



Julie Alexander, Missionary to Liberia – February 2017 Prayer Letter

Let me start this letter by apologizing for the long delay in updates. I am still in Bowie, TX at Baptist Bible Translators Institute. I had a few weeks off at Christmas, which I enjoyed with my friends and family in Columbus, GA. It was a blessing to be in my home church, to see my grandchildren, daughter, husband and all my family. I returned to Texas the first of January.

I have no excuses for the delay in this letter, other than to say that the events of the last 6 months or so have left me quite speechless. As I indicated in my previous letter, I arrived in Texas just to injure my knee on the very first day I arrived. What I did not know at the time, was that injury was, for lack of better words, an indication of other underlying health issues I was having. As many of us do, I initially just "powered through" the issues, was regularly attending classes and keeping up as best I could with a myriad of chiropractor and doctor appointments. Let me suffice to say, that the last six months have been the most challenging of my Christian walk. I have never had to deal with chronic pain or illness and it has been eye opening. Like most would, I spent a great deal of time crying out to God and many times asking him "WHY?" He has been largely silent, but I had to go through many attitude adjustments, understanding that the question should be "Why not?" I have gained a new insight and appreciation for people who undergo these struggles. I was often rebuked when I was reminded, during times of internal frustration, of all the medical options that are at my finger-tips while my friends in Liberia have little to no access to health care or the funds to even go to the pharmacy and purchase "tablets" (aspirin or Tylenol).

While God's response has simply been, "wait and be still", He has proven His faithfulness to me time and again. He has put me in the path of wonderful Christian healthcare providers who have "cheered" and sometimes pushed me along, when all I wanted to do was give up. My favorite, a Chiropractor that God providentially introduced me to, constantly reminds me of my "WHY", the calling on my life, and prays with me for the Holy Spirit to keep that ever before

me! I have also been incredibly blessed by my new "family" here at BBTI. They have supported, encouraged and taken care of me, proving themselves true brothers and sisters during this time of adversity!

I don't want to alarm anyone, but I feel the need to be transparent because I need your prayers! My issues are important, and have taught me that I have to take my health much more seriously than I ever have, but very early on in this struggle, God gave me a verse that I have clung to:

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Sometimes God gives us difficult lessons to learn. We can submit to the prodding and suggestions of the Holy Spirit, and if we don't respond, we can end up with a big 'ole spankin'. I see this trial as that in my life. No more fooling around. I am being "exercised thereby", getting my body healed and strong, because when I leave for Liberia (prayerfully in the late summer, early fall), I have every intention of being in the best shape of my adult life to ensure I will not be "turned out of the way". I came to Texas with a certain outcome in mind, but as usual, God's plan was something completely different. I just thank him for his faithfulness in molding and preparing me for the field and all I have to face ahead.

Despite an inability to sell baskets, God has used his people to continue to bless me and the people of Liberia. We FINALLY got the container through customs and much government red tape and the food and supplies are now in the hands of my friends in Liberia: ELWUO Orphanage, Jahzjet Orphanage, His Safe Haven, Beulah School in Bong, and many others have benefitted from your prayers and assistance. The timing was good in that the Liberian economy has really taken a hit with the departure of the UN peacekeeping troops last July. Another

negative cultural impacts that no one thinks through is how pulling out 20,000 soldiers and their money will impact jobs, housing, and the markets that provided their food and transportation. Add that on top of an upcoming election, and you have the perfect storm for a terrible recession. Food prices are being driven up, and my friends were so grateful to have these provisions to supplement their supplies, plus they say they love the flavor! Thanks again to Friends Against Hunger for partnering with me.

Please continue to pray as I finish up my time here in Texas and as I pray for God's direction for my next steps. I am excited to be attending a Missions Conference here in Bowie this week, and I have several meetings and ladies conferences scheduled in the weeks ahead! My birthday is approaching and my Mom, children and grandchildren are coming to spend some time with me during my Spring Break, here in Texas. I attend classes as I am able and I continue to attend Faith Bible Institute classes. If you haven't heard, my 5th grandchild is on HIS way. Yes, I said his. We are looking forward to some blue after all the pink! We will be meeting him in person the first part of July.

Thank you again for your faithful support and prayers! I need them like never before!

Praise God I have reached 73% of my support goal.

Praise God the container was finally released and properly distributed.

Pray for additional meetings in Texas & Oklahoma while I am here.

Pray that God might lay me on the heart of Pastors where I have already presented, that they might take me on for support!

Praise God for a new transmission in my truck, and for His provision through His people!