



Mali West Africa



Avant

September 30 2013

Volume 1, Issue 2

"Timbuktu? Really Lord?"

DEAR

"We are excited to pursue this next step in our journey to see where the Lord may be leading us. We would value your partnership in prayer as we consider the many needs of the world and where God can use our gifts and strengths to best serve Him."

This was the closing paragraph to our first prayer letter and much has happened in the past month. The Lord has directed and built upon the key words we stated in our previous letter; **Obedience, yes, Avant, full time missions.**

Upon announcing our commitment to Avant and full time missions to family, friends and our church, the next steps we prayed through was completing a **VISION TRIP** to Mali, West Africa and also to Ankara, Turkey. In discussion with Avant leadership these were the two top places for us to consider based on need, fit, our family, and potential ministry.

We prayed about a possible trip in the fall and realized there was still a window of time left in the summer where the girls could be taken care

of and youth ministry would not be hindered.

Within weeks we applied for visa's, obtained vaccinations, scheduled the kids guardians, hosted a garage sale, sold a vehicle and with miraculous gifts and confident answers to prayer we had the full funds and complete affirmation to head overseas for a two week vision trip!

So on August 23rd April and I said goodbye to the girls and boarded a plane for Mali, west Africa. It was an extra blessing to have a short layover in Paris and get to see Dave's sister and family (new niece of 7 weeks). After a week in **MALI** we then traveled on to Ankara, **TURKEY** and eventually arrived home September 5th, just in time for the first week of school to resume.

Obviously we have so much to say about a full two weeks on a vision trip of this magnitude. We asked lots of questions, met several key leaders and missionaries. Our senses were full with the taste,

feel and immersion of both countries. We earnestly prayed that the Lord would speak to us daily through the experiences we would have. Every encounter in each country was amazingly diverse. From the people, to the spiritual needs, to the infrastructure and stability of government, and even to the style of ministry that is best effective in each place.

It was so much to take in that we decided on our flight home to take a week to pray and process all the Lord was showing us. We did admit that Mali grabbed our **HEARTS** in many ways but we didn't want to jump to any conclusions based on feelings.

So after a week home of readjusting to our "normal" pace of life (which included sharing our experience with our girls) and much prayer as a family we have a true sense of **PEACE** about God's calling on our lives to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ in **MALI!**

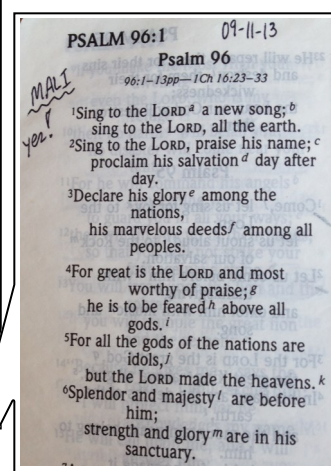
IF NOT US... then WHO?
IF NOT NOW... then WHEN?
IF NOT HERE... then WHERE?

JULY -
Attend Orientation at AVANT

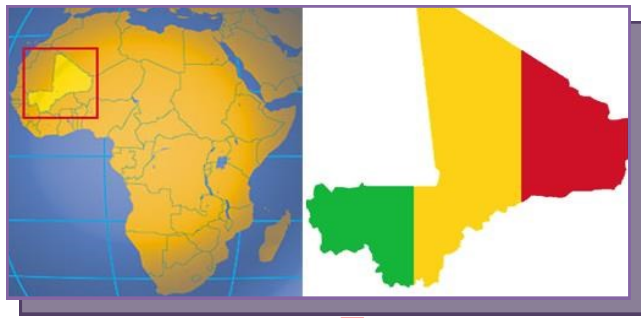
AUGUST -
Vision trip to Mali and Turkey

SEPTEMBER -
Commit to serving in Mali

OCTOBER -
Begin FAITH raising



"Because of Avant there will be developing churches where there is no church"



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THE TIME IS NOW



8 of the 100,000 university students needing to hear the name of Jesus Christ!



The national church president whom we met and discussed the needs of the next generation within the church

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“Why mali? Why now? ...How Lord?”

This is exciting news and a whole new venture for our family. We have shared each step of the journey with our church family and are committed to making this a **HEALTHY** transition, protecting the honor of the bride of Christ.

So the questions are coming and the wheels are now spinning. Many are asking us the following:

WHY MALI & WHY NOW?

- We met university students and saw the potential of ministry to impact the **NEXT GENERATION** of Mali leaders.
- We met the church leaders and saw the needs to help **DEVELOP** the local church
- We saw the breakdown of the **FAMILY** and need for spiritual influence in the home
- We saw the potential for **TECHNOLOGY** to advance the gospel in creative ways!
- We see a country that is 98% muslim with a tight window of **10-20 years left**

before it is 100% muslim.

- Islam is strategically reaching into the university and there is a desperate hunger for **ANSWERS** based on the recent coup de tat.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

- We can not and do not want to do this alone. We need a **TEAM**. A team in partnership and a team that together can see these needs met and bring God great glory!
- We need your **PRAYER** support. The spiritual battle is raging and prayer is vital. Our desire in this partnership is for our family to pray for you in return.
- Some may call it “support raising” but we have decided to take on the verbage of our missions pastor by calling it “**faith raising**”. As a family we know our faith will grow as we trust God to provide all the finances needed to send us and sustain our new

ministry. As partners with us we also long to see how supporting this cause will deepen your family’s faith too.

After supporting other missionaries we recognize that it is not just about the ones going but also about those on the team who are sending. Our prayer is that each of us involved in this ministry will have our faith deepened as we each rely on his goodness and provision in life. We also recognize that you are not giving to us, but that this is first and foremost giving to the Lord and letting him expand His Kingdom and make His glory known.

Our desire is to be honest and real with each of you in this step of obedience our family is taking. The spiritual and physical cost is high, therefore we are including practical ways for you to be involved with us as **TOGETHER** we advance the name of Jesus into the future generations of Mali.

Dave & April

Emma- 8; Hailey- 5

Kylie- 3; Claire- 1

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