

## 2018 Ministry Trip

Our trip to Liberia was, yet again amazing. Andy, Chris and I spent 10 days reaching out to numerous communities with healing and the Gospel of the Kingdom. We spent three full days in Lofa County, based in a small town (village really) called Ganglata. We were welcomed by the chiefs and the towns people and renewed friendship with those we had met on previous trips. We were joined by several Liberian's from four of our Monrovia churches and a good number of leaders from the churches that have been planted in Lofa since our first visit 4 years ago.

I also did three mornings leadership training on the Gospel of the Kingdom and baptism. A number of the pastors present were deeply touched and realised that much that they had been told was unbiblical. In particular, one of the issues we sought to address was the practice of delaying baptism of new believers until after a prolonged period of instruction which resulted in many believers not being baptised even years after coming to faith.

The impact was both immediate and enduring. 41 believers were baptised during our visit, many of whom came to faith during our outreach. And since then I have received numerous reports of further baptisms as outreach continues.

The Cotton tree story continued this year with another miracle. You may remember that last year, just before our trip, this great symbol of ancestral worship was mysteriously burned in the night. Well when we arrived this year we found the tree lying on the ground. A mysterious stranger had walked into the village one afternoon with a chain-saw and cut the tree down. How this was accomplished, no one knows. The tree is more than 10 feet across where it was cut down and stood on massive buttress roots. Furthermore, anyone damaging an ancestral Cotton Tree would have expected the whole village to come out and kill them! God seems to be sending very

strong messages to this community that someone else is now in charge!



Again it was wonderful to see people rejoicing in physical healing and seeing others healed as they prayed for them. But there were also distressing “failures”. We prayed for Evelyn who was paralysed from the waist down with no sensation in her legs or feet. We tried to get her standing – but it was impossible. Her legs were like those of a flower-pot man – completely floppy and unable to support her. She wanted to be baptised so her uncle carried her down to the river and baptised her. Immediately after, she found she could feel her legs and lift them up. Within days she could stand and walk about by holding onto a support. We pray for her complete healing.



One evening I taught on singing in the Spirit and several people were deeply touched by God and found a beautiful release in the Holy Spirit. Others were spurred on in their desire to know God more deeply.

Since our visit, the chiefs and the school teacher have become committed members of the church and the believers have carried the gospel into many other villages and towns in the area. I must say, that our times in Liberia have had a big impact on how I read scripture. I so often relate what I read to the people I have met in those villages and the way the Gospel is transforming the lives of individuals and whole communities.

Throughout the trip there were many opportunities for each of us to step out in acts of faith, to grow in our knowledge and experience

of God, to give away the love of God by listening to a person's troubles, giving words of encouragement and performing small acts of kindness.

One of our Pastors, Robert, has just established our fourth school. Robert was the Pastor whose house, business, church and school were bulldozed by the government two years ago. It is amazing to see how these pastors and the teachers give the last of their meagre resources for the sake of educating impoverished children. Although we do not consider education to be our "mission" in Liberia, with such a high proportion of the nation being children, it is clearly important to help establish Godly values and help these children to meet Jesus for themselves.