



June 26, 2003

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom ... " *Colossians 3:16a*

Aari primer lessons prepared at the Aari Primer Construction Workshop last March. I've noted every new word and every new form (e.g., "worked" or "working" might be a new form of the verb "to work"). Some lessons have too much that's new. I've asked the church leaders to meet with me the first week of October to revise these lessons. Pray that we will successfully get the primers ready to be published by the week's end.

I was privileged to attend the graduation of Ermias (Jeremiah) Mamo from Fuller Seminary in mid-June. He is the first Aari church leader to earn a seminary degree and hopes to go on for doctoral studies. If the Lord works it out, he plans to join us for the Banna Primer Construction Workshop. I am deeply grateful for this brother in Christ who shares the vision for literacy evangelism and discipling. Please pray for him as he seeks God's direction.

Why do I care so much that the Aari and Banna believers learn to read? Because I am convinced that they will never have a strong church until they do. I'm not against cassette tapes, videos, and Bible "storying". We have several cassette tapes available in both languages. You'll remember that the Jesus video was dubbed in Aari over a year ago, but apparently production is taking longer than expected. Nevertheless, I am convinced that we become true disciples of Jesus Christ by immersing ourselves in His Word ... daily, prayerfully, allowing the Holy Spirit to apply it to our lives in very personal and specific ways. There's just nothing quite like time spent alone with God, allowing Him to write His word on our hearts and live His life in us.

Most of the Banna people don't share my passion. Even the believers don't seem to hunger for God's Word in their language. That's understandable - they've never had it. They don't crave chocolate chip cookies, either, and you don't feel deprived because you've never had injera b'wat (Ethiopia's national food).

When we publish these primers, though, they can taste God's Word in their heart language. Then they'll be excited about it, just like the Aari church leaders got excited by working on the primer lessons ... just like the Banna church leaders will get excited by working on Banna primer lessons. Please continue to pray for plans and participants for our Banna Primer Construction Workshop. We changed the dates to September 15-30th. Three fine men will come from Kenya to lead the workshop - Gideon and Patrick, who helped in the Aari Workshop, and James, who is over the Literacy Evangelism ministry in Kenya. I'm not impressed with the political emphasis on diversity in the media, but I'm **thrilled** at the privilege of working with these brothers in Christ without barriers of race or culture. When our hearts are one, other "differences" don't really matter. We can learn so much from each other!

The literacy work has taken most of my attention the past few months. Please pray that I will also complete a CARLA draft of Matthew in Banna before returning to Ethiopia in September.

Thank you so much for your part in this ministry by your prayers, gifts and encouragement.



Yours because His,

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