



## Used by *GOD* – 2015 Highlights

Another late newsletter? Yes! It's been an incredibly hectic two months on the road and on the go. I didn't want to send our first newsletter of 2016 without recapping how God used your prayers and generosity in 2015 to make a difference in our life and work in Cameroon.

As I write, I'm filled with deep gratitude for your faithfulness to the work of BFL. I have truly felt the warmth of your concern, seen the effect of your prayers and been moved to give thanks to God for the positive impact your partnership is making as thousands of struggling people across a region plagued with unemployment, uncertainty and confusion are offered hope. Hope and promise that no leader, no nation, no movement could ever equal. Many are responding to that promise and seeing their lives transformed.

2015 was another great year for the ministry of BFL. Lives were touched and changed through our medical and agricultural outreaches. Hundreds of pastors and church leaders were provided much needed training and resources. Hundreds of children were ministered to through our After School & Awanna programs. Some progress was also made in our 250 acre farmland in Dimako, although not as much as we had anticipated. We had five short term teams from the USA

visit our work. Two of those teams were led by two BFL Board members, Dr. Jackson Downey, a medical doctor from Jacksonville, who has made about a dozen other trips to Cameroon and Dr. Roxanne Cheek, another veteran.

Opportunities were given for ministry to various arm of the Cameroonian military and Eric Carter, a police Captain from the Albany Police Dept in Oregon brought timely encouraging words. Ministry was conducted in several prisons across Cameroon. A number of small businesses were initiated through our small business loan program. Orphans were helped through our partnership with Tim & Sara Born and Grace Taite Orphanage.

Our team visited and initiated ministry in the border town of Garoua Bolai where over 20,000 refugees from war torn Central African Republic are camped, most of them are Muslims. We are looking at initiating a church plant and developing sustainable ministries there in 2016.

There are no words in the English lexicon that can adequately express our profound gratitude to you for your partnership. All of

these and more was possible because of your availability to God! Looking forward to serving Him with you in 2016!

With gratitude,

*Ernest Ehabe*  
Ernest Ehabe



▲ Giving hope to the villagers of Akite whose children as young as three walk several miles each day to school. Dr. Roxanne Cheek is raising funds to build two classrooms by September 2016



*Celebrating 21 Years of paving on the BREAD*





•Thankful for 2015  
•Happy for 2016

January 2015 started with a rush of activity for our medical and agricultural outreaches. So was February and March with training for pastors and church leaders across several regions of Cameroon. Prisoners were ministered to spiritually, medically and physically. So much also went on in our land in Dimako which we are developing for sustainable development. I was opportune to visit the USA a couple of time with ministry opportunity across the USA – including ministry to fellow Africans. The list of things to be thankful for 2015 is pretty long. Thank you for being a HUGE part of what happened in 2015!



▲ (photos above) (1) Katherine Bowlus visit with pre-K children (2) Patrick Gaughan leads devotion before medical outreach (3) Marci Hildebrandt & Cameroon nurses plan the days outreach, (4) Dr. Roxanne gives talk on nutrition & agriculture (5) Dr. Roxanne teaching on raising chicken & nutrition in Tombel (6) Walter MORRIS, a five month intern from Jacksonville, FL takes vital signs for doctors.

## In Their *Own* Words

By Michael Bowlus

*M*y mother is a very spiritual person and a close follower of Jesus, but she was beside herself with worry over, what she perceived to be a very high risk adventure. She was worried about me and my wife Katharine traveling to Cameroon on a BFL "vision trip". She had never heard of Bread for Life and couldn't understand why we had to travel so far to tell folks about Jesus.

We traveled through five states of Cameroon and met loving folks from all walks of life. The courage of the people we met and their warm welcome and companionship was a tonic for our souls, a miraculous thing amongst many miracles we saw and experienced. Tired, sometimes sick, dirty and far from home we were carried by the love and friendship Ernest and his crew showed us.

Bread for Life is an ambitious and faithful group of men and women who bring the love of Jesus to remote places in a tangible and effective way. They demonstrate the scripture and everyone knows them by their love. The love of the work the love of the people and the love and care they show each other are testaments to their walk with Jesus. In a very short while I realized that this love came from God and that we would be "ok".

The projects going on, in so many places around those 5 states, was equally exhausting and inspiring to see. The endless hard work and devotion to the tasks, from work in the schools, on the farm, in the "field" to making new outposts where the work would continue long after most "missions" had come and gone, was all done with love and compassion. There is something for everyone to get into and there is no shortage of



▲ (1) 1. Michael Bowlus entertains children at the orphanage in Bossa (2) Katherine Bowlus interacts with school children at a public high school



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opportunities to get closer to God while ministering to the "least of these".

That is not to say that those in need are helpless or apathetic. On the contrary, the folks we visited were not waiting for help. When we arrived they were doing everything to improve their lives they could do: teaching their children, engaging in all manner of commerce, big and small, with no expectation of getting anything without hard work. It was a privilege to witness this and support them however possible. The energy and genuine caring with which they worked was contagious and before long the obstacles we initially perceived were just opportunities to answer God's call, humbly and patiently.

For despite there being no shortage of clocks, time became very "elastic" and while our American brains were alarmed by this at first, we grew to understand the "fullness of time" and God's time for getting things done. Patience, waiting upon the Lord, is a lesson I learned in Cameroon. A lesson that will bring you closer to God and closer to the people around you, no matter where you are.

