

## THE CHALLENGE OF AFRICA: From Rhetorics to Tangible Actions



Photo of refugee camp in Garoua-Bolai, East Cameroon

**RISING** - that was the word most associated with Africa during the dawn of the 21st Century. All over Africa, various indicators led to a sense of growing optimism: dictators were being replaced by democratically elected leaders; protracted conflicts were coming to an end; a middle class was emerging; foreign direct investment of over \$500bn per year were flowing towards a continent seen as yielding the best return on investment; China and other major investors flocked the continent; and natural resources were being discovered at an amazing pace. It seemed, the long held image of a "dark continent" would become a thing of the past. Africa could no longer be described as "the hopeless continent." Several magazines reversed their previous bleak prophecy and pronounced the continent as "hopeful."

Some, now think the word - "rising" belongs to the past. Two factors have made this difference: first is the sudden drop in commodity prices, particularly oil, secondly, peace has eroded across large swathes of the continent. Due to a sharp increase in violence, generated mostly by Islamic extremists, the Boko Harams and the al-Shabaabs, the too-good-to-be-true picture has been shattered.

The question often asked is, "How can you build on a long history that encompasses colonial violence and paternalism, post-colonial domination, inept and corrupt leadership and the insecurity generated by internal and external factors?"

For any tangible and lasting progress, African and Africa must be included in the peace and development process. Efforts must be made and we must move from perceived and felt needs to identifying not

just immediate solutions, but, long term solutions capable of making lasting impact. We must approach the solutions from holistic and nuanced ways.

Against all odds, I have embarked on developing a number of sustainable projects that will be capable of providing ministry opportunities, creating much needed jobs while simultaneously generating revenue for continuity - long after my exit - that is, if Jesus tarries! Our focus this year and in the foreseeable future will be in the areas of agriculture/community development, education and health. Our evangelistic and church planting activities will continue to accompany each endeavor.

Behind the news media's favorite themes - war, disease, corruption and disaster, there is another story: The spirit of the Lord is unleashing a wondrous transforming work. The rate of conversion in some parts of Africa is said to be outstripping birth rates. Africa, the mission field of yesterday can become the mission base of tomorrow. Africa, the "Dark Continent", may soon become God's beacon to the world.

Bread for Life International is one of many indigenous tools God is using to build a better foundation. Together, we are making significant, positive and lasting difference as together we take Jesus' message to a rapidly changing continent through words and practical demonstration of love!

For a brighter future & continent,

  
Ernest Ehabe

Our team (Jochobed, Asanga and Ebenezer) visit and share with refugees at the Garoua-Bolai camp, East Cameroon

Bridging the gaps.  
Changing mindsets.  
Transforming our culture  
...to the standards of Christ!





# Doing for the TRUTH what Muslims do for RELIGION

With the recent tragic shooting in Orlando, as well as many similar incidences around the world triggered by extremism, many have asked me about the situation in Cameroon and across Africa.

Cameroon is often referred to as "Africa in miniature" - everything African can be found here - including various religions!

Growing up, some of my closest friends were Muslims - we lived peaceably then and I had no reason to think it would be otherwise. Not only was I attracted to the Muslim way of life as a youth, I even learned to pray Muslim prayers in Arabic. After my conversion to Christianity at the age of 13 in the 1970s, I continued to maintain relationships with many of my Muslim friends. In talking about how with live with those we may not agree with, Tim Keller wrote, "...tolerance isn't about having beliefs. It's how your beliefs lead you to treat people who disagree with you." St. Augustine said it more succinctly - "Preach and if you must - use words."

In his book - *Operation Crescent Moon*, George John said, "...there are more Muslims missionaries in the world than Christian missionaries." In Nigeria as in other parts of the world, Muslim missionary activity is growing. Operation World says of Nigeria, that special "...efforts are made to win over pagans and backsliding Christians." This is no different in Cameroon where Muslims are less than 30%, but are growing, largely through social programs. Saudi Arabia is pumping in billions of dollars through social programs. Mosques are springing up everywhere even in places where there are no Muslim population. Where I live in Douala, a new mosque has just

*Various mosques across Cameroon*



*Various mosques across Cameroon*

been built next door to a struggling church. A missionary friend in Bamenda told me Saudi Arabia made a commitment to build 1,000 mosques in Cameroon in 2013 alone, and did so.

