



MISSION UPDATE

JUNE 2018

CLIMBING AND HIDING

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LATELY, I'VE BEEN TAKING my teenage sons, Landon and Jabel, to the climbing gym. I was introduced to rock climbing by two close friends, a young couple named Tim and Tanya, when I was a teenager. On my first day, I had to be essentially rescued by Tanya from the top of an 80-foot granite spire. It was an inauspicious start to what would become a lifelong passion.

What many cannot grasp, though, is that climbing isn't actually very dangerous. So long as one is skilled in the techniques of rope management, anchor building, and risk management, rock climbing becomes almost pedestrian in terms of danger, as any experienced climber will attest. In fact, in many cities, being a pedestrian would be more hazardous than climbing with proper equipment and technique.

Is there danger? A little, but it can be minimized by responsible behavior and a basic awareness of one's situation and surroundings.

This is why I'm teaching my sons and have been for years. I want them to know *how* to face not just a steep cliff but life's dangers, trials, and temptations. Let's be real: life can be

pretty dangerous! For this reason, Violeta and I are not just *raising* our sons, we are *disciplining* them.

Raising is important. It involves providing for, teaching, and protecting, among other things. But discipleship is all that and more. It involves modeling *how* to understand, evaluate, and even critique the prevailing culture. It involves purposeful teaching and mentoring about the attractive dangers of modernity. It involves teaching your children *how* to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn "as little children." It requires a personal connection with Jesus, as parents. It's the greatest challenge and joy a person can have: to help mold another into the selfless, loving image of Jesus Christ.

There's rock climbing and there's Rock climbing. The first is fun, freeing, and hugely satisfying. And so is the second. "Climbing" into the strong arms of the Rock—Jesus—to hide safely in the cleft of His grace may seem dangerous to some, but, in fact, it's not. It is where true peace, safety, and comfort are found.

Moses of old hid in the cleft of the Rock.

And so can you and I and Landon and Jabel and . . . and . . . and . . .

Anyone!

"Your life is now hidden with Christ in God"
(Colossians 3:2). 



NEWS FLASH: BURKINA FASO

MEIRING PRETORIUS

“AT LEAST 35 PEOPLE have died and 90 more were injured after a series of attacks in Burkina Faso, believed to have been conducted by Islamic extremists. Seven soldiers were killed in the country’s capital Ouagadougou after gunmen open fired on the French Embassy and army headquarters. Eight of the militants were killed during the attacks in the former French colony and several other people were wounded among the security forces.”

As I am reading and reflecting on this news flash, memories and feelings flash back into my mind. I can still hear the blast of the car bomb. I can still feel the shake of the church building. I can still see the panic on the faces in front of

me. I can still hear the gunshots fired in the street around the corner of the Adventist Mission in Burkina Faso. “What is happening?” my mind screamed. I had never been in a situation like this before!

It was Friday morning, March 3. My plane landed in Burkina Faso the previous afternoon. Light Bearers Ministry sent me to the Adventist Mission to do some training with the workers there. The mission received a container of literature from Light Bearers and the people there needed training on how to use the Bible lessons effectively for soul-winning. The bomb exploded just after my words of introduction—two blocks away from the mission church and one block away from my hotel. The explosion shook the church and our minds. My eyes were on the company of pastors and Bible workers in front of me, and I realized this was not normal. They closed the steel windows and shut the door. We prayed. For an hour gunshots could be heard in the street. “Should we continue with the training?” I asked the pastor, not knowing the seriousness of the situation. We

trusted in God's protection and continued. The gunshots eventually died down.

Burkina Faso means *land of honest men*.

God kept us safe and I was able to complete the training by Saturday evening. My heart went out to the Gideon-like band before me while I worked with them. There are only four pastors, two missionary pastors, 19 Bible workers, and about 2000 believers in the whole country, which has a population of 19 million people. Burkina Faso means *land of honest men*. I pray that God will fill these few dedicated workers with His Spirit and cause a gospel explosion. The Light Bearers container of Bible lessons and other tracts have arrived at the right time.

Burkina Faso is incredibly poor, even by West African standards. The country is landlocked and has suffered many droughts and military coups. It lies on the fringe of the desert to the north. Prior to landing, looking out of the small window of the plane, I felt a forsaken feeling coming over me. The poverty was real the moment I stepped off the plane into the