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I was anxious when I saw the needs of the people and I thought of how to make things happen more quickly rather than how to be in the moment when God is working in so many lives. The miracle of patience is that it makes it easier to see God more clearly. Slowing down the "rush to redemption" makes the journey, the process, more important than the destination. My walk with Jesus took on a different pace and folks saw more of Him and less of me the more patient I became. We were blessed by God to have made the trip. That blessing has been

expanded, like the ripple on the pond in greater widening circles as our witness to the work that God is doing through the Bread for Life ministry has reached and touched more folks than I would have ever imagined.

My Sunday school class is sponsoring a child at the Grace Tate orphanage and everyone who heard of the good works being done wanted to know how they could help. There is great power in the witness of God's people doing His work. It is worth the trip to make new friends and share those new friends with the folks back home.

Three years ago when Roxanne first suggested that we should go with her on a mission trip to Cameroon, I responded like my mother, with worry about the risks of such an adventure. Each year Roxanne would ask and I would demure, unable to see the value of one more visiting white man of modest means in a country that needed more than I could give. God does not send the equipped, but He certainly equipped me and my prior doubts and fears were starved into weak worries, unable to withstand the power of God's love to move me to go where I could not imagine how it would matter.

In that time I felt like Jonah, dismissing God's suggestion that I go to Cameroon, rationalizing that I knew better about what was good for Cameroon and me. After purchasing my plane ticket, I felt more like Paul, making a trip to be with other Christians, to laugh with them, sing with them, cry with them and learn from them and with them about the power of God's love in a skeptical, cynical world. To my surprise I was often the recipient of the word I intended to bring and more often than not felt such a great blessing that I couldn't be sure if God brought me to bless the Cameroonians or if He brought me to them so that I would be blessed.

As we boarded the plane home I thought of my mother and how she worried about us. We had some adventures, deprivations and difficult times, but they were of no consequence. The blessings received were as the bright light that eliminates the shadows and reveals the beauty of life, obscuring in its glow any vestige of darkness. The brilliance of God's love is reflected in the hearts and lives of the Bread for Life members. They are truly known by their love.

In October 2015, Michael (a Jacksonville, FL lawyer) and his wife Katharine (a school teacher) accompanied Dr. Roxanne Cheek (a BFL Board member) to Cameroon on a "Vision Trip."

► Ernest & BFL Medical Director (Dr. Pascal Fongang) with October 2015 team



► Michael Bowlus talks to high school kids at a public school



► Katherine Bowlus at a public school



► Michael shares with prisoners at yaounde maximum security prison





# A Look Ahead: 2016 at BFL

Welcome to 2016! We are encouraged by the start of a new year. A clean slate to fill and new goals to pursue. As I think and pray into this year, I find my heart encouraged by the words of King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 11:1-6:



*"Ship your grain across the sea; after many days you may receive a return. Invest in seven ventures, yes, in eight; you do not know what disaster may come upon the land." Another translation says, "If clouds are full of water, they pour rain on the earth. Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls, there it will lie. Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap. As you do not know the path of the wind, or how the body is formed in a mother's womb, so you cannot understand the work of God, the Maker of all things. Sow your seed in the morning, and at evening let your hands not be idle, for you do not know which will succeed, whether this or that, or whether both will do equally well."*

Several nuggets of encouragement and truth resonate with me as I read this passage.

We are called to **sow generously**. God calls us to spread our resources with wisdom.

Not to hold back or focus

solely upon the place that gives us the biggest return. We are to invest with a Kingdom-oriented generosity in mind and trust that God, who calls us to be faithful toward others, will be faithful to us as well.

We are called to **sow faithfully**. Planting is hard work! However, if we fail to plant, there will be no harvest at the end of the season. It is tempting to focus on the harvest - the experience! We are often reminded of how many times the end has been a letdown because we were not faithful in the planting phase.

We are called to **maintain a focus**. Not to spend much time focusing on obstacles that we cannot change. Keep moving regardless! Friction is the source of traction, we are to embrace the resistance. Setbacks are part of the process, but we are to live in light of a God that provides faithfully. Tomorrow holds great promise because of Him.

Lastly, we are called to **trust God!** We can't let the worries and cares of the day stop us from doing what is best and needed. We are not to let fear and worry rule our actions.

Again, I am reminded and encouraged that the little things we do along the way are powerful. Small, consistent (even persistent) tasks lay the groundwork for big God-inspired returns. I hope you find encouragement in all you do in 2016, I also hope you will be a part of the ongoing work of BFL in 2016.

## 3 Main Focus of BFL in 2016:

- Sustainable Development: Work on land preparation & a nursery. A minimum of 70 acres of land developed.
- Strategically plant three churches & hold three evangelistic crusades across three regions of Cameroon.
- Trust God for at least 80% support to cover monthly operation & staff stipend. We are at 40 % now!

## Other Goals as God provides:

- Team Building, Leadership & Pastoral Training for church and ministry leaders across Cameroon.
- Medical & Agricultural Outreaches.
- Samaritan's Enterprise: At least five small businesses started for individuals.
- Ray of Hope Academy launched in the village of Akite.
- Explore the possibility of an all-inclusive school in Douala that would meet the needs of many special needs children.
- Two to three ministry trips to the USA with at least two team members from Cameroon.
- Develop our small social enterprise by shipping two to four containers with resources & donated equipment shipped out of Dallas & Atlanta.

*Gifts to Bread for Life are tax deductible, please send all gifts to:*

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