The United States is not free from Muslim missionary efforts. There are more than 1,000 mosques in the US and more than 150 full-time private Muslim schools for children.

In talking about Islam's "serious and powerful competition for souls" among African Americans, *World Magazine* (May 11/18, 1996) said, "...for the black community, this

**"Preach and if you must - use words."**

— St. Augustine

*new Islam challenge is real. For years we have enjoyed the luxury of our people either choosing our Christianity or going without. This is no longer the case. But hopefully this new challenge will help us sharpen our weapons, strap on our battle gear and defend the faith like never before."*

Some Hispanics youth in the US are also converting to Islam. These young people say that Islam meets needs in their lives that Christianity does not meet. But, really? These youth do not understand the salvation they are rejecting or the religion they are joining.

Unlike Christians, many Muslims are trained in apologetics at an early age. They are trained in Islamic dogma and how to defend their faith. Sadly, Islamic extremism and pseudo Christian cults are taking advantage of the high unemployment rate and desperation among young people to recruit adherents. Always, where poverty and despair take root,



conflict, instability and violent extremism has a tendency of flourishing.

How should we respond to this trend? What should the "Church" do? Simply put, we must do for the TRUTH, what Muslims and Pseudo-Christian cults are doing for "religion." Non-religious Christianity is quite different from religion. While religion is about "DOs and DON'Ts, authentic Christianity is about - "DONE." Like the song writer says "Jesus paid it all...."

It's been my contention for many years, that, if our message is going to make a decisive impact in Africa and amongst its people, we'd have to preach it not only in words, but, to demonstrate it and incarnate it through social actions and concerns and in a compassion kindled at the flame of the charity of Christ.

Missionary statesman, E. Stanley Jones couldn't have said it better, **"An individual gospel without a social gospel is a soul without a body, and a social gospel without an individual gospel is a body without a soul; one is a ghost, the other is a corpse."**

The uniqueness of Bread For Life lies in its ability to see far and in its willingness to combine evangelism with social action - addressing spiritual and physical hunger.

Would you prayerfully consider joining us in doing for the TRUTH what Muslims do for a religion? Your partnership can make a huge difference - be it in church planting; economic and community development; students' sponsorship; providing seed and farming tools and sponsoring sustainable agricultural and social projects etc. Let us know where your heart is and we will connect you with an area that needs you.







## Prayer: Praise



*Refugees at Garoua-Bolai camp, East Cameroon*

## Church Plant to reach Refugees from CAR

As the civil war in Central Africa Republic (CAR) winds down, there is increasing unrest caused by past members of armed factions. They are now being incorporated back into society. Criminal bands are on the rise, similar to what happened in the United States after the Civil War. In the end, it was not really the gun fighters who won the Wild West, but the preachers who were used by God to change lives. This is our hope for CAR. There are tens of thousands of refugees in the border towns of Cameroon. More than 20,000 in the town of Garoua-Bolai. By reaching out to refugees in the border towns of Cameroon we can contribute in a lasting peace. Many of these refugees are Muslims. Imagine them returning to their home country changed and as agents of change! We are looking at planting a church in one of the border towns before the end of the year and are praying for sponsors for this new church plant that has such potential of reaching CAR. Will you prayerfully consider being a part of this?



## Beulahland Farms: Reducing Hunger. Improving Lives

Three years ago, we were led to buy 250 acre virgin forest land near Dimako in the East of Cameroon, among the marginalized Baka Pygmies. The vision for this land is to build a sustainable ministry based from where we can effectively minister to this and other communities, create a model demonstration farm and a social business. As a typical visionary. I thought this would become sustainable within a year. It hasn't. Our focus this year is on land preparation. That is - cutting down some trees and developing a plant nursery for the farm and the community.



**Lee Cawthon**, a US Army veteran heard me share about this project in his church two years ago and immediately volunteered to come and serve with us on a long term basis.