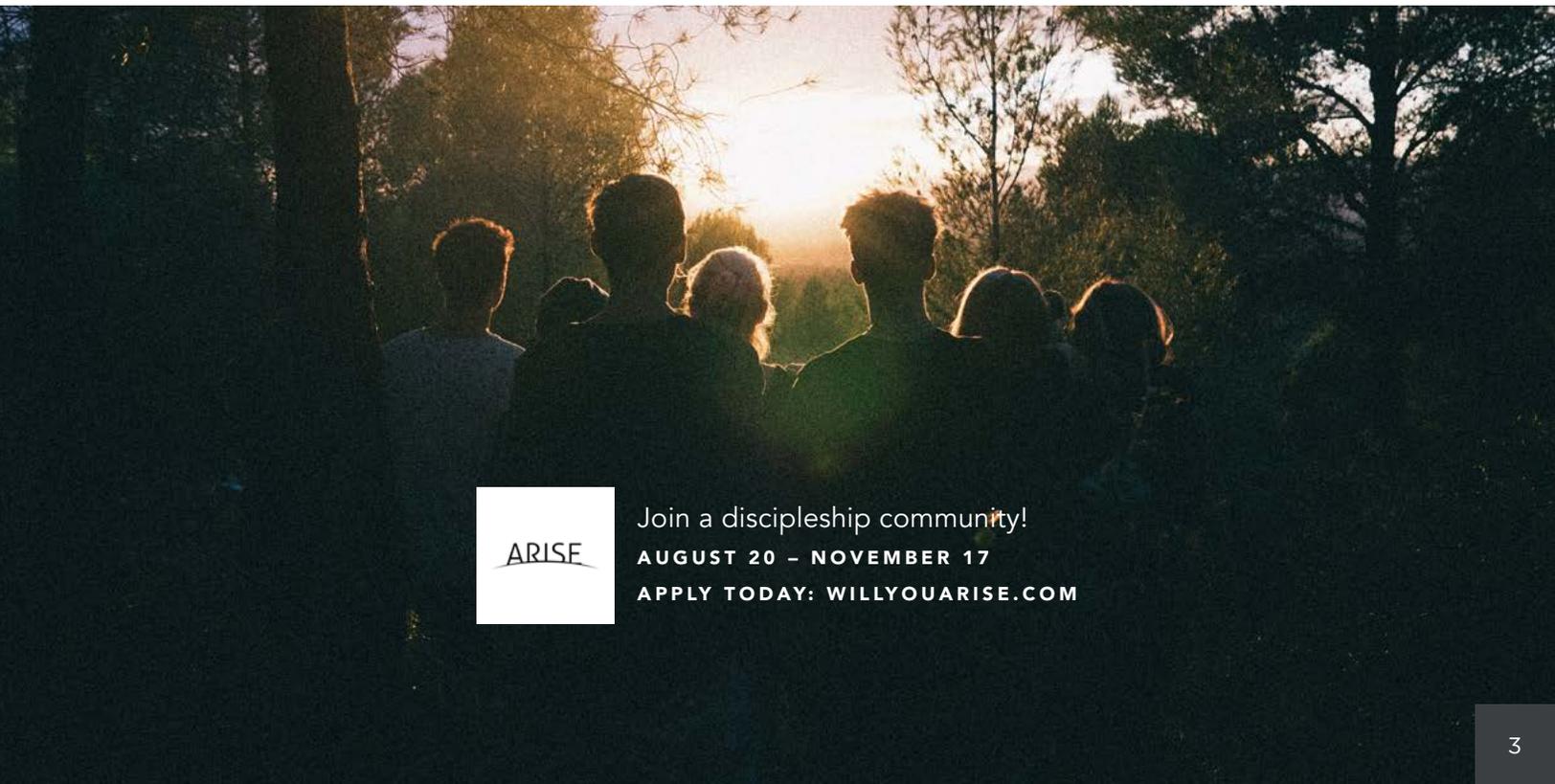
46°C heat (about 115°F). "Who can live in such a forsaken place and survive these harsh conditions?" I wondered. I watched faces and they testified of trials and hardships. I saw souls who needed a Saviour.

The terrorist attack scared us, and the temptation was to leave the country as soon as possible. But God sent me here for a purpose—to finish the work of encouraging and training these workers. What a blessing it was to see their zeal and love for God. We worked out a plan together for using the Bible lessons effectively in Burkina Faso. I know many souls will be reached through this effort, using the material systematically. One container might seem like a mere five loaves and two fishes to feed such a population, but Jesus has already demonstrated to us that He will multiply resources according to the need. My prayer is for another container. God is giving us an open door which no one can shut. News flash: Burkina Faso, God has not forsaken you. 



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West Frankfort, IL
James Rafferty
www.3abn.org

JULY 3-7

Light Bearers Convocation
Jasper, OR
www.lightbearers.org

JULY 31-AUGUST 4

Impact Europe – Global Youth
Leaders Congress
Kassel, Germany
Ty Gibson, David Asscherick
<http://youth.adventist.org/GYLC>

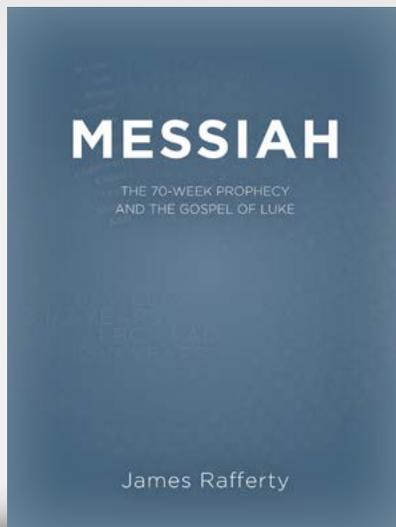
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