

"Where there is no vision, the people perish..." (Prov 29:18 - AV)

If the above Scripture is true, and every Christian must agree that it is, then the reverse is also true. Who is it who sends visions and dreams of revelation? God does. Admittedly not as often as perhaps once He did, and for a good reason we have the completed canon of Scripture now. But just every once in awhile could it be possible that God still sends visions & dreams to confirm & to define what is already revealed in the Scriptures?

Dare to Dream

In April 2013, when returning from a wonderful missionary trip with a small team of evangelists and pastors on the River Madeira in the region of Borba, God put something very special on my heart: This team really, really, needs their own boat to be able to continue reaching out to otherwise forgotten Indians in the back of beyond. I turned to my friend and colleague, Pr Neh, and just came out with it: *"You must have your own boat! Let us commit it to prayer and ask the Lord for R\$20,000 (£6000)"*. Unknown to me this team had already spent two years discussing the subject, and although they had buckets of zeal and hearts overflowing with love for the Lord, their specially set up fund had raised exactly R\$0 (£0), as every trip drained all their financial resources.

One year later, almost to the day, in April 2014 I found myself with hands laid on our answered prayer, our dream realized, their brand-spanking new boat which God had amazingly provided R\$27,000 (£9000) for! Now we were offering up prayers of thanksgiving during a dedication service at the boat yard. Isn't God awesome and worthy to be praised?

I had hoped to go on their maiden voyage in May, but due to a few delays, the very same day that the boat was shipped over to Borba Andrea, Lucy and I were setting out to visit our Apurinã friends on another river; like Moses seeing the Promised Land from a distance I was both strangely disappointed and delighted. Next year, after returning from doing deputation in England, we intend to sail together to further encourage the team and to reveal Christ to those presently perishing. **In the meantime please offer up your thanksgiving for God's great provision of the mission boat; pray for safety as the Borba team plan on making various trips this year; and pray that they will see much fruit for their labors, even souls saved, souls for whom God will send them to win that they too may join in the chorus of His praise.**



Men involved in the Borba mission team. Front left: Pr. Neh



Re-tiring at 500?

At age 480 Noah was called to build the ark, incidentally while he and his wife were still childless (look carefully at ch6-11 of Genesis and you too can *do the math*). I imagine as his wife was making preparations to celebrate her husband's half-millennium, Noah could be forgiven for wondering if she might also incorporate a retirement party in with the celebrations...

God of course had other plans, plans which Noah faithfully submitted to.

As we recently broadcast our 500th radio program, and are making preparations to visit the UK, we too find ourselves in a reflective mood, wondering about what the future may hold. Our Rehoboam-styled young radio boss has afforded us a little extension on our contract until we leave for England, agreeing not to increase what we pay each month until we get back; at which time he plans to scourge us with proverbial scorpions by increasing our financial yoke eight-fold! This of course is totally unacceptable, and why we are presently looking at other options for next year; one being to broadcast on a local television station. **First and foremost: praise God for allowing the gospel to be proclaimed 500 times on-air, utilizing the radio waves of 4 different stations over the last 7 years! Pray that the Spirit may germinate the seeds sown in that time, allowing many a holy flower to bloom to the eternal satisfaction of our Heavenly Father. And pray for future broadcasts, by whichever media tool that God wishes to harness, that the Desire of the Nations, Christ, may truly be desired by this nation of Brazil.**

Firing squad

Have you ever put yourself in Martin Luther's shoes before the diet of Worms and wondered what you might have done and said?

His life hung in the balance as those who wished to silence their consciences believed that they must first silence him, but God was on His side rendering his enemies powerless to do harm.

After visiting every house in the creek with invitations for the men, that they may come and shoot my air-rifle on our land, to take out unsuspecting water-filled balloons and sweet-corn cans at 25 paces, there I found myself literally stood before a firing-squad of 60 people! I opened up the Bible and preached: "*In the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed, the righteousness that is by faith from first to last... 'The righteous will live by faith'*" (Rom 1:17). I led up to this Scripture by sketching out the stages that Luther himself passed through before he embraced this verse, which set him free from vainly attempting to earn a works-based righteousness. I challenged the *firing-squad*, made up of unversed Pentecostals and Catholics, heretics and closeted-atheists, that each of us is at one of the stages that Luther experienced: some suffering unbelief, while a few have sensed the fear of God; many are distracted by exalting created things, even themselves and their works; and strangely some are dedicated to serving the "Unknown God". I said that our prayer was that all of them might learn to trust in *nothing* and *no one* other than the God of Creation and in His Christ: even Jesus. And that they may live FOR Him, IN Him and BY faith. *Pray that, by God's grace and mercy, salvation may visit our creek.*



It was a wonderful experience to travel 40 hours by boat west of Manacapuru with Andrea and Lucy as a family to celebrate 10 years of the New Testament in the language of our Indian friends.

