

Charles and Pam White
March 2009

Dear Christian Family,

I really believe that one of the greatest joys that parents have, after that of having children and watching them grow up, is that of being with them when they have become adults. Grown children reflect the training and love the parents have poured into them, and, at the same time, the development due to their own personal experiences and choices. And that — for Christian parents anyway — makes for a great combination. Pam and I had the wonderful privilege of having two of our three daughters with us for a few days this month. Tess was accompanied by her fiancé, Stephen, who came to see the places and persons that are dear to her from her childhood days. Their wedding is planned for the 22nd of August in Colorado Springs. And Tia came from Italy, with Ameleah, her 4-year-old. Tia came to make the first arrangements for having her second child here in Lyon, toward the end of July. The French hospital system is much better for that sort of thing than the Italian, so Tia is exercising her prerogatives as a French citizen. It would have been great to have Tami here, also, as the moments when these sisters are together are truly magic for us as parents. What a privilege to have them ! What a joy to watch their love for each other and for the Lord! I'm tearing up as I write, so ... on to another subject.

As I told you last month, we have already begun the tedious process of making arrangements to see as many of you as possible in September and October of this year. We look forward to telling you in person about the work here. All of that moving about will be strenuous for Pam's knees and my fibromyalgia, so we're going to have to build some rest periods into the itinerary. But we do want to see you and renew our contacts with our faithful supporters. It has become apparent that we will also need to do some fund-raising this time. So, if you know of any congregations around you that might be interested in contributing to a solid work in Western Europe, please do send us the name and address of a contact person.

I have begun a Sunday morning study called "Les soucis de la vie" ("The worries of life"), partly inspired by Leroy Brownlow's book, *The Christian's Everyday Problems*. I guess Christians have the same troubles as other people (and more, in a way), but our approach to them has to be different, and that is the angle I'm taking. As Peter said to cast all of our anxiety on the Lord "because He cares for you," I have made that the theme of this study. I want our folks to have that reflex: to seek the Lord in all their burdens, knowing that He is actively involved in helping us bear up under them. So far, we've talked about "time" and "money". Some other subjects will be, "solitude," "feelings of inadequacy," "calumny," "submission," etc.

The translating work is going well. I am now in my 14th year with Truth for Today, and it continues to be a satisfying ministry. The members of our own congregation and members of the Church in all of French-Speaking Europe profit greatly from this monthly publication that is now sent to 44 French-speaking countries around the world.

I believe it is a sign of growth that our congregation is now receiving reports from mission works that we support. Twice a year, we send a gift to the Bétikara Orphanage in Madagascar, a work of the Churches of Christ in that country. John and Esther Ratovohery, whom some of you may know, work closely with this orphanage. Recently, when John and Esther weren't able to pass through Lyon on a reporting trip, they sent us a PowerPoint report that we were able to watch on a Tuesday evening at Bible study time. Before watching the report, we read together several passages from the Bible about how important it is to help widows, orphans, and other people in need. It was encouraging to see a report of a work so far away that we are personally supporting and encouraging. Those children taken off the street and taught about Jesus will be a powerful influence for Him in coming generations in that very poor country.

This has been one of those months in which there is really little "new" news, since the different activities of the group have been carried on as usual, as in most assemblies of the Lord's Church. April should be a bit more lively, though. We are planning our 9th annual member retreat, to be held on the 13th of April, on the theme, "The First and Greatest Commandment". For the first time, this all-day retreat will be held entirely at the home of one of our members. I'll tell you about that in the next letter. Also in the April letter, I should be able to tell you about the April 19-20 visit of the choral group "Harmonie," from the Church in Marseilles. We're currently inviting friends, contacts and neighbors to hear them sing.

I've had good news about my eyes. The two repaired retina tears in the right eye are holding well, and the feared tear in the left eye has not developed. The flashes I'm seeing appear to be vascular, says my doctor, due to strain on my neck (probably from too much typing!).

That's about it for this time. We appreciate all of you so much and pray the Lord's blessing on you, as we know you pray for us and for our efforts here. Thanks for being partners together in this great effort, whose ultimate fruit will best be seen in the Day we all eagerly await, and which we will welcome with shouts of joy and victory!

Sincerely,

Charles and Pam