

Listening to 'The Call'

"Odle News" January 2021

Twenty years ago God told a young pastor Zak to find a new place where the Lord wanted him to work. The calling was so clear Zak got on his cheche (bicycle) and started riding among people and villages who had never heard of Jesus. Zak rode most of the day from his house down paths and small roads to the community of name omitted for safety and knew this was where he needed to work.

Zak worked with others and started a church. The church was the only one in a several square mile radius of Muslim villagers. Zak made friends, the Lord moved, and soon a fledgling congregation formed, built a mud church, the very ones in the picture, and Zak started pastoring this group.

Eventually, Zak worked with a missions group that took more of his time and attention and eventually sent him to Mali for a few years. When he returned, the people heard he was back and asked him to come and help them restart the church.



I have spent Christmas morning and early afternoon in this town the past two years. Each year I am invited to speak on a topic that will help the entire community come together--Muslims and Christians, men and women, old and young. Everyone sings for at least an hour and people try to dance without stepping on the children who are taking every open space on the hardpack dirt floor. We pray for the leaders of the community, including the imam and his family, that God will grant wisdom and peace.

After the service has ended the church serves a meal of jollof rice and chicken to every family. I sat with some of the men and we talked about COVID, 2020, and our hopes for 2021.

Jesus is healing relationships here. The imam and his family attend every year. Elders and sub-chiefs from the village and surrounding villages come and participate.

I'm grateful to be Zak's friend and partner in ministry. He listened to the call of the Holy Spirit and it is making an eternal difference for people in this town..

Zak founded Active Discipline Foundation (ADF) when he returned to Ghana from Mali. ADF is just like Zak--100% focused on sustainable development and missionary work. He brings years of experience as a nonprofit manager, regional pastor, lay dentist, trainer, church planter, and agriculture coordinator into ADF.

For 2021 Zak plans to complete the mission house, expand the church, and begin preaching stations in the district where the church is located.

Oh, and Zak has a radio ministry that reaches about a million people every week and trains young Christian evangelists Arabic so they can read the Qu'ran in the original language.

**Please pray for the Odles and Zak as they listen to God's call!*