



Operation World

when we pray, God works
september 2004

LOOKING BACK

Orphans in the desert, crowds of Englishmen in the pouring rain to hear Chinese, mountains in the middle of the Atlantic. Seven months, six countries, three seasons and many experiences later, I write to you again! You may need to refer back to the last letter to freshen your memory, or look at my blog (any event which got a special write-up in my blog gets a *-blog-* marker to point you in that direction). Let me recount for you a few of the most notable moments since I last wrote you...

STREAMS IN THE DESERT

At the end of February, I flew out to Southern Africa to join a mission mobilization team for 5 weeks. The first 2 weeks were in Namibia; a large but sparsely populated country which is mostly desert and semi-desert. The next three were in the Cape region of South Africa. These two areas are among the most lovely I have ever visited. Apart from the beauty of the land *-blog-*, I was struck by how many young people were separated from their parents; as orphans, with itinerant labourer parents, or simply sent to boarding school for better education. Our team had many chances to share the Gospel with these young people. We also spent a lot of time with youth groups and college/university students, challenging them to use their lives for the Kingdom and presenting the ministry of OM ships, particularly the Doulos, my home for two years.



orphans in namibia

THE HEAVENLY MAN

On arriving back in England, I found WEC gearing up for the annual May Day weekend, which entails a special event on Saturday, a joint churches event on Sunday and the WEC Open Day on the Monday. Despite heavy rains we had huge crowds, much more than anticipated. This was largely due to the presence of Brother Yun, the Heavenly Man, as our guest

speaker *-blog-*. The juxtaposition of the main spokesman of the Back To Jerusalem Movement and a mission organisation focused on the unevangelised was a perfectly sensible thing, yet still very exciting. The visitors also seemed excited to be around. Hundreds stood out in the pouring rain – the 1600-capacity tent was full – just to hear this little spiritual dynamo share the vision and passion of the Chinese house churches.

A WEE TRIP NORTH

In June, I had the opportunity to head up to Edinburgh for a training course. The Leadership Matters Course drew together about 50 people from different organisations to learn and implement skills and tools for leadership from a Christian perspective. Coming from different cultures and nations as well, it was a great learning time, but also a very stretching one. It just so happened that the Doulos was in Scotland at the same time, so I stayed on board and renewed old friendships in the little spare time that the busy course afforded us!



stellenbosch - s.a.'s wine region

THE WHAT?

At this point, I took advantage of an opportunity too good to pass up. Sailing from Scotland with the Doulos, I arrived in the Faeroe Islands. Yes, *the Faeroe Islands*. This small nation (a self-governing region of Denmark) is home to less than 50,000 people, but is greatly distinguished for its physical beauty, its strong Christian heritage and its remarkably high rate of sending missionaries. I was involved in speaking in several conferences on and off the ship as well as at local churches and youth camps. I also had the privilege of taking a sail around a couple of the islands *-blog-* (the Faeroes are effectively mountains jutting up from the bottom of the North Atlantic). Never have I seen such stark but stunning beauty.



doulos in the faeroe islands

TWO MONTHS IN ONE PLACE

After sailing from the Faeroes to France, and then making my way back to Bulstrode by train, ferry, walking, van and car, I found myself at Bulstrode. For the first time in years, I was going to be two months in one place. Looking back now, I have to ask myself what I really accomplished in this time! Hmmmm. Well, I suppose not as much as I should have. But a few things, at least. I've managed to read, cull and file two years worth of Operation World magazine subscriptions (boxes and boxes worth). I've got the office itself running and in working order (complete with TWO sizes of paper clips and FOUR colours of whiteboard pens!). The filing system (paper and electronic) is up and running. The databases are safely in the hands of our data guru, who is constructing new programmes to help us enter, analyze and report data more efficiently. We are almost finished completing the reorganization of all our subscriptions (to news reports, magazines and

journals), from which we get a large part of our information. But more important than all of those things...

THE SAINTS COME MARCHING IN

We are a long way from being sorted out, but a team is (at last) beginning to form! This is such an encouraging thing for me; I was beginning to despair of ever seeing progress in this area as a couple of what I thought were certainties fell through. But God brought in other enquiries from out of nowhere. Nothing is formalised yet, but things are well on their way to seeing 2, even 3 people join the Operation World team by early next year! Yeah! However, OW is a long term project, and as such needs at least one more person full time, as well as a team that lasts through not just 1 but 4 years. Praise God for real progress, but KEEP PRAYING!

ONE MORE FOR THE ROAD

In just 48 hours I will be on a plane to Thailand headed for the Lausanne Congress there (29 Sep–10 Oct). This is a rare gathering of 1500 esteemed evangelical leaders from almost every country...plus me. We are there to discuss how the church can realize the goal of the gospel for every person and a church for every people in as quick, effective and relevant a manner as possible. This is a tremendous opportunity for networking and making contacts who could prove enormously helpful to OW (we could end up being a bit handy for them as well!). Please pray that God will bring me across the path of all the right people, that great future working relationships will be formed.

BRING ON THE SLURPEES!

After that I will be headed to the True North Strong and Free. From 18 Oct to 23 Nov, I'll be in Canada, visiting family & friends and speaking at conferences and churches around the country. There's not enough space for my full itinerary, but if you want to get in touch, or have me speak/share/preach just e-mail me or look at my blog *-blog-* for more details.

<http://operationworld.blogspot.com>

...and please don't stop praying!

In Christ and for the Harvest,
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