior blanket I received yesterday. It will help tonight. Praise God for the cool. **NO MOSQUITOS** in my room!!! I may not have to fight the mosquito net tonight. You know, it really is the little things.....

Monday, July 26; 6:00 A.M.

Good nights sleep. Rain woke me about 3 A.M. Praying for the roads. Two of the teams have to travel to the bush today and the roads will be very slick. No electricity this morning. Usually comes and goes with the rain. Cold in my room.....59 degrees. Looking forward to what the day has, praying for the three teams as we go to our different assignments.

As surely as the rain bringeth forth the crops, the reign of God brings forth the harvest.

Monday, July 26; 10 P.M. The rain did not stop. Neither did we. Neither did the leaders traveling from every corner of the Turbo region on their way to the base church in the tiny community called "Number One". The roads were terrible. We stopped in the market about 2 miles from the church and I hired two strong young men to ride with us for what I thought was the inevitable pushing that had to lie ahead. *Oh ye of little faith!!* We drove through every mud hole and crept down the slick clay roads all the way to the church. Not so much as a smudge on my pants.

WHEN LEADERS MEET TO WORSHIP, THE INTENSITY REACH AN ENTIRELY NEW LEVEL

The conference participants didn't have it quite so easy. Rain brings the bush country in Kenya to a standstill. Some of these men and women rode public transport as far as they could and then walked the remaining couple of miles in the rain, mud and through the corn fields. Some were a bit late (not by Kenyan time!), but finally the church was full. All eleven churches from the region were represented with pastors and leaders present and ready to worship. I taught for six hours with a one hour break for some **"swallow-ship"**. New word for me too!! It's a hybrid.....fellowship plus eating equals swallowship. Seldom do these men and women get to spend a day together as leaders and friends. Never do they sit a a feast of roast chicken with all of the trimmings.....**at your expense.**

The worship was unbridled.



TURBO



UNBRIDLED



OVERWHELMED



"SWALLOW-SHIP"



NUMBER ONE

I can't believe God let's me do this!!

Singing, shouting, dancing, and expressions of praise and prayer that convicted me deeply. **Why, in all of my wealth and health can I not appreciate the presence of God so readily and freely?** I'm guessing it has something to do with my level of dependency (on God) vs. theirs?

These men and women are unschooled in so many ways. In so many other ways.....they have completed graduate studies in faith and the practical expression of the daily Christian walk that they should earn them the title of **"Doctor of faith"**. Their teachable spirits and sponge thirsty hearts are rich soil for a preacher to labor in. The six hours passed and I could have stayed the night with them if my voice would have tolerated the strain.

Today will easily be the high point of their year, so far. The fact that an American would travel through the muddy bush roads to teach and fellowship with them boggles their mind. The encouragement today brought was impossible to hide in their brightened eyes.

While we ate lunch, the sun appeared. The roads dried and everyone knew the journey home would be a piece of cake compared to the travel this morning.

I could do this *all day every day!!!* These people love being taught the Word more than I love teaching it. That is a match made in heaven!!

The rest of the U.S. team split up this morning, with half going to Mt. Elgon for a leadership conference and the other half staying in Kitale to work at the feeding station, preach the noon

services at the tent church in the market, and then hold another open air evangelistic meeting in the afternoon. They (the team) have hit their stride. The intimidation is gone. They have fallen in love with these people. They are ministering with the same abandon that these people receive the mercies of God with.

Tonight, Richard and Helen (the area ministry overseers) hosted the team in their home for a Kenyan feast. Roast chicken and all the trimmings topped off with ice cream and fresh picked sweet bananas. This from a couple who live on \$300 per month in support!!! When I protested to Helen that it was too extravagant, she rebuked me and reminded me that it was an honor and a privilege to serve the servants of God in her home. Humbling.....truly.....humbling.

Tomorrow is our last day in Kitale. Half of us will travel back to Mt. Elgon for the conclusion of the leadership conference, the other half will remain in town for work at the feeding station, evangelistic meetings and the noon worship service at the tent.

