



# Ministry Updates

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## **Taste and See** ([Psalm 34:8](#))



*"The first Christmas was pretty **simple**. It's okay if yours is too."*

Debbie read the above quote on Facebook recently. It seems apropos for many in the US during Christmas. The season's frenetic pace can become a burden—terrible traffic, commercialized gift gluttony, and parties or events scheduled almost every night. Yet, the **simple** message of Christmas can break through and remain profound for us in our families. We focus on [adding virtue to faith](#), knowing that material goods develop by those who [obey God first](#) while on earth. So, we promote events centered on Jesus with serving opportunities and family time. Like

most reading this, we know we cannot do it ALL. Instead, we strive to prioritize meaningful activities. At the end of the season, hopefully, our choices brought us closer to Jesus and helped us to share His love rather than leaving us jaded, exhausted, and spiritually dry like the people Jesus taught in [Matthew 9](#).

While missing our US family very much during [Yuletide](#), we enjoy the **simple** Christmas celebrations in Cote d'Ivoire. Although Abidjan, the economic capital, is as devoted to consumerism as any American city, the emphasis on Jesus in small towns and villages where the Gospel has penetrated is evident. Usually, churches host a Christmas service with much singing, preaching, Scripture quotation, and often some drama. Perhaps children will get candy, and maybe the congregation will gather to eat a meal together during Christmas week. Other holiday trappings rarely invade the spiritual celebration.

## **Come and See** ([Psalm 66:5](#))

Keeping activity **simple** in ministry is also a challenge. Many people and activities clamor for our time like others experience here. Verlin noted this week that he has nearly 200 text messages from Africans waiting on him. There are twelve people he partners with closely because they are devoted to advancing the Kingdom using Community Health Evangelism (CHE). If one of them leaves a message, it takes priority. Like him, these believers are too busy to waste time on nonessentials, so he knows their communication is essential. To keep ministry **simple**, we limit social media and rarely watch movies or TV shows. Others need not imitate our choices, but hopefully, all of us improve at evaluating our time use and adjusting it as required to demonstrate Godly priorities.

This past week's multiple three-hour round trips to Nashville from Cookeville for medical evaluations slowed our progress on some priorities. Catching up our responsibilities in faithful service will likely be eased later by the assurances provided by clean bills of health. Thankfully, we are through half of our first round of visits. Physical reports thus far seem excellent, but Debbie did experience a hypertension flare-up needing intervention. Because flare-ups occur here more than in Africa, we want to identify possible causes, like the use of nasal decongestants. She keeps working on that. Testing focuses more on cognitive exams after the coming week of cardiovascular, ear, nose, and throat evaluations.

## **Prayer & Praise**

- 🙏 Pray for the **simple** church gatherings and outreaches occurring in Cote d'Ivoire and worldwide during this Christmas season. May Gospel **simplicity** refresh many souls.
- 🙏 We look forward to fewer days with the 3-hour round trip to Nashville. Pray that we discern non-medical solutions to the blood pressure problem that resurfaced this week for Debbie. Such happens occasionally, particularly while she readjusts to North American climates and food.
- 🙏 Pray for abundant end-of-year provision for ministries sharing the Gospel and serving those in need, including our mission account and those of fellow missionaries hit by similar inflationary pressures.

Your partners in the Gospel,  
Verlin & Debbie

Last Week: [Set the Record Straight-231125.PDF](#)  
Prior videos: [Simple Servants](#) - [Reflect & Rejoice](#)

2023 Q2Report: [Pruning Priorities](#) -  
[2023 Q2 Report 230722 PDF](#)

2022 Budget: [CHSC-0118 ANDERSON-Budget 2022](#)

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