



FAR REACHING MINISTRIES



A home for Alice

THREE WOMEN'S JOURNEYS

This newsletter is about three widows and their journey from terror to Christ. To understand them, I must tell you about the level of extreme terror and suffering they have endured. I recently was told that someone was offended by the graphic nature of our messages. I responded by sharing that the problem is that things just keep getting worse. If I do not give some semblance of what is going on, people will have no understanding of what others are going through in the world today. I purposely do not share the most graphic atrocities and, sadly, the situation is growing more extreme each day. I believe most people have no idea how much their brothers and sisters in Christ, around the world, need our support. I also believe God has called Far Reaching Ministries (FRM) to be a voice for the voiceless. I understand that this level of evil and suffering takes some people outside their comfort zone. At the same time, Hebrews 13:3 ends with a very strong admonition, *Remember those who are in prison, as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated, as if you yourselves were suffering.* For this reason, I need to warn you that this newsletter does contain details about the persecution

in Africa that are not appropriate for children and anyone sensitive to such information, so please read ahead carefully and prayerfully, before sharing this with others.

Northern Uganda lived under a reign of terror by one of the most demented serial killers in history. His name is Joseph Kony and his terror organization is called the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued a warrant for his arrest, as a result of his numerous and brutal "crimes against humanity." Kony waged war against the civilians of Northern Uganda, under the guise of taking control of the nation. I have spoken with former soldiers of his who say that when he goes into a killing frenzy, his voice takes on a very evil tone as if it were a demonic being speaking through him. His eyes turn red and roll back into his head, as if in a trance. He hunts children, abducting these innocents from homes or schools, forcing them to rob, kill and destroy, as his own child soldiers. The young girls are given as wives to his men. Using fear and intimidation, he demands absolute sovereignty. The LRA attacks villages, towns, and cities taking every child they

see, and leaving behind unspeakable carnage. The casualties are so horrifying it seems that Satan himself must have been the master of ceremonies. Victims say that he uses the name of God to justify his actions. A family captured is told to wait as Kony takes a few moments to ask God what he should do with them. Moments later, he calmly re-emerges declaring, "God has told me to cut all of you into little pieces." He is known for forcing children to hack their parents to death. Parents hearing his threats, beg to be killed, hoping the child's immediate obedience will placate Kony and spare the child further torture.

This war put over 1,000,000 people into internally displaced persons (IDP) camps where Ugandan troops tried to provide constant security. An entire generation was robbed of their land and livelihood by the LRA. No one has escaped the scars or trauma, both physical and emotional. FRM still supports projects to rebuild the thousands of broken lives. Here, I will share about Canaan Farm, set up just below the border of Northern Uganda in the lush and fertile Masindi district.

Founders, Richard and Suzan Angoma, offer those affected by LRA trauma, a safe haven. They provide a small plot of land to farm, a nearby place to build a home, various training, and Bible studies to rebuild their lives in Christ. Richard was born in Northern Uganda and gave his time and resources to often help family and friends in IDP camps. Suzan, a registered nurse, asked Richard to allow her to come and serve with him. She took her own salary, purchased medical supplies and gave free medical clinics. Richard and Suzan eventually married and opened the family farm and invited those who had suffered at the hands of the LRA to come and live with them.

After 22 years living in war-torn South Sudan, I can say women experience cruelty on an unparalleled level and suffer the most. When a city is overrun by rebels,

gang rape is all too common when women are captured. Age does not discriminate, women from nine to ninety are raped. To further torment the family, husbands and fathers are made to watch, even when innocent women



are subjected to a gang of rapists. Satan seems to have no bottom; there seems to be no end to his depravity. Mothers are forced to watch their children be executed or marched away as prisoners. Wounded and bereft, these women are often then disfigured. Noses, lips, ears, even breasts are severed; leaving lifelong scars to remind them of the night of terror for the rest of their lives.

This letter is about three women's journey from traumatic terror to eternal redemption. Esther and her family were captured by the LRA. Kony declared that they had offended God and her husband must be immediately executed. She was forced to watch as child soldiers savagely hacked him into pieces, until he died. Afterward, she and her son were ordered to grind millet with their hands. They did so, until their hands bled. Kony inspected their bloody flour and announced that they were forgiven. Esther was released, but her son was drafted into the LRA in front of her and she never saw him again. The mental anguish, unrelenting fear, and pain broke Esther. For many years, she existed but her heart and soul felt dead. One day, she heard of a farm, to the south, where victims of the LRA were given land to live and farm. She made the journey hoping and praying she, too, could be set free. At Canaan Farm, Richard and Suzan welcomed her with warmth and

genuine love—she had not felt this in a long time. Just as she had heard, they gave her land and helped her build a new life. Suzan taught a Bible Study every week, and for the first time Esther learned that God loved her and knew her personally by name. The Word of God began to melt her soul and fill it with His love. Esther looked forward to learning more every week and soon made many friends. Esther came to know Christ as her Savior and He has answered her prayer beyond what she ever imagined. She never misses a Bible study and boldly shares her faith everywhere!

