

July 19, 2000

Dear Family & Friends,

I hope this letter finds you all doing well and abundantly blessed! It's been almost a month since I returned from my mission trip to North Africa. For those of you that I didn't talk to before I left, I can now tell you that our destination was Morocco where we spent just over two weeks. Let me give you a brief overview of this nation.



*Shepherd near Azrou*

The Kingdom of Morocco lies just below Spain on the north coast of Africa. It has 30 million people and is 99.8% Muslim. Official numbers state there are only approximately 400 Christians in the entire nation, fewer than attend my church here in Auburn! Of the 30 million people, over half are under the age of 21 making it a nation ripe for change. Evangelism and missions work, however, are outlawed and those who decide to follow Jesus must be extremely careful for fear of ostracization and even physical harm from family, friends, co-workers, and their government. Because of this, most believers are forced to meet in homes and keep their faith a secret from all but a few.

Such an atmosphere made our work, and the work of the few missionaries there, very interesting to say the least! We arrived in Casablanca and from there traveled to the capital of Rabat then to Meknes, Azrou, Beni-Mellal, and Marrakech before returning to Casablanca. We spent the majority of our time doing two things. First, we would walk the streets of these cities praying, asking God to tear down the ancient strongholds of Islam and idolatry, while also opening the eyes of the people to see His love for them as expressed through Jesus. To be strategic in our prayers we would read about each city or town and its history and then pick locations of spiritual or historical importance to pray at. Sites such as mosques, palaces, ruins, markets, and tombs were among the places we prayed while posing as tourists.



*Meknes*



*In a Moroccan home*

Second, while we traveled we looked for people we could talk to. The Moroccan people are very friendly, and unlike some Middle Eastern nations, love Americans. Many people, especially the younger ones, speak English which made it easy to communicate. We would often meet people on trains or buses, in stores or restaurants, or just walking around that were excited to talk to us and make an American friend. This allowed us many times to share with them a bit about our faith and sometimes even give them an Arabic New Testament.

The most exciting thing that occurred on our trip was meeting a young man named Momo. God sovereignly led us to this one man among thousands who had met another Chi Alpha team two years prior and received an Arabic New Testament. Since then he had been reading it over and over but had many questions. That evening we met him for dinner then the following day hiked up into the nearby mountains where we could talk in private. There he shared with us some of his favorite

Scriptures and told us how some nights he would stay up late reading the Word and then cry for hours over the things God showed him. After talking for awhile he asked us to pray for him which we did after some worship. God's presence showed up in a mighty way and Momo fell to his knees weeping and crying out to Jesus. It was an awesome experience and we thanked God afterwards for being allowed to play a small part in leading Momo to Him. Some missionaries work for years in such an environment with maybe a dozen converts so it was entirely God's grace and timing that allowed us to be there and be used by Him.

Overall, I know that each of us came home changed from our experiences. Personally, there were at least three things I realized while there. First, I now have a much better concept of exactly how BIG the world is and how blessed we are. Despite having been overseas before, I'd never been to a non-Western non-Christian non-democratic society before where freedom is a foreign concept. Second, it put a face to the nameless masses we hear about and see on the news and showed me the need for missionaries and mission trips like our's. Unlike America, most of the people there have no idea who Jesus is beyond just another religious figure. Finally, it gave me a strong desire to see others go on short-term mission trips as I know it will open their eyes as well.



*In a market with two Moroccans*

I would like to thank all of you who made this trip possible through your prayers and financial support. I was forever changed by it and am confident that we accomplished much more in the spiritual realm than we now realize. I also know that God will credit all of it to your account because of your partnership in our work there.

Since I've been back things are moving along on my dissertation but I still need your prayers that I can finish in time and will have favor with my committee. While graduation is my focus, my involvement in Chi Alpha continues. Currently we are having weekly meetings and intercessory prayer, while looking ahead to fall. We are planning our annual student leadership retreat for August and beginning to contact incoming freshmen. We are also making other preparations for the beginning of fall semester such as our kick-off barbecue and helping new students move-in. Please keep all of these events in your prayers as fall semester is a crucial time for campus ministry.

Also, I am still establishing my support team for next year. My greatest need continues to be monthly pledges of any amount. When combined with the gifts of others they will allow me to focus on serving Chi Alpha without financial concerns. Those of you who have made pledges, or wish to, can begin to send them in, as fall semester starts next month. In my next newsletter I will give you an update on the progress of my budget.



*Cascades d'Ouzoud*

Finally, *please* send me any prayer requests you have! I have received a few and am compiling a list so that I can pray for each of you and your specific needs regularly. Thank you again so much and may God bless you!