



Phil & Vala Long

Taking Life to the forgotten people of Madagascar

Mad 4 Life Ministries

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10

www.Mad4Life.org

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Dear Pastors and Prayer Partners,

Bonjour and Salama Ireo from the Big Red Island of Madagascar!

Aiza ny zanako? It's a simple phrase. It means, "Where is my baby?" It's the first words I heard cried out by one of the ladies from our church as Vala and I walked into the Children's Intensive Care Unit before going to church this morning. Tahiry is one of the first people who accepted Jesus after the Browns and us started the church. She is one of three or four people who began coming to the church from the very beginning. Friday, Vala and I received a call that Tahiry was in labor and was in major distress because she needed a C-section. The baby was too big and the birth canal too small. It's a long story that involved some incredibly archaic birthing practices, however Vala recommended that they take her to the maternity hospital where Vala teaches English. A German missionary who is a mid-wife runs it. Even though it's a small hospital, it offers the best care in Madagascar, especially when it comes to pediatrics. The doctor, the midwives and the family declined and decided to continue with a natural birth at the small clinic. The baby was born, however because of the damage to the baby's head as a result of the birth, his health was declining quickly and the little guy was in major pain. The family finally consented to bringing the baby over to the hospital Vala had recommended. Our partner, Dan, got the baby and the dad into his car and met Vala and I and we guided them to the hospital. Once we arrived, the staff stabilized the baby and then consulted with some of the best doctors here and in Germany. The consensus was they could keep the baby stabilized, but there had been so much trauma to his head that only God could help him now. Saturday we were able to get Tahiry out of the clinic where she was and over to the hospital with the baby. That evening our girls, Sarah, Kezia and Rebekah, went with me to check on Tahiry and her husband. The girls did such a good job ministering to her, but they let me know that dad did not understand the baby's condition and he wanted to take him home. So, with the girls' help, I told Tahiry and her husband to prepare themselves because I had to speak to them in a very direct way, which is not done in this country, and it could also be the reason they did not understand how bad the baby was.

"If you take the baby home, you need to know he will have big pain. While he is at the hospital they are keeping him from having pain. Please listen to the doctors and nurses here and do not take the baby home until they say it is okay." Once Kezia said that, I prayed with them and then hugged both of them before we left.

So this morning, before church, Vala and I were on our way to the hospital to take them breakfast when Dan called to let us know the baby had just died. When Vala and I entered the NICU, that's when I heard that phrase, "Aiza ny zanako? Aiza ny zanako!?" Vala and I stayed with the family as long as we could, Then I took Vala, Deacon and the girls to church, then turned around, went back to the hospital to get Tahiry, her husband and the baby and brought them back to their house so they could prepare to take the baby to be buried. This was a first in over 20 years of ministry. In almost all of our updates I try to be positive, and this is not what I wanted to put out this month, but what I had intended can wait because I really want to ask you to **pray for Nandrianana**, Tahiry's husband. He is not a believer. He has only been to church once or twice and has not been happy that his wife and their four-year-old son have been coming. However, since this morning he has hugged me 3 times and allowed me to see him cry. Please pray with me that he will give his life to Christ. Thank you so much, and know that we are also praying for you.

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