Tomorrow night?.....**Party time!!!** We have given the cooks at the orphanage money (*yours*) to go buy chicken and all the trimmings for a party. Some of the team is going to scour the city tomorrow to try to find decorations and party favors for the orphans. I will wager it will be the first party some of them have ever attended. We are going to laugh, play games, eat and love on these orphan children as much as they will let us. The impression tomorrow night will leave

on the team and the orphans will be indelible. I can't wait.

It has been a long day. A hard day. I am physically exhausted. But my mind is spinning recalling the conversations, the prayer requests and the sights and sounds of worship. I hope I can bridle my emotions enough to fall to sleep. The rain (and the resulting time spent in prayer) robbed me of rest last night. I have to refresh. Tomorrow will be another full day of ministry.

I can't believe God let's me do this! Amazing Grace.



MIKE CURRY



WE GO TO THEM.....NO MATTER HOW MUDDY IT IS!!

Adventure on Mt. Elgon

The motto of Global Field Evangelism is: WE GO TO THEM! I know that is Biblical. I believe it is God's plan for spreading the good news. I just wonder sometimes why he put "them" so far back in the bush!!!!

We woke to a beautiful sunshiny day. But, yesterday's rains had done their damage to the roads in Mt. Elgon. As we tried to make the trip up the mountain to view and pray over the property where the Bible School/ Training Center will one day stand, we

found Kenyan roads that even Land Cruisers can't conquer. I heard not one word of complaining as we climbed out of the vehicle and into the slop that was supposed to be a road. After recruiting some native help, we were on our way again. The view from the



CAPTURE THE THOUGHT



7 TO A WOODEN BENCH



LOSING TOES TO INSECTS

The next generation will never learn to do ministry sitting in the pews. They have to get in the streets!

two acres atop Mt. Elgon is breathtaking. I closed my eyes and could hear the sound of Bible classes being taught, discussion groups solving the issues of the leading the local Kenyan church. I imagined sitting in a rocker on the wrap around porch and taking in the view of God's amazing creation while discussing God's word with tired Kenyan servants who had come to the training center for rest and renewal. When I opened my eyes....there was still just the overgrown fields. But soon.....very soon.....

The men once again traveled for miles to come to the training

SEEING THESE YOUNG PREACHERS PRAY WITH NEW BELIEVERS IS A TOUCH OF HEAVEN FOR ME

conference. I have already told you how hungry they are. How readily they grab hold of God's promises and the practical applications brought by veteran pastors and teachers. There is simply never enough time, but after a few hours we had to make our way back down the mountain to join the team back in Kitale town for our last round of open-air evangelistic meetings. The college students were to take the reins today....do all the preaching and share all the testimonies. My dream was coming true. A new generation of American students bringing the Gospel to a new generation of Kenyan believers.

The young preachers did a wonderful job. The Gospel was clear, and their courage showed that God was honoring their obedience.



STUDENT PREACHER



STUDENT PREACHER



THEY COME



THEY WORSHIP

Bring the fatted calf!!

I know they will never forget today. Neither will those who heard and received the Good News for the very first time.

I don't know how many I have seen come to Christ. But I do know, it never gets old!! Honestly, I had rather watch these young preachers kneel and pray with new converts than see an entire village respond to one of my sermons!! The Kingdom is in good hands. There is a new generation coming from the bench to take over for us warriors who are losing a step. I believe they will win it for Christ in the fourth quarter of this warfare for souls.

Oh, I almost forgot. At Mt. Elgon I was greeted with some surprising news. There is to be a mass wedding in September. Relax.....we haven't gone "cult" yet. Most of the pastors in the Mt. Elgon region have never formally married their wives. Most have been living with their wives for several years and have many children (the fewest children a Mt. Elgon pastor has is 7. The most is 19!). It simply wasn't their custom to have a wedding ceremony. Now, after studying the scriptures and beginning to understand the importance of marriage and what it truly means, they want to publicly testify to the community that they are united in HOLY wedlock!! I never taught them this! Our staff has never mentioned it. God just revealed to them that this should happen. Bishop Ben is coming to conduct the service. It will be an incredible ceremony! God spoke to me and said a party like this deserves a feast. I stood and asked the men if there was a cattle rancher in the area who had the most prime and fattest beef on the

mountain. One man stood and said he knew the man. I told him to go buy the fattest calf the man had and have it slaughtered and prepared for the wedding feast in September. And you thought the Old Testament was ancient history!!! Shouts and applause filled the room. I don't know what that calf is going to cost me, but I know it will be worth every dime (sorry, shilling).

After a day jammed with ministry we had one more assignment on our plate. **A PARTY!!!**

We promised the orphans that on our last night in Kitale, we would join them for a party. No reason. No special occasion. Just to celebrate our friendship together. The money was provided and extra cooks were hired for the day. The team went to town and found crepe paper for the decorations the children would make at our school today. The decorations were hung. The chickens and all the trimmings were prepared. The Cokes and bottles of Fanta lined the table. And the festivities began!!!

Maybe the first party these kids have ever had. I know this. It's one party I will never forget. I don't which I enjoyed more.....the looks of joy and delight on the children's faces, or the looks of pure pleasure on the faces of the U.S. team who had provided the evening.

Just a party. Just some chicken and Cokes and a little crepe paper. For those who have been left alone in this world. Well.....they are not alone. Not tonight.

I am exhausted. Before I started typing I washed the mud from my sandals so they can dry over night. I

can't even sleep with myself with this odor. I'm pretty sure I felt something crawling in my hair just a minute ago. I'd do it all again in a heartbeat!! **Wait a minute!.....**We do do it all again....tomorrow. Early departure for Nakuru. We will stop to visit a new school and feeding station there and pray over the children. Then on to the market for another open-air evangelistic meeting before going to the game park for a safari on Thursday. I am pretty sure seeing all the wonderful animals God placed in Kenya will pale in comparison to seeing the amazing grace God has put on display these past few days.

Enjoy the photo page from the party.

ORPHAN PARTY



ORPHANS AT A FEST? OUTCASTS BROUGHT IN FROM THE STREETS FOR A PARTY?

ALMOST SOUNDS LIKE I HAVE READ SOMETHING LIKE THAT BEFORE?!!!

I SAW A GLIMPSE OF THE BANQUET TABLE TONIGHT. HEAVEN IS GOING TO BE SOME SERIOUS FUN!!!!



MIKE CURRY



AN OASIS OF GOD'S BEAUTY IN THE MIDST OF SUCH POVERTY AND NEED

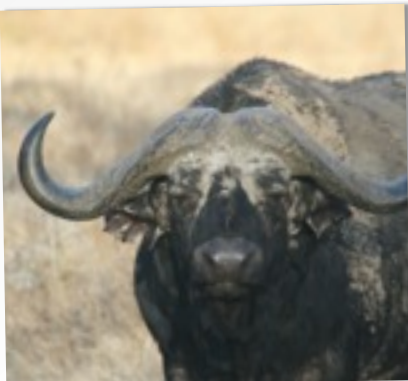
A STUDY IN CONTRAST

Wednesday, July 28, 9:42 P.M.

No matter how many time I come to Africa or how many teams I bring, I am never ready for this day in our itinerary. For some on each team, this will be their one and only trip to Africa. We have walked among the

poor and the starving. Ministered in places where the stench will be imprinted in our nostrils forever. But there is a beauty to God's creation in Africa that may be unparalleled anywhere else in the world.

Today we visited one of the poorest slums in Nakuru. We saw a "start-up" feeding station with 37 starving children and no budget. They (some of the local church members) are teaching the children and giving them a portion of their personal food.



THE BOSS



THE BOSS'S BOSS



TROUBLE

Sometimes, I just need to be reminded

Tonight, I sat in a four star game park with our team and we dined on pork tenderloin, beef steak, fresh rolls and a wonderful chocolate dessert. I'm sitting in my "safari tent" looking at my gorgeous hand carved poster bed with the down filled wildlife print comforter and my perfect mosquito net in place.

