

Intensive Care Ministries-Africa



May 2024

“As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.”
Psalm 103:12

Sometimes it is impossible to not think Scripture. No matter the situation, when the Lord puts His Word in our mind, and writes it on our heart, it seems to flow like a river...never ending and always refreshing! Here is the special backstory on how the Lord recently brought Psalm 103:12 to mind.

When we inaugurated the Bible College program in Monrovia, Liberia, this past March we had the opportunity to experience firsthand just how expansive the continent of Africa really is--how far the east is from the west! Going from our home in Moshi, Tanzania, on the eastern side of Africa to Liberia on the western side is virtually the same distance as travelling round trip from our home in Saint Petersburg, FL to our ministry headquarters in Mentone, CA, and then all the way back to Saint Petersburg! How is that for context?

After a long day of travel, Jim arrived in Monrovia tired and missing all of the checked luggage. All the student materials and his clothing were still sitting in Nairobi, and there wasn't another flight between the two cities for 2 more days! *East Africa* is truly a world away from *west Africa*. Psalm 103:12 instantly came to mind.



Upon seeing Liberia during daylight hours, one is struck by the beauty of the countryside. Recent rains had turned everything a lush green. However, the rains had done little



to mitigate the intense heat, that was made all the more challenging by the extremely high humidity. Not even South Sudan's 113 degrees could have prepared us for this—and no air conditioning to be found! We asked the Lord to help us make our response to this uncomfortable situation a positive witness to our Liberian brothers and sisters in Christ.

Liberia was founded in 1822 by freed African slaves returning from the Americas. It achieved independence in 1847. Today, Liberia is mostly inhabited by indigenous Africans, with the slaves' descendants comprising only 5% of the population. Our initial interactions with the students revealed that they seem more connected to U.S. culture than their African culture. Quite a few were not prepared for the sheer intensity and seriousness of the Bible college training. One student simply never came back from a break on the first day and another departed after the second



day. Of the 18 that remained, it was clear that a good number were not suited for the work involved with the 2-year diploma program.

This unique program was designed by Tanzanian pastors to ensure that maximum use is made of the limited time that students are in session. This approach ensures that the pastors are away from their churches and families the absolute minimum time. Like it or not, the program's rigor tends to weed out those who are not willing to work hard to improve their pulpit ministry.

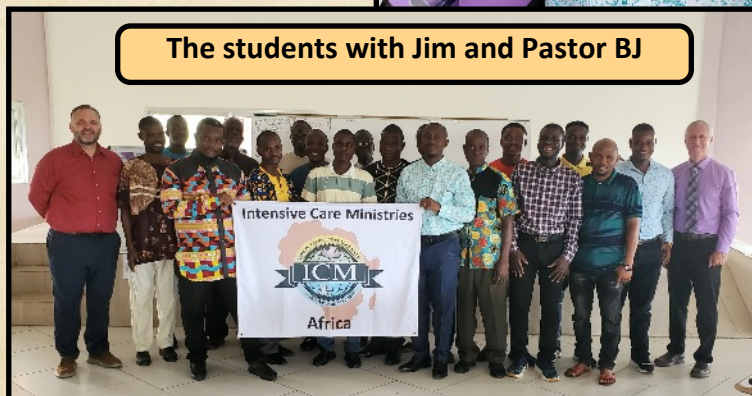
After several days of working with the students and the host pastor, Emmanuel, we were able to identify which students would be qualified and capable to continue in the program. The remaining students would be given the opportunity to continue in the certificate program, and receive credit for the session they had just completed. We are not sure when we will be able to begin that program for them, but we will do what we can to honor the work they have already done.

The plan is for Jim and Pastor BJ (a former missionary in Tanzania) to return in June, and again in the fall of this year to continue the diploma program. In the meantime, the locals are going to try to secure or build a suitable facility to house the students and teachers, and a classroom that is more conducive to the learning environment. Please be praying for their efforts, as we find

This pastor traveled from Guinea to Liberia to attend, and he is asking for us to bring the program to his country.



The students with Jim and Pastor BJ



it is always a little more challenging without having someone on the ground with them to work through the issues. Another full-time missionary is needed there!

CONTRIBUTIONS PAYABLE & MAILED TO:

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Note "LARSON" in Memo of check

On-line giving available through our website



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PRAYER REQUESTS

- Praise that we graduated the 35th class of diploma students last month! And we have started the 50th class which will graduate in 2026! The Lord is on the move!
- Pray for both of us as we go to South Sudan to conduct the graduation for the first class of pastors there on May 5. That will be a very celebratory occasion. They have been a joy to work with!
- Again, we will both travel to Malawi May 14-24 to conduct the first diploma session there. Pray for our travel, as well as the preparation of the facilities there. Another pastor from the US will be joining us there to teach with Jim.
- Pray for our church as we are reaching out among the local missionary community to find men to fill the pulpit on Sundays when Jim isn't here. And pray for the Lord to bring us just the right person to fill that role long term.