



**JULIE STONE** - Missionary in Cameroon

**NOVEMBER 2015**

Dear Family and Friends,

Greetings from Bansa Baptist Hospital. The last several weeks here have been quite painful due to the loss in September of a dear friend and co-worker by the name of Philip. I first met Philip in 1998 when he presented to medical attention with symptoms caused by an unusual lung condition. When evaluation failed to uncover the etiology of his pulmonary problem, he was referred to the distant capital city of Yaoundé for further investigations. Philip's work-up there was equally non-diagnostic. Eventually, Philip's Francophone physicians convened a meeting wherein Philip, an Anglophone, was addressed in English while the consultants carried out their deliberations in French.



The road in front of the family home was closed to make way for the population.

His physicians concluded the meeting with the following remark, "Nous ne pouvons pas lui aider. Il va mourir." The specialists had declared, "We cannot help him. He is going to die." They thus spoke with one another candidly, never realizing that Philip had knowledge of French.

On returning home, as Philip's prognosis became known, many individuals tried to goad Philip into seeking help from traditional doctors. Since medical science had already declared that its modalities had been exhausted, what did he have to lose? Thus, Philip was urged to consult the witch doctors. Africans are well aware of the powers of these occult practitioners.

#### PRAISES

- For an opportunity to showcase Philip's life during the funeral by offering a personal eulogy.
- From all reports, the funeral service was used of The Lord to challenge many regarding their walk with Him.

#### PRAYER REQUESTS

- For Philip's widow and children – who continue to mourn his death.
- For wisdom in helping to train eight physicians who are now here on orientation.

*"Precious in the sight of The Lord is the death of His saints."*

**Psalms 116:15**



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Yet, Philip also knew, based on Deuteronomy 18, that the secret arts used by such individuals are an abomination in God's sight. Despite considerable pressure, Philip steadfastly refused to go to the sorcerers for help. Philip told his detractors that, if it was God's will to take him, he was ready to die. These events took place around the year 2000. Later the same year, when I departed for America to commence my 2<sup>nd</sup> furlough, it was with a heavy heart – thinking that I'd said goodbye to Philip for the last time. I did not expect him to be alive upon returning to Cameroon. However, upon my return well over a year later, Philip was alive. While Philip had not been cured, the pulmonary disease afflicting him had been inexplicably arrested. He still suffered the effects of his illness, with bouts of chest pain and shortness of breath. Yet he continued to work – both for the hospital and in his labors for The Lord. Philip always said that he lived each day by faith – knowing that it was The Lord who sustained him. In fact, Philip lived for 15 years beyond the time that the specialists had predicted his death.

As his condition worsened in the 2-3 months preceding his death, Philip mentioned that he wished for his funeral to be a time of proclaiming the Gospel. Specifically, Philip stated that he wanted the service to be held at their family compound – instead of in a church – knowing that there were many who would not attend the service were it to be conducted in a church. Accordingly, the funeral was held outside Philip's family home at the very site where the burial took place.



**Left:** A crowd of mourners outside the family's home with the burial site adjacent to the mound of dirt

**Below:** The grave is filled as men tamp down the dirt with their feet, dancing in unison



In line with Philip's final wishes, the Gospel was shared with the many townspeople who came to bear tribute to this amazing man. The service was well attended and included several dignitaries, including the local mayor who volunteered his band for the occasion. Philip was a genuine Christian, a man who finished his course well. Would that all who name the Name which is above every name might do likewise.

*With Love, Julie Stone*