



### **Chris's travel diary update - 10/28/22**

**I left on Wednesday, 10/26, for Sierra Leone, Africa, with my teammates, Sharon and Aaron. We stopped for a layover in Seattle where I had a croissant so I could compare it to Paris. The 9.5-hour flight from Seattle to Paris went well and we landed without issues, and that is the beginning of when I realized that my French is not even really serviceable. I was mentally saying things in creole and even once said out loud "por favor" to the barista. Ugh! Come on Chris! You're pulling out Spanish to say please in France and looking very American.**

**The Paris airport was weird -- it had a huge cat statue on a pillow. My view of France may also have been tainted by the fact that they took my all-natural hippie bug spray from my bag and threw it away for being 1 ml over the limit. Even more frustrating is that she did it with such a kind smile that it was hard to get too mad. At least the layover was calm and relaxing, the coffee was amazing, and the croissant was a touch better than Seattle.**

**We arrived in Freetown with all nine bags, but only eight made it into the vehicle. Not sure exactly what happened, but we are working on it with the airport. We think it was a scheme that groups use to look like they are**

hope of it being returned, sadly.

By the time we made it to The Evangelical College of Theology, we all were very tired but it was a good night. I woke up early at 5 am and watched the sunrise and listened to the birds. It was very peaceful. We had breakfast and exchanged money and ran all of our options on funding potential land for the central compound for our ministry. We joined our missionary there, Ben Margai, to look at some potential land and I got to fly the drone which is always fun. The people loved to see it fly and see the pictures.

We visited our new orphan home where all of our secondary school (high school) kids are living. We were made aware of a situation before we arrived that was very sensitive. Our oldest girl who is 19 and finishing her education was in a relationship with a man from the village and she is now in the early stages of pregnancy. Ben, his wife Kuya, pastor Aaron and I had a good and grace-filled conversation with her today and she was very sorrowful and repentant. She wants to do the right things. Remember, all of these kids lost their families to Ebola. So we are their family. We talked of how we have never been in this situation before either and that we can all show grace and kindness and work together to help her and her baby have the best possible life. We had a sweet time of prayer together and things are moving forward with a good plan of action. I discussed the matter with the other kids in the home. They all knew of it already so we had a good opportunity to demonstrate how Jesus would love and they all agreed to love her as Jesus does. It was really sweet. I will be calling the man and paying him a visit. My hope is that he humbly repents, takes responsibility, and gives his life to Jesus.

Over the next few days, we'll be visiting schools, churches, and orphanages in Tefeya-Kono, Binkolo, and Gboyama. Thank you for your continued prayers for the ministry of Light of the World in this area and for a fruitful time on this trip!

10/31 update

orphans and widows. They all sang songs, did skits, and showed us their talents. We ate a wonderful dinner together cooked by our amazing cooks at the orphan home. We gave out gifts of bright, solar-powered flashlights to our wonderful security guards and many other gifts to the kids and staff.

On Sunday I got to hear my friend Tamba Sandi teaching. He is a passionate teacher of God's word and a faithful man. He is also our principal of the Tefeya Primary School. Tefeya Christian Church Pastor Ezekiel James is a young man, married with a cute baby. He and Tamba are going to be a powerful pair for God. I am hopeful that we can get them connected to the internet out there and get them a laptop to be able to do some continuing education and discipleship from Tefeya which is very very far away from all of our other works. If we can get them connected, it would be the first wifi and the first laptop to be in the community of well over a thousand people.

I was blessed to preach and it was a joy to worship together with the people of Tefeya. We had some good goat and rice for lunch. Aaron wasn't a big fan of goat. After we ate we decided to move our seminar from the church to outside of the orphan home. It was so nice to be teaching under the shade of a tree. The seminar was well attended and all of the kids were able to listen to the teaching as well. We had a great time of discussion and Pastor Aaron brought some great teaching on leadership.

I also spent time with Pastor Solomon, who is one of the most loving and kind men I have ever met. He loves each and every child as if they were his own. He has been experiencing a very traumatic family experience where his daughter Bernadette was in a motorbike accident with her adopted 6-year-old daughter. It became a large national news story and the verdict came down that she murdered the child because she didn't report it to the police before she took the child to get help. Since there were no witnesses and people related to the child spread rumors, she has been sentenced to life imprisonment in the women's maximum security prison. It is a great injustice and has made many people very upset.

Before leaving Tefeya to go to the hotel we found the family home of the man that impregnated one of our girls at the orphanage and it turns out he heard we were in town and he ran away in fear. He had been missing for three days. I talked with his mother and explained the expectations we have of him and hopefully, they will hold him accountable to do them.

11/03 update

When Ben and I were checking into the hotel there was a lady named Nancy that heard him call me Pastor, so she approached me saying she wanted to know Jesus and that she really wanted to become a Christian because they seem to have joy and peace. She wanted to know what church I would recommend she attend. I told her she only needed to tell God she wants to accept the free gift of Jesus' perfection and she could do that right now. So she and I prayed together and I got to witness her accept Jesus as her savior right there at the front desk. That was a treat!

On Tuesday we visited My Father's House, one of our orphan homes, and the kids enjoyed singing together so much that they asked if we could sing and do a parade through town. I grabbed the guitar and we had a lot of fun singing songs and gathering many people joining us from the town. The people in the village were singing with us and loving it. I think we made a lot of friends in Gboyama! It was beautiful to see Sharon shine during our visit with the orphans. She is such a good grandma to these kids. We gave solar lights and other gifts to the kids. They loved the soccer ball and the jump rope a lot.

There are also significant challenges at this home, as social welfare has approached us about taking in two special needs orphans. Up to now, we haven't taken on any new orphans, and this will be a tough conversation that our board of directors will need to have as it means a commitment and a slight change in direction. We want to be wise but we more importantly want to follow the leading of the Lord on these issues. We certainly do not wish to overlook opportunities He presents us but we definitely do not want to assume an obligation that we can not meet.

**Lord will provide if He desires for us to be a part of the solution.**

**One of the orphans is Sofie, who is 6 and was born without hands or most of her toes. She is smart and sweet. She came to the home and our leaders and the other kids said they were willing to love and care for her. I believe she will fit in; my hope is that we can get someone to sponsor Sofie at \$150 per month or a couple of people @ \$75 per month.**

**The other special needs child is a 10-year-old boy who is deaf. This is a real challenge because sign language isn't common and hearing aids are very expensive. There is a deaf school in Freetown, but we will need to find out the cost for him to go to the school. The issue is his younger brother is an orphan as well and I don't believe he can stay at the deaf school with his brother. They are all the family they have. These are very real issues that we must deal with. Apparently, there is a great need for care for children with special needs in Sierra Leone which makes sense since this is a great need around the world.**

**I very much appreciate your continued prayers for this trip and the unique needs and challenges that we have encountered so far.**

**Love ya,**

**Chris**

