

Wednesday, July 23, 2008

Dear Family and Friends,

We arrived back in Uganda the end of May on a Thursday afternoon. Sunday after arriving, I had 7 pregnant ladies come for check-ups. Some of them were past due, telling me that they had waited for me to come home. I did their check ups in-between the Triennial Session Meetings, that I was apart of.

When the meetings were over the Sudan pastor's training started, keeping Darrel busy.

It was about a week before I could go out to Cissy's land. Since the builders were tied up for a couple of weeks we decided to go out and do what we could to get sand and stones brought to the sight and to clear the land so that the dump trucks could come in and turn around and provide a place where they could pile bricks.

Harmony, Cissy, the 2 babies and I went out to work.



Every day we either hauled sand from near the river, rocks from the mountain, or water from the river. We hauled the stuff in basins on our heads. Transportation costs are so high and since the sand and rocks are close, we chose to try and save some money and not hire a truck for all of that. Gas costs more here than in the US and every vehicle is imported. We could have hired local people to help, but since I was a foreigner, they wanted to charge me more than the cost of a dump truck. So day after day Cissy and I carried things to the building site. Harmony watched the babies and stuff mostly, but she also carried things on her head when she was tired of staying with the babies, or when Cissy was

feeding them.

There are a lot of small scrubby trees on Cissy's land. It seems that everything has thorns on them. There are tiny thin thorns,



others have long spikes, like the ones growing on this sweet, berry like fruit. There are other wild bush fruits that grow on other thorn trees.



The worst of the thorns are the ones like in this picture that have strong, razor sharp hooks on them.



The tree is deceiving to look at, with soft feathery leaves,

like this bush next to Cissy. If you happen to brush one of the branches, a hook grabs you and goes deep into your skin. You can't just pull away, you must stop and carefully visualize the thorn to remove it out the way it went in, or you will make a gash in your skin. The problem is while you are trying to get one out another grabs you and goes in. It is best to avoid the soft looking tree, if at all possible. It is so much like Satan's ways, soft and harmless looking, but deadly when he gets you caught, he pulls you deeper and deeper into his trap.

With this thorn tree, you learn to see the soft leaves and try to stay far away. So we should stay away from the things that look too nice, easy and inviting, things that the Bible and our consciences warn us against.

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One day as I traveled down the bush road, swinging my empty basin that we use for caring things in; a boy about 13, passed me on a bike. He was caring a sack with seed for planting, on the back of his bike. A few moments later I rounded the curve and saw him scrambling out of the bushes and trying to right his bike. He had rounded the curve going down a hill on his bike. Right in front of him was a big bull standing crosswise in the road, his horns and head hidden in the bushes, eating something. The boy's bike had no brakes.

The bulls here are usually not aggressive and run with the cows, but even a gentle bull might not be so happy to be hit broad side in the stomach with a bike. The boy did the only thing he could do, and that was to crash into what ever was there at the side of the road. The things that grow best on the rocky soil here seem to be thorns, so it is not surprising that he crashed into a thorn tree. Too bad for him, though, it was one of these terrible thorn trees with the hooked ends. He had several long gashes down one arm. When I got close to him, he stood next to his righted bike holding his upper arm. There was no grimace on his face and he didn't show any sign of pain, except that he was holding the gashed arm. I saw several thorns still stuck in his temples and carefully removed them. The gashes were not so deep although long, and he would soon be fine. I think he was more worried over the bike, than his wounds.

Needless to say we have all gotten thorns in our hands, feet and ripped our clothes, because of the many kinds of thorns.

Harmony had been complaining to me for several days about a thorn in her big toe that was bothering her. I had looked at it with a flashlight the night before in the tent, but I had forgotten to bring a pin with me for removing slivers etc. and it was straight in. We gave up trying to get it out and went to sleep.

The next day we were hauling water from the river up to the building sight on our heads and she started to complain again that the thorn in her toe was really hurting.

I suggested that we find a long thin thorn. We could use it like a needle. Harmony found me several very thin ones and she sat down on a root holding her foot up for me to work on. They were very sharp and thin like a pin, but too soft and bent too easily. She then found and brought to me one of the strong curved ones and it worked well, helping me to remove the troublesome thorn.



There is even a caterpillar that I saw with what looked like thorns al over its hairless body. It was fat (maybe as big around as a dime) and was beautifully colored; yellow, black, green and cream. The red “thorns” were jutting out on both sides of its body, warning every, would be predator to stay away. I was told that they really sting. I wanted to get you a picture of caterpillars with thorns on them so much, but when I went back a couple of days later it was gone so you will just have to imagine.



I don't know what this is, but they told me it is "snakes food." That is what they tell children for anything they don't want them to eat.

The latrine is completed, with a bathing shelter attached. Darrel went out and has poured the footings. So much work! No truck to come and dump cement.

Here are a few pictures of the work.





This is a little girl helping to carry bricks.



It started to rain, so the kids ran to hide in the latrine to keep dry. None of them live in homes with a tin

roof, and so this was fun!

Please keep praying for the work on her home! Also that we may all have wisdom, here and there where you live, to do the work in the way God would have each of us to do it. We are not wise enough ourselves to know what is best in each situation!

God Bless!!

Kristina

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Our phone number here is 011(if you are calling from the USA) 256 774-803-909 or 256 712-58-5584 or 256 - 47 - 642 - 0650. You can call between 12:00 midnight and 1 pm. EST. We have a cell phone, but it doesn't cost us anything if you call us. Of course it does cost you.

Our Address is: South Sudan Field  
PO Box 823  
Arua Uganda (no, I didn't forget the zip. There isn't one).