Rose and her family were also captured by the LRA. She was given a machete and told to kill her husband. She began to cry and shake her head when the leader shouted, “Stop! Kill him now, or I will kill every member of your family in front of your face!” Her husband looked into her eyes with sorrow and deep love, his lips moved telling her to do it, but he made no sound. No doubt, as parents they longed to



Rose stands next to her new home

spare their children, but it’s impossible to imagine the pain in their hearts. She killed her husband, as the rebels demanded, with tears of anguish streaming silently down her face. A flood of questions raced through her mind: Would her children survive? Would that image of her plunging the machete into their father ever stop haunting them? Could they forgive her? Could she forgive herself?

The shrill orders interrupted her grief, “Line up! March in silence or you die!” Sometime in the night Rose escaped, but she never saw her children again. The pain raged, like a fire inside of her, until one day, she did not want to live anymore. By God’s grace,

she was welcomed to Canaan Farm right at that time. She also began going to Bible study and asked Jesus to be her personal Lord and Savior. Hope began to grow in the fellowship of believers and soon she could say, “Jesus has healed my broken heart!” She fell in love with Jesus because the miracle of forgiveness gave her new life. She also, never misses a Bible study and actively encourages others in the community.

Alice also suffered great loss and years of anguish. She lost her home, her farm, and all her possessions during a raid. Worst of all, her family was separated as they ran to hide in the bush. Unfortunately, two of her sons were abducted as they fled and forced to become LRA child soldiers. As daylight broke, and people emerged from the bush, Alice and her family searched frantically for the boys. Ugandan troops were sent to secure the people and helped investigate the area for the boys. Since their bodies were not found, Alice feared the worst.

For several years, she had no idea where they were taken and one of her sons has never been found. She later found out that her other son was burned to death by the LRA. Alice became despondent and angry. She responded to the call to come to Canaan Farm, and there, she too, found Jesus to be all she needed. She was born again and began to rebuild her life. Alice actively serves Christ and has

been leading a group of women evangelists who go door to door sharing the Gospel. Last year, they led 12 mothers to Jesus during our Love Covers outreach—Jesus redeems and restores.

I met these sisters years ago and heard their testimonies around a campfire. Every story concluded with some variation of, “...then I came to the farm and I met Jesus Christ, now everything has changed.” Their stories were so poignant that amongst the women with us, there was not a dry eye. I am not a man given to tears, though I felt their loss deeply. Last year, we raised funds to build each one of these women a home. They were living in mud huts with grass roofs,

so these new homes are a palace. Each was built a house out of cement brick and sheet metal for the roof—keeping the rain out and the home dry. The homes have one bedroom and a sitting room. When I met with the ladies in April, they were so excited to show Vicky and I their new homes and requested that we pray to dedicate the homes to Christ and His service. They also wanted to offer a prayer of thanksgiving.

When we arrived at each home, we were welcomed with sodas to drink. Each sister beamed as she told us that she could never have dreamed of such a wonderful home. They also said that they slept deeply, because they felt so safe. I shared with the ladies that one of my favorite sounds is rain on a metal roof and rain is my favorite type of weather. I then shared, once I visited a church and was staying at a pastor's house. I noticed they had a metal roof over their balcony. It was raining, so I asked if they minded if I took a sleeping bag to sleep on the balcony. They agreed but seemed confused. That night, I listened to the rain and it was very refreshing. The next day when

I arrived at the church to speak, word had spread that I was too wild to sleep indoors. The ladies laughed at this story. As we prayed, each one held my hand. It was a joy to see how much these houses blessed these women.

Canaan Farm is where our new school, Christ's Crucible, is being built. It has castle-like walls to protect the children from any future terror. Our desire is that children will be educated and equipped with Christ's Word as their foundation. The school will open in 2019 and educate between 600 and 700 students at capacity.

We are also building homes for chaplain widows in South Sudan and many of them have said, "With FRM, we are not alone, we truly have a family that cares for us." We tell them that many believers in the U.S. are praying for them. Whether the widow resides in Uganda or remains in South Sudan, the cost of the home varies. In Uganda, the home is built and painted for \$4,000 (USD), however, the cost is slightly higher in South Sudan at \$5,000 (USD), because of the added transportation fees. If you would like to help build a home for a widow, you can give a donation for all or part of a home and notate "Widow's Home" on the enclosed gift card.

Thank you for all of your prayers and for your continued support. There will always be those unable to empathize with the hurting. I pray that it will not ever be that way in my heart.

Wes Bentley

Wes Bentley

Far Reaching Ministries

May my heart be moved by what moves the heart of God

WIDOW'S HOME



When our chaplains have fought the good fight to the end, laying down their lives so others might live, it is their families who suffer their death the most. This is an opportunity for God's people to help the widows and families of these fallen chaplains. We are building homes for these families who have lost everything. These will not be western style built houses—just bricks, cement and a metal roof. Each house will consist of two rooms with a causeway between the rooms. These homes will be a great blessing to widows and their children, as most people in South Sudan live in a mud hut with a thatched roof.

Each home is about \$5,000, which is more than they would ever be able to afford. To be part of blessing these families, please indicate "WIDOW'S HOME" on the enclosed gift card with your donation. Please join us in prayer as these women take on the monumental task of raising a family on their own.



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