

has prepared for those who love him—these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.” 1 Corinthians 2:9-10 (NIV).

Each time we delve into the Word, we must pray and ask God to reveal new and exciting things to us so that we can see the “heart” of God’s message. I also like to think that God revealed the heart on Snowy’s foot to me as a sign that He loves me and cares for me. Another friend with whom I shared the picture responded: “Oh my goodness! Yes, love that, leaving an imprint of His love every step we make. The greatest commandment is to love Him above all and love others.” I always smile when I see my fur babies (I also have a dog)... but when I now look at Snowy, I get an extra big smile as I remember God’s love and revelation. Let’s strive to be more alert and aware of the beautiful surroundings God has provided to us. In that way, we will easily recognize His signs and wonders that guide us to the heart of what matters most to Him.

Two Months in West Africa as a Pharmacy Student

** Due to safety and security concerns, the author will remain anonymous and any information that could identify locations where the author visited or the agency that operates the hospital will be kept confidential. Also, some names have been changed to protect their identity.*



Getting There: - Sultan’s Story

Two common questions I was often asked before going to West Africa were: “How hot will it be there?” (It’s normally over 100 degrees) and “How long will the flight be?” The answer to that question is a whopping 13.5 hours, during which time I saw the Lord work in an incredible way to affirm that He had called me to travel to West Africa for a purpose; and also to show that He had a reason for prompting me to leave two weeks earlier than originally planned. While on the plane, I sat next to an individual from Ethiopia who had become an atheist after attending college in the United States. During the long flight Sultan asked me why Ethiopia is a Christian country, and using scripture alone, we walked through Acts 8:27-40, and subsequently Issiah 53, and detailed how Christ was prophesied over 600 years before his coming to earth. As a result of solely explaining scripture – and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit – Sultan eventually told me, “I think I’m going to read the Bible this summer. I mean, life without God just seems pointless... and I think I need to

give Jesus a try.” While this obviously wasn’t a moment of salvation, I believe it was a clear testament that God had been working through this entire process.

Welcoming a brother into our family: John* was at the end of his rope

He had been a devout Muslim all of his life and he had a loving family, but he was unfulfilled in the Islamic faith. John came to the hospital with over half of his body covered in severe burns, clinging to life. The surgical team determined they couldn’t do anything to help him; but for some odd reason, they asked the pharmacy student to visit John after rounds – along with an interpreter/evangelist – to attempt to give him hope at the end of his life.

The evangelist, James,* was led into the patient’s room by this pharmacy student. Upon some questioning, James learned that for reasons known only by God, John’s burns were the result of an attempt to end his own life. He was broken, tired, and in hopeless despair. From his own religious beliefs, he assumed that his god, Allah, had abandoned him. James quickly discovered that John had



never in his life heard about Jesus Christ. He began to share the Gospel truth that John was in fact loved by the One true living God (who is not Allah); and that this God loved him so much he sent His one and only Son Jesus to die for him, so that his sins could be forgiven and he could spend eternity with Jesus in heaven. James explained that when a person believes and receives Jesus, he or she will receive forgiveness regardless of whatever sins he had committed. John made the decision to accept Christ in that very moment, saying, "Allah isn't working, I need Jesus. I need His forgiveness."

Over the next few weeks, something truly miraculous happened: John did not succumb to his burns, and he is still alive at the time this article was written. John has reached out to the hospital evangelists on several occasions and was able to speak with one of our evangelists, who confirmed that John is still walking in the Christian faith and has a continued desire to know Jesus better! In a land where Islam rules, a person who boldly leaves Islam and comes to the saving faith in Jesus Christ is a major victory, and more proof that the LORD is working in West Africa.

Working as a Pharmacy Student in West Africa: What Pharmacy looks like in Missions

Like most readers of this article, I made the decision to say "know" (pun intended) to drugs years ago, and have been on the journey of becoming a pharmacist ever since. While in West Africa, I was able to put those skills to use as I participated in daily clinical rounding with an OBGYN team, a surgical team (see photo), a pediatric surgical specialist, an internal medicine specialist, and an orthopedic team. I was able to provide drug recommendations that resulted in positive outcomes, as well as new medications now being implemented at this



hospital. Most of these interventions were in the realm of antimicrobial stewardship, pharmacokinetic mechanism, and diabetic care of patients. I was also able to participate in staffing the outpatient hospital pharmacy which filled over 1200 prescriptions daily; and in that setting I utilized the pharmacy knowledge that the Lord has granted me to optimize patients' medications so they can lead healthier lives. I worked under an amazing mentor and pharmacist, who taught me so much and gave me a clear example of what it looks like to be a missionary pharmacist.

My education in pharmacy has trained me to identify when clinical interventions (such as the examples above) are necessary; and through the Holy Spirit, I was also blessed to make what I call "spiritual interventions" almost daily. When talking with the evangelists, it is clear that the hospital's pharmacy team is the most common initiator of these "spiritual interventions," in which we either note the patient's chart or personally notify the evangelist and medical team when a patient needs an evangelist in addition to our team praying with them. In combining both clinical and spiritual interventions, I can truly say that through Christ we were able to help heal both bodies and spirits.

Final Thoughts

This photo might not look like much, but it shows exactly why I am here. As I was out walking one evening, I heard a man fervently praying and seeking God. While I could not understand him, it was clear he was desperate for the God of the Universe to see him and hear his plea. The sad reality was that he was praying in Arabic, which likely meant he was praying to Allah, the god of Islam. This man was not praying to the One true living God, and despite his desperation, his prayers were not reaching God the Father since he was not praying in the name of Jesus. Perhaps he has never heard about Jesus, or perhaps he simply wonders why none of his prayers are answered. Please pray that I (or someone else) would have the opportunity to share the good news of Jesus Christ to this man, that we may point to the true hope that is in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

