

April 2020

Greetings from Lebanon

Thank you for following my news. In this newsletter, you can read about a couple of highlights from the ministry in the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) through graduates from the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS).

As you already know, I was appointed by CBM as of January 1, 2019 to help build and implement a strategy for CBM's work in the region. I thank God for this amazing opportunity to be part of the work He is leading in this region of the world. Our main target was to start working in Sudan, and with God's grace and your generous support we were able to do so, as well a couple of projects in Morocco and North Lebanon.

Sudan

Pastor Philemon Hassan is a graduate from ABTS and leads the River of Life Baptist church in Khartoum, the church is very active in terms of discipleship and equipping young leaders. We had the opportunity to partner with them by providing full financial support towards a five days leadership training conference that took place in October 2019. 105 young men and women attended from various denominations and states in Sudan. They received teaching on "Visionary leadership". They were also able to discuss in groups, practical ways to apply what they have studied together in their churches and ministries. This is a very important ministry, as the church in Sudan is in dire need for a young, trained generation of leaders.



Pastor Philemon during one of the sessions.

Visit to Sudan

In December 2019, I had the opportunity to travel to Sudan. This trip had two goals: Visit the graduates and get to know more about their respective ministries, build connections with some of the ministry leaders in Khartoum. The trip was successful as I met with different pastors from various evangelical denominations, it was very inspiring to see the Church there being very active despite the great challenges it faces. After meeting with the different ministry leaders, it has become obvious to me that the following are the most urgent needs for the Sudanese church:

- Training and development of young people in the church, who are eager to be involved in ministry. The positive thing is that churches are willing to work with each other on this.
- The Christian kids who go to public schools in Sudan have to attend a class on religion and since the government doesn't have the willingness to support Christian education, they are forced to attend Islamic courses, as a result to this many of them turn to Islam or simply become atheist. The need is to support teachers who can give Christian education courses.



With some of ABTS graduates in Sudan.

Morocco

Said and Salima* are ABTS graduates. They are a high caliber couple and key leaders in Agadir, Morocco. They are seeing many Muslims come to faith through the different parts of their ministry as well as training new leaders in the hope of reaching more people in different parts of Morocco. We were able to come along with them and help fund a three days conference attended by 20 young women and men. This program addresses their spiritual needs and is a very important training for them as they get ready to lead home cells, the church in Morocco meets in houses and evangelism is done one to one.

North Lebanon

Fadi* is ABTS graduate serving among Syrian refugees' in North Lebanon. In a conversation with him, Fadi states: "Our vision is to win, build and send believers. We aim to support churches and plant new ones. In addition, we aim to prepare missionaries from our refugee brothers and sisters, who feel called to return to their country Syria and serve there. Our team has become bigger. We are also multiplying disciples, and we have a big group of volunteers. We are looking forward to starting a new church soon." Fadi and his team have a ministry for 225 Syrian refugee children; It also includes a literacy program, focusing on the Arabic, French and English languages. They also provide food for the kids at the center. It is very important to keep the children of the streets as they run the risks of becoming gang members that are present in the camps, the danger of radicalization is always a threat specially that it comes with offers of financial help, as well as child labor. We were able to come along this meaningful ministry and contribute to its funding.



A classroom in the center.

*Names were changed for security reasons.

Partner with CBM

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing prayer, encouragement and support. Thank you for taking part in what God is doing in our region.

If you wish to become a partner with my ministry, the MENA ministry, or with any other CBM ministry, please contact Barb Keys bkeys@cbmin.org for more information. Your partnership is key for the sustainability and growth of the ministry.

Stay Connected

I would love to hear from you. You can email me at: jbridj@cbmin.org