

For over a year and a half now we have been funding and administering a women's program in South Sudan. Out in the rural villages of South Sudan, women are treated as citizens with little to no worth and are usually forced into marriage at a young age. They are the ones who are expected to do all the hard work and provide for their families as well as having no programs for their benefit and care, all while being told that they have much less value than men. With this in mind and with God's direction we are seeking to bridge that gap by providing programs that minister to women only. Providing a place where they can gather, fellowship, be taught the truths of God's Word and eat a good meal.

Eric has just returned from a 2 week trip to South Sudan. Our first women's program has had a great year of success in Boma, and now a different people group, the Ofrika tribe in Omiling, have requested a women's program be started there. Eric and the team arrived in South Sudan in early March and were met with rising tensions as the country teeters on the edge of civil war. We very much appreciate the prayers of everyone during this trip and thank God for their safety. They traveled to Omiling with supplies to start the new women's program. The people in Omiling were thrilled to host the team and delighted to finally have their own women's program. 3 years ago we sent a pastor into this area and the team were so happy to now find 6 thriving churches ministering to the Ofrika tribe. The current pastor, a Ugandan man named Sam, and his wife Doreen are doing a splendid job planting churches, mentoring new pastors and ministering to the people there. Doreen is now taking over the brand-new women's program. About 30 women attended the first meeting and responded joyously to hearing teaching from God's word about how God values them just as much as men and how much He loves them.

Back in the capitol city of Juba, Eric and the team were able to meet with the 6 young girls (ages 13-16) from Boma who we have been able to rescue from forced marriage in their home village. They are now attending a school in Juba that doubles as an orphanage. Every one of these girls, if she were still in the village, would have been forced to be married by 14 and been turned into her husband's slave. Their excitement to learn, as well as the fact that they are safe from their cultural expectations, was encouraging to see.

#### **Prayer Requests and Needs**

1. The woman's programs that we have are showing huge success with hundreds coming to Christ. Yet these programs require ongoing financial support. We feed anywhere from 100 to 300 ladies once a week and this gets costly. Note that we have woman's programs at 2 base locations in South Sudan now (Omiling and Boma).
2. We need to raise more funds so we can take more girls out of the village and bring to the school in Juba so we can protect them from forced marriage, rape and slavery. I know we can't save all the girls but each life we save is worth it. It absolutely breaks my heart that girls as young as 12 are forced to marry men that don't love them and basically rape them and use them as slaves. Let's see how many we can save.
3. Please pray for Sam and Doreen as they serve the Ofrika people and manage the new women's program there.
4. Pray for the country of South Sudan, that peace will prevail and that they will manage to not enter another civil war. South Sudan is the youngest country in the world, founded in 2011,

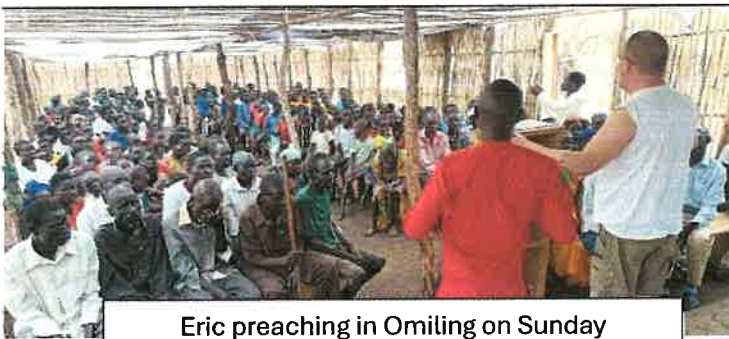
5 years of their early independence were marked by civil war. Many lives were lost and it makes ministry very difficult to do during wartime.



First women's program in Omiling



The 6 girls rescued from Boma



Eric preaching in Omiling on Sunday



Sam and Doreen

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