



Christian Reformed World Missions

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Dear Friends,

There's an intriguing incident reported in II Kings 12. King Joash decided to renovate the temple in Jerusalem and instructed the priests to get on with the job, using money collected from vows and voluntary donations. But the priests apparently dragged their feet or did other things with the funds, till the king finally became impatient with them, relieved them of this responsibility - and their access to the cash - and gave the job to a building contractor. Evidently this worked. Vs 15 reports that "they did not require an accounting from those to whom they gave the money to pay the workers, because they acted with complete honesty."

Wow! I'll bet this passage doesn't get quoted very often in Stewardship and Accountability Manuals. We like to concentrate on Jesus' parables about masters calling servants to account, or II Corinthians 8 where Paul goes to some lengths to assure the Corinthian church that its gift has been properly reported and administered. I'm trying to imagine how King Joash could have known that his building contractor acted "with complete honesty" in the absence of any accountability!

I recently spent the better part of 2 months (mid-February to mid-April) in Takum, working mainly with the finance department of one of our partner churches. I had two goals: review their financial records for the past 4 years and get them ready for an external audit of those years; and provide training to the finance department staff so that this year's and future records will be kept in good order. Neither task has yet been completed. There are huge challenges facing the accountant and his assistant which will require a lot more than 2 months of my time.

From what I've seen so far, I do believe that the accountant has acted "with complete honesty," but even so, a lot of questions remain unanswered. One day when I was particularly frustrated and vented with "What are we going to do now?!" he responded with, "Please ma, please help me!" That alone convinced me of his honesty. He's not trying to hide anything; he's just overwhelmed by the work and looking for help.

For the rest of this year, I was hoping to be able to spend a week per month working with this partner, but already that estimate has come short. Most of our Nigeria missionaries are presently in North America on Home Service assignments, so in addition to my business manager duties, I am also acting as Nigeria Field Director, Compound Head (overseeing repair, maintenance and rentals) on each of our two Jos compounds, and dealing with immigration matters. With the extra hats I'm wearing these days, I've been wishing for a few extra heads too. It will probably be late August before I can find time to go back to Takum for a couple of weeks. Pray for patience and stamina! Thank you for your faithful support and prayers, and for your patience with me!

In His service,  
Kathy Vanderkloet