



The Atkins Family

Jason, Emily, Savannah,
Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

April 2024

Continued progress is racing against impending rain and our early-June return to America!

Exciting, Tiring Progress *by Jason*

The construction progress recently has been both exciting—and hard fought at the same time. Important (and visible) steps forward are being taken, and it’s really exciting to see shop walls going up and the first few internal columns of the shop (which are steel) being set in place. At the same time, it’s been tiring at a time when we’re already tired, and a bit stressful as we race against both the rainy season that looms not far ahead and our return to the USA in the beginning of June. It’s great to see progress, but we have a lot more to go before the rains can arrive without causing damage to any of the work we currently have in process. Please rejoice with us for the jobsite safety and progress, and continue to pray for energy as we work to wrap the current steps up!

Right: The skid steer has been a giant help in lifting and setting the first pair of steel columns for the new shop!



Let The Little Children Come To Jesus *by Emily*

One of my favorite parts of each week is the hour that I spend in our kids’ Sunday School class. It’s a rowdy bunch of around 50 kids aged from 2 to 12, and I am one of 3 teachers with them each week. Most of the kids in the class come from non-Christian homes. They live in the neighborhood and like the songs and the stories, so they walk over for Sunday School and then head home when church starts.

This past Sunday was my turn to teach. Just before the class started one of the other teachers told me that she felt strongly that I should offer an invitation for any kid who wanted to give their life to Jesus at the end of the lesson (which is not something we normally do). I made sure to leave about 20 minutes and I asked the kids, "What does it

mean to give your life to Jesus?" Some of them explained that it means that Jesus is your Savior and Lord. We talked about what it means if Jesus is my Savior - He cleans the sin from my heart, He gives me the strength and ability to obey. What about my Lord - He’s the boss, I obey Him, I grow to become more like Him. We also talked about the exclusivity of giving my life to Jesus - I don’t worship idols or wear good luck charms blessed by witch doctors.

We were able to talk about really specific examples of what a life with Jesus as your Lord and Savior looks like. With their eyes closed, 23 of them decided that their life didn’t look like that, but they wanted it to. After praying together, we talked to each one of them about the decision they had made.

As someone who gave my life to Jesus at 5 years old (right after Kiddie Korner at Simpson Park Camp), I know that the decisions we make as kids can change our whole lives. Please pray that God would fill these little ones with joy and a continued desire to know Him more.



My view as the "cement delivery tractor" driver.



Though not the way it's done around here, my guys have gotten quite good at giving our slab sections a nice smooth steel trowel finish.



The steel columns were scrap yard finds, now we're welding the attachment points we need onto them before lifting them up.



The shop walls for my office and the storage room that will hold all of the solar power electronics are getting taller!

Thankful To Have What We Need *by Jason*

I've been reminded again and again over the course of the construction project what a blessing it is to have a shop at my disposal with so many capabilities. It's a privilege I'm grateful for. We've done everything from fabricating roof joists to knocking out a few small brackets to plasma cutting more complicated parts to machining a quick replacement part when something broke on the cement mixer. It's a big blessing to have a well-equipped shop handy. We've been glad to help others with this kind of stuff for years, and it's fun to be our own customer now. I'm thankful for the way the current shop exists at the moment, but excitedly look forward to all of the extra things we'll be able to do when the time comes to settle in at the new shop with enough electricity to run what we need, enough floor space for several people to be able to work on different things at the same time safely, and enough storage to keep things off of the floor so it can stay neat and organized.

Right: In the old shop machining a replacement for the broken cast iron part from our 1960's sheet metal cutting shear.



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