We began the celebrations with a tribal dance

Wild West



The celebrations continued over the weekend with record numbers attending the services: I preached from Genesis 2:16, comparing it to 3:1, to learn how we must have **every** confidence in God's Word; we considered Hebrew 1:1-2 for the Breaking Bread service; Matthew 16:13-18 for the main celebratory service; the whole book of Jonah during the 4 mid-week services; and Romans 12:33-36 to lead us in meditation upon the greatness of our Great God. We were honored to be asked to join in with one of their traditional dances; and God gave me the privilege of providing the only meat for the main meal when I shot a monkey during a hunt.

Lucy and Andrea were very disciplined in continuing Lucy's schooling during the trip (one of the benefits of home-schooling); this allowed the chief to do final translation checks on Psalm 2, 1 Samuel ch1 and 2, a first draft check on ch3 and to translate a first copy of ch4! A pretty busy time was had for all.

I even managed to fit in two crocodile night-hunts - one of the scariest things that I have done to date, especially when I found myself crouched at the front of a 4 meter canoe with nothing but a spear in hand closing in on a 5 meter croc!

Praise God for a joyful, safe and healthy visit to the tribe. We rejoice that the Indians are experiencing a renewed zeal for studying the Bible in their huts; and they are increasingly coming hungry to

hear God's words preached in the church, which is all hugely encouraging. Keep praying that God would raise up a pastor from the tribe to help them further mature spiritually and be ever more effective in His service.



Lucy gaining the confidence of some of the locals

Jesus said: "I will build my Church"

Did you know that there is a frog in Africa which can survive for over 5 years in a comatose state deep in the sand until the rains come? *Keep with me now*, as I wonder if this might be the experience of the True Church here in our creek: Like that desert-frog, once refreshed by the first few drops of rain after a long drought, we as the local Church have gathered ourselves together and began peeping out of our hide-away these last few months, for the Spirit Himself has been nourishing us by raining down His blessings. Each Sunday we have up to 20 participants, some from the creek and others from Manaus or the tribe. Could it be that in 2015/16 our creek may experience a Great Awakening, as the Spirit works through our little fellowship to nurse tender souls as they spring up into the fullness of life? I feel my webbed-toes tingling just thinking about it. But what about the next few months? We take great, great comfort from the words of Jesus above. If our local fellowship truly is a part of His Universal Body of believers then He will preserve His Witness - even if it involves temporary shuffling back into the sand for a dry season. Justo lives with his family here, he is an ordained pastor who has already planted two churches in his tribe, but after painful experiences he is still sore and shy from taking the lead.

Pray that Justo may submit to the Spirit's prompting and not trust in his own wisdom, nor strength, nor choose to seek riches over humble service, but give himself wholly to glory in the LORD of Hosts (Jer 9:23-24).



Justo

*...here we go,
here we go,
here we go...*

What do you do when the World Cup comes to town? Get out of the way if you have any sense. Fair enough if some wish to use the games set to play in Manaus as an opportunity for evangelism, but we will be flying from Brazil (June 10th) to return to the UK for 6 months to visit as many of you as possible. We do not yet have a full program of where we will be and when, but we will keep in contact and let you have these details as soon as they are confirmed.

Very generally we hope to attend the UFM conference (Jul 28th - Aug 1st); and the GBM camp (Aug 3rd - 8th); then to visit churches in England and Scotland in the Autumn; and even possibly spend a few days in Northern Ireland and in Wales.

Pray that God will be glorified through each of the meetings, that friendships will be further strengthened and that God may even call more people to get involved in missions, at home and overseas.

Tadpoles - making leaps & bounds

If I can get away with referring to our local fellowship as a desert-frog, perhaps I can strain the illustration one more notch and refer to the children in our "clubinho" as tadpoles - after all, they are the future of the church. It is exciting watching them develop spiritually, although time will tell where they really stand before the Lord. Certainly their consistent attendance at our Bible club amazes us, as does their unflagging enthusiasm through our five month series in the book of Acts. This series comes to a climatic close with our first ever family service on Saturday 7th, which will include prize-giving and a meal.

Please pray that their parents will come, hear the gospel and be challenged by the Spirit. Pray that our Heavenly Father will Himself keep these vulnerable tadpoles from many predators as they paddle upstream through this perilous fallen world.



Lucy, poised to strike during a mini (catapult) shooting competition

- Pray that God would mightily use the new missionary boat in the hands of the Borba team.
- Praise God for the recent blessings both during the shooting competition and in the tribal visit.
- And pray that Christ would continue building His Church in the creek whilst we visit the UK.

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