

The Jim Civale Family

Missionaries to Samoa

January 1, 2012

...His compassions fail not. They are new every morning...

Lamentations 3:22-23



Dear Praying Friends,

Where were you on December 30, 2011? If you were to ask me that question, you might not believe my answer. I would tell you truthfully that I wasn't anywhere. If I were to tell you that last week had only six days in it, you might also be skeptical. However, such oddities occur when a Head of State, Prime Minister, and Parliament decide to move the international dateline from one side of the country to the other. It used to be that Samoa and American Samoa were both east of the international date line, but as of Thursday evening, December 29th at midnight, the date line was officially re-drawn to go right between our two countries. This means that I went to sleep on Thursday, December 29, and woke up on Saturday, December 31, but that my friends in American Samoa woke up on Friday, December 30.

The date line change was not the only history-making event last month. Another big event (at least in our village) was ABC Academy's first graduation ceremony. Emi and her teachers did a great job graduating their first 11 Kindergarten students and promoting their other 16 students. Their combined Christmas and Graduation program was well attended and well received. In fact, over fifty had to stand outside and watch through the windows. Of course, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to preach the gospel to many first-time visitors that night.

By most accounts, the evening was a great success. However, one person was not so pleased with the program and has created quite a stir. Our head deacon's wife made a scene at the end of the program because her son did not receive the first, second, or third place award. Since then, she has refused to speak with us and does not attend church. Her husband, who was at first embarrassed by and even apologized for her behavior, has also stopped coming to church and begun speaking badly of us. One other couple and one other individual from the church have joined them spreading rumors and missing church. In our first two years as a church, we experienced many external attacks, but this is our first major internal attack. Your prayers are greatly desired.



Deacon Vatau gave this testimony at the end of our Christmas Eve service...
"I am from a poor family and we have no treasure box to open to give a gift to Jesus, but I have one thing to give and that is myself. Lord, I give myself completely to you to use as you wish."

On a more positive note, our son Joseph successfully finished his first semester of college last month and is enjoying his Christmas break in New Jersey with the twins. Thank you for keeping Michael, Carol, Joey, and Tory in your prayers.

Your faithful prayers mean much to us and we thank you. May God bless each of you richly in 2012!

Sincerely and gratefully,
Jim & Emi Civale

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