As I have said and written in the past, development is not a matter of simply drawing up an ideal blueprint, but, rather one of pragmatically devising a way of proceeding within the constraints and possibilities of the realities on the ground. My values in this regard can be summarized as:

- Empowering people verses enabling them
- Preserving dignity vs. creating dependency
- Doing things with people verses just doing things for people

**You can be part of this legacy by joining us through praying, coming to serve with us or sharing about this with others or helping financially.**





# Why are missionaries always asking for something?

A former missionary's blog answers a question some folks ask and gives insights into the most awkward part of being a missionary

by Frances Green

When we lived in Venezuela it felt like we were always asking somebody for something - Would my brother drive us to the airport at 3:30 in the morning? Can we stay with you, all six of us, while Gary takes a class? Could Mom send us some chocolate chips? Will someone hand deliver a notarized copy to the consulate?

People must get tired of our requests because we certainly get tired of asking. It's embarrassing. It's humbling.

It makes us feel like a needy child instead of a responsible adult. We feel like the persistent brat - "Give me. Give me. Give me."

Just because missionaries ask doesn't mean we enjoy it. Most of us dread it. But we keep asking because the job we're called to do is bigger than we can do alone.

We should be concerned when missionaries quit asking. When they quit asking, it means they have quit dreaming. It means they are limiting their future ministry to what they can do in their own strength, with their own resources. And the kingdom of God is too big for that!

Why are missionaries always asking for something? Because, by God's design, that's what missionaries do. And their asking allows the rest of us to lay up treasure in heaven and participate with them in God's great plan for the nations.



## HAPPENINGS @ BFL

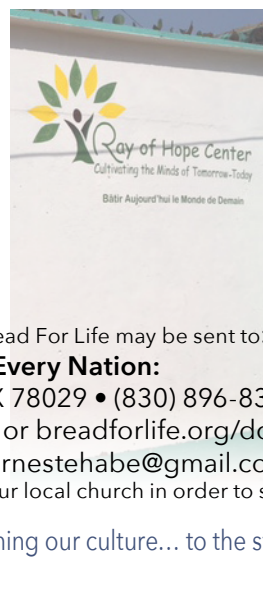
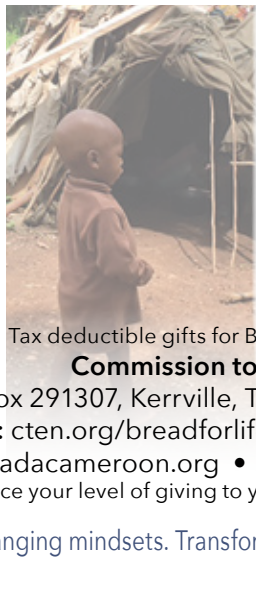
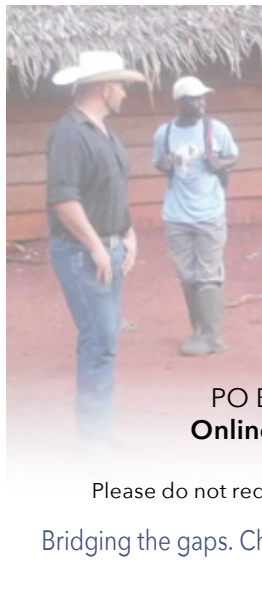


### RAY of HOPE ACADEMY An Opportunity to Change History

Early this year, we prepared a room in our house for specialized tutoring for our four year old son, little did we know this would quickly evolve to include several special needs children in Douala. We are planning to move into a semi-permanent structure. We are in dire need of special education teachers, speech therapists as well as occupational therapists and a psychologist to train our teachers and evaluate each child. Also be praying that the needs to pay a full year's rent and teachers' salaries will be met. Renovation of the house will begin in early August as provision comes in and school will include kids with various learning abilities/disabilities from September 2016. This is a HUGE ministry in Cameroon and we are glad to play this role, among many others!

### RAY OF HOPE CENTER - Yaoundé

We had outgrown our office in the heart of Yaoundé and recently moved into a spacious office Compound in a place call Obobogo in Yaoundé. This has been a HUGE blessing. After the renovation is completed, we will be able to save over \$100 monthly on rent as we are paying less than what we paid in our downtown office location. The good news is, this will be a base and a launching pad for several community and citywide events. Many will be held at our Center itself.



Tax deductible gifts for Bread For Life may be sent to:

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Please do not reduce your level of giving to your local church in order to support this ministry

Bridging the gaps. Changing mindsets. Transforming our culture... to the standards of Christ!