



# Phil and Sylvie Good

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**Location:** Lebanon



**What we do:** Supporting multiple organisations discipling new believers across the MENA region and fundraising to bring the good news across borders

Dear All,

Thank you for praying for us, even as we are in transition towards ending our time with CMS.

Currently Phil is at home, fixing our house and helping SAT-7 with fundraising, and I am in Lebanon enjoying Beirut's wonderful summer humidity. We have got to that time of year when everyone longs for a breeze or rain! Breathing becomes a challenge as it is much like a sauna.

I am spending my days, as ever, visiting families, teaching English, teaching mums to play with kids and kids how to do French skipping. If you can't remember that, we all played it as kids with long elastic. It's very cheap here and creates a lot of fun. I am missing Phil, of course, but spending more time with Jesus, which can't be bad.



*Sylvie at a clothing distribution centre for refugees.*

Could you please pray for one of our families? They have been granted asylum in America and their two adult sons have already gone to Salt Lake City. They were due to fly out last Tuesday, parents and six girls, but the UN cancelled the flights the morning they were due to leave. The excuse is that Sham, the youngest girl who has developmental delay, needs a doctor on the flight. This is not the case as her family manage her very well. The flights have not been re-booked, just delayed indefinitely. You can imagine the stress on the family, who have sold off or given away their furniture and household bits and pieces and given up the small jobs that they had to earn money. Now they have no income, no furniture and no future. But, they say, God is here, and he is just and fair and will provide all we need. Please join me in praying that God's will be done, and his alone. And pray that the UN will have compassion on the mess they have caused.

On a lighter note, I had the pleasure of joining a few Muslim background ladies in a Bible study. It was on Luke 14, where Jesus asks us not to follow him before we have counted the cost. All was going in fairly pedantic fashion and you could be forgiven in thinking, as so many people do, that they were only doing the study to get the money from the church. And then I asked them what Jesus meant. To be honest they didn't really understand, but they lit up like beacons and suddenly all started talking at once! Because Jesus loves us, they said, and we love him. One lady said she had been very sick and had just asked Jesus to take her.

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**With Jesus  
With each other  
To the edges**



Another said she had been laid up for seven months and couldn't move but Jesus was with her every day. They don't know the Bible very well, but they certainly know Jesus.

Lebanon is quite stable at the moment. The dollar is stable and that makes everyone feel better as they know what price to expect when they go shopping! Everyone is expecting that to change in the near future but it is good for now.

Sadly, the tension between Lebanese and Syrians is getting worse as time goes on and the economic situation gets worse. This is understandable from both sides, but no one can see a resolution as returning to Syria – risking an awful prison sentence for desertion and even worse conditions – is not a tempting prospect for any family.

So where is God in this? Why did Jesus come into the world? To die for us, yes, but also to teach us how to live with integrity and wisdom in a less than perfect world. For most people, things change, but not overnight, and today is the today we live, not tomorrow. So, we take up our cross and follow Jesus, we live the Sermon on the Mount, we become the pure in heart, the salt of the earth, and we draw close to him who never moves away from us. And we find love, and peace, and joy in the midst of heartache, frustration, doubt, despair even. At such times we see the Suffering Servant. But though God is not deterred by suffering, it is never the end.

Phil: As you can see Sylvie has written this from Lebanon, and I will soon join her. We are helping to host a mission trip to the school of Emil and Reem in the north of Lebanon, and then we are selling all our things and flying home sometime in September. When we went to Lebanon we hoped that Syria was coming out of the darkest time and that normal life would return and the refugees would start going back. But that was not to be, so the life of a refugee is no longer a temporary state of affairs – they are just another group of underprivileged people.

We are leