

May-June 2015

It was hard to send rough drafts or recordings of our translated stories to our AIM consultant, and hard to get enough bandwidth to receive his messages back. But little by little the team was getting the hang of the process, and making progress. We sensed they would make even more progress when school was out and they were no longer teaching classes at the high school.

Ministry flourished. Two business owners were meeting with Joseph and Peter to craft stories together. Nathaniel and Patience were reading the Scriptures together in their home. Colin and I continued to visit with Greg and Abigail, Robert and Sharon's families. One week when we went to Bethany on the day I normally would have visited Sharon, she fussed at me. "Please, if you have to skip our meeting one day, could we reschedule for another?" Whenever Colin went anywhere, men invited him to come sit with them in the shade and discuss matters of spiritual interest.

It distressed me that Nancy seemed to be less interested in spiritual things. When I went to visit her family, she listened with the other women, but rarely commented during our discussions and often changed the subject. Her husband Timothy, however, grew more interested. His job kept him busy in another town, and his visits home were infrequent, but whenever he came, he was glad to read Scripture with Colin. Once when we were on our way to Bethany, we stopped by the small booth where he and his colleague inspected trucks for illegal contraband. To our surprise, they were reading the Bible storybook he had bought from us. "Do you have any other Bible books," they asked, "and next time you stop by here, can you bring them?"

Old Kellie and her visiting daughter, Bonnie, were as interested as Timothy. When Bonnie arrived to stay with her mother from Zanzibar, she emphasized how devoutly Muslim she was. As we took no notice of her outward gestures and side comments, however, and simply treated her with friendly kindness as though there were no difference between us, she relaxed. Whenever I went to visit Kellie, Bonnie was there. Day after day I shared Scriptures that demonstrated God's grace and Jesus' perfection, beauty and salvation.

One day I found Kellie alone. "I am so old, and probably going to die soon. I am afraid of the judgment. I have not been a good person," she confessed. "I think I know why you are afraid to die, Kellie. It's because you are not yet in God's family. If you had been born again, you would know God as your Father and you would not be afraid to go meet Him." "But how can a person be born when they are old?" she asked. So we read John 3 together, and I explained about the new birth through faith in Christ. Then I prayed for her health, and for the health of one of Nancy's relatives, who had suffered a stroke.

The next day when I went back to check on how she was feeling, Bonnie met me as soon as she saw me coming. “My mom is better! And the lady you prayed for who had a stroke is so much better, they have canceled plans to take her to the hospital.” Kellie was beaming. “Tell Bonnie what you shared with me yesterday about how to be part of God’s family.” So we reviewed it all again, then chatted about other things. As I prepared to go home, they stopped me. “Can’t we pray that prayer to be in God’s family?” So we did. Then Bonnie said, “You need to go share this with Ann. She wants to know how to be in God’s family also.” Bonnie and Ann, I learned, had been discussing these things when they went to draw water at the well. “I have to travel tomorrow,” I answered, “but you can read this passage to Ann and share with her how to pray and ask God for birth into His family.” I left the Bible with her and marked John 3 for her.

Oh, it was hard to leave the village this time! When we returned in July we would only have ten days to say our goodbyes before returning to the USA. During the month of June, while Colin and I went to Nairobi, each of the team members chose another place to visit, to observe and learn. Termed “month-out,” it was an opportunity for them to broaden their exposure to missions. They enjoyed it. But we were all painfully, acutely aware our time together was drawing to a close.

Below: Bonnie and old Kellie