I listened to the team members a few minutes ago as they shared their impressions of the past few days. We sat by the fire (yes, it is "jacket" cool here tonight). We lounged in overstuffed chairs. I walked to my tent under a full moon and stars that I only see in the darkness of an African night. And.....I can't explain it.

Why some have so much and others have so little. I know the team is struggling with that tonight. It is a good struggle. One we should all have.

I am blessed to be wealthy. I tell God that every night I lie down in Africa and try to push back the scenes of starvation and disease long enough to invite the much needed sleep. I just don't know what to do with nights like tonight.

Tomorrow we will go on safari. We will ride among some of God's most amazing handiwork in the wild.....just as He created it so many years ago. I am an outdoorsman. I love the wild. I never get tired of this scene.

The beauty of God's creation brings a much needed reminder to my questions of why and how. He is so much bigger than all the needs I am trying to process. He is so much wealthier than all of the budgets I am trying to project and balance. And he loves us so much more than I can even imagine.

When I type the last phrase tonight, I am going outside to sit under this amazing sky. Sleep would be a serious waste on this scene. I need to stop. I need to be quiet. I need to see the stars twinkling and know that the Father is watching. He is watching over me. He is watching over my family while I am away. And He is watching over those children that are snuggling next to each other along the roadside tonight in a futile effort to stay warm.

I can't reconcile it. I have to rest in His presence. And tonight I am grateful that He is the God of my hand carved bed, of my home in Arkansas and of the loneliest cold ditch in Kenya.

I need to be overwhelmed. I'm not God. I can't fix Kenya. I need to be overwhelmed.....I have never hung a star no caused the moon to light up the landscape. I need to be overwhelmed. I don't have the creativity to design the wildlife that dots these plains like so many colorful ornaments on a Christmas tree. Sometimes.....I just need to be reminded of who I am. And.....who I am NOT.

Thursday, July 29; 6:20 P.M.

The long and winding road out of the Great Rift Valley finally led us up the mountains and back to Nairobi. The team is exhausted (as am I!). The travelling on these roads takes more out of you than the ministry portion ever does.

We will be headed back to the Java House for some wonderful "Western style" cooking and then a good night's sleep in comfortable beds with hot showers for everyone!! Remember.....***it's the little things.***

Tomorrow we head to the largest slum in Nairobi to visit a start-up feeding station and school and then on to the slum church for a one-day pastor's conference. Then the U.S. teams heads to the airport for their marathon travel back to the states. I'll take Saturday to "get my legs back under me", and then preach in one of our Nairobi churches Sunday before flying out Sunday night about Midnight.

We are not through. I am praying that I and the team don't let down just because we are out of the bush. The next ministry may be the most important? Only God knows.

We are finishing empty. Most of the team has left their clothes behind. I think they are all out of money. Lives have been born.....lives have been changed.....no one touched by this trip will ever remain the same.

Your prayers have been our fuel. Your support, the platform from which we have launched in new territory. Thank you sounds weak, but it is appropriate.

NOTE: When I sent the two prayer updates yesterday it confused some of you. MY BAD!! They had the same header but were different prayer journals. You can go online tomorrow and read the entire journals (to date).

I will try to write once more before leaving for the U.S. Thank you.....(have I said that already? If I have, I haven't said it enough!!).



MIKE CURRY



THE TEAM BRAVELY WALKS INTO THE CENTER OF A NAIROBI SLUM THAT SEES FEW WHITE FACES

Mathare Slum.....an island of humanity

Friday, July 30; 9:50 P.M.

I have been trying to visit the Mathare slums in Nairobi for several years now. Every time I plan to visit the work there, our Kenyan staff has restrained me saying it was too risky. It is a violent place. A filthy place. A

disease and poverty-ridden place at a level that is beyond my descriptive capacity and the lens of my camera. Chris Rogers (pastor with the Texas team) described it best this afternoon at the pastor's conference: *"it's like there is this island of humanity and they*

are surrounded by an inescapable ocean of need". Well said.

