

# THE RHOADES

## MISSIONARIES TO GUYANA, SOUTH AMERICA

March 2016

“ Every Christian is either a missionary or an impostor. ”

Dear Pastors and Supporting Churches,

We have a great deal to update you about in this letter. We have had a number of events take place since our arrival in Guyana. We arrived in Port Kaituma Guyana. The Family Conference started the same week of our arrival. It was a joy to preach with Brother Ralph Cepec that week. I preached the first and last service of Family Week, and he preached the services in between. We had a high attendance of over 250. All week there was a good response at the altar. It was a great encouragement to have the Cepecs with us in Port Kaituma as we were getting accustomed to living in the jungle.

Within the first two weeks in Port Kaituma, Mercy Joy was bitten by insects, and the sores became infected. We attempted to treat the wounds to the best of our ability, but it became clear that she would need to go to the hospital in Georgetown to receive further treatment. At the end of the Family Conference on Sunday afternoon, Mrs. Patty drove us to the local hospital in Port Kaituma to have Mercy checked out. The doctor had an IV in Mercy's hand to administer a n t i - viral and antibiotics to combat the infection. Mercy flinched her hand and the doctor withdrew

the needle and would not try again. He advised us to give Mercy pills for 3 days and then check back with him for a possible blood test. We came back home and Brother Dean was told the news of the doctor's assessment. Brother Dean agreed that we needed to get Mercy to Georgetown and advised us to do so. That Sunday evening after church, I received a phone call from personnel associated with the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown. After a series of phone calls, we were notified that the U.S. Embassy would have a medic at the airport in Georgetown the next morning and would expedite our travel for Mercy to be seen at a private hospital. When we arrived at the airport in Georgetown, we unloaded from the plane, and the medical staff from the U.S. Embassy was already at the steps of the plane assessing Mercy and had a wheel chair for her to use if needed and people to carry our luggage from the plane to the truck. We did not even have to wait in line for customs. We walked straight to their vehicle and were taken directly to the doctor with Mercy Joy. She was given 2 bags of anti-viral/antibiotics, and they considered admitting her to the hospital to be watched for several days. We were told by the medical staff to stay in Georgetown to help Mercy Joy's health be restored. The U.S. Embassy nurse stayed beside Vashtee and Mercy the entire time at the hospital. We moved into a house in Georgetown to save on costs of a hotel.

While we are staying in Georgetown, we applied for a work visa that would be good for 5 years. Due to our passports being stamped as visitor status for 30 days, we were told that we could not be in Guyana while our work visa is in process. I was told that due to a new government and a new president, all the immigration laws are now being enforced.



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The way it worked a short time ago is not the way visas are being approved now. For the time being, we are waiting in Trinidad and living with Vashtee's mother. We are told that our family's work visa should be approved within 40 days. We are eager to get back to Guyana. We know that we are called to Guyana! I do not know what the Lord is doing, but I do know that the Lord is in control

During our time in the Capitol, while seeking medical treatment for Mercy, the Lord showed me several areas where I can begin our work in the Capitol region. I have our pastor's approval and blessing on establishing our first work in this region. We will plant churches, train church planters, and bring a container of Scripture to Guyana annually.

Lord willing, once our visa issues are resolved, we will return to Guyana and begin our ministry sometime in April. We have found housing and have identified key places to begin a work. We are eager to get started.

Lastly, we learned many lessons during our first month in Guyana. We are forever thankful for the hospitality, help, and home cooking that Mrs. Patty Runyon prepared for us! We are thankful for Brother Dean Runyon's advice and counsel given to us, even though he was in the States during our time in the jungle region. We deeply respect the many years of faithfulness and sacrifice that Brother Dean and Mrs. Patty have given the Lord. In our eyes, they are a modern-day David Livingstone and Amy Carmichael!

We are thankful for the kindness, counsel, and prayers that have been sent our way the last several weeks! Thank you very much for the hundreds of messages that have been sent to us, the thousands of prayers that have been sent to the throne room of grace on Mercy's behalf, and the countless ways the Lord has shown Himself faithful!

Looking unto Jesus,

The Rhoades Family  
Ephesians 6:23-24