We drove through roads as muddy as the one we traveled in the bush earlier this week. But this mud was not from the rains. It was from the raw sewage that drains through every



HOPELESS



A SEWER RUNS THROUGH IT



BABY COFFINS

A ray of the hope of God FINALLY broke through.

street and into many of the shanties these people call home.

A hush fell over this team of college students and young adult leaders as we walked through the narrow pathways and sunk deeper into the despair called Mathare with each step. It wasn't fear that stopped their mouths. Though, I'm sure there was plenty of well deserved fear in the team members. It was a hush of a loss for words. What do you? WHAT COULD YOU SAY?!!!!.....to this level of poverty, pain and suffering?

Pastor Harrison, who was our host for the day, has sent these native "missionaries" into this place from his

WE GOTTA' CARRY SOME WATER TO THE DESERT. GOTTA STOP THIS HAULIN' WATER TO THE SEA!

church. Five members of his church ride unbelievably crowded public 1 1/2 hours each way every day. When they arrive in the slum, they begin to prepare for the classes they will teach at the school and the two meals they will serve to these starving street children. Of the over 130 children who come each day, 65 of them have been "certified" by the staff as complete orphans. On our drive into the slum, we had to stop our van several times to allow a toddler.....I'm talking about a child that could barely walk!!!!.....cross in front of our van. They are on their own!

But.....in the middle of the most desperately hopeless situation I have encountered in all of my travels, a ray of the hope of God finally broke through.

As we made our way to the tiny classroom, we were greeted with

MATHARE



HOME SWEET HOME



STUDY IN CONTRAST



GO!!!!!!!!!!



NICE THOUGHT



Thank you for shaking me.....I needed it!

poems, songs and Bible verses. The children were clothed (though raggedly) and were perfectly behaved. As they presented their program to the team, I sat beside the headmaster as he continued to fill out their report cards. I couldn't help but think.....*who will they take them home to.*

We are not financing any of this work. Pastor Harrison's church decided they couldn't just cluck their tongues and wag their heads at the plight of this cesspool of humanity. They **sent workers out into this field.**

Talk about a field ripe unto harvest! Any message of Good News will be the only good news these people have ever heard.

I don't know what to do with what I saw, smelled and touched today. I know this.....I am going to answer the only request the staff made of me. I am going to send them the money to bring in enough fill dirt to raise the floor in one of classrooms so that it will stay above "flood stage" when the rains come and the sewer invades their class.

Is that enough? **No!!**

In the "big scheme of things" will that really change the conditions these children live in? **NO!!!**

Does raising one floor in one classroom make any difference? **YOU BET IT DOES!!!**

I told them I would do it. It is the only thing they have to look forward to (today). The difference it makes is.....**it gives them some hope.**

Hope that if they can't "get off this island" called Mathare, at least someone can send a ship with supplies to sustain them.

I pictured my two sweet little granddaughters sloshing through the sewer to get to school. I imagined my new grandson toddling across a street with no one to watch him or to watch for him. That would never happen! That WILL never happen as long as I am alive.

I have to do something. These brave volunteers are putting their lives on the line every day they walk into this slum to minister to these children. The volunteer pastor who has planted the one room church in the middle of this slum deserves a helping hand.

I have to believe God wants to reach into one of those classrooms and pick choice fruit that will bring him glory that could never come from "normal living conditions". If a child escapes that island, follows God and becomes the captain of the supply ship back to those people.....what a tribute to the grace and mercy of God.

I can't captain the ship. I can't stock it full of supplies. But I can bring my little container, add it to the pile, and wish the crew God's speed as they sail to this island of hopelessness carrying the precious cargo of God's love.

"Thank you Father for today. For shaking me to my very core! For not allowing me to escape into my normal American justification of my inactivity and excuse that what little I might do doesn't really matter. Thank you that what I do matters. Thank you that everything that is done matters. It matters to you. It

matters to these children. It matters to the Kingdom. And it matters to me. It matters to me because I can no longer be allowed to bask in the sauna of ignorance. I have seen. I have smelled. I have touched. And.....I will continue to touch. With my skin. With my flesh. With my heart. With my prayers. And with a portion of the abundance you have given to me.

Thank you for shaking me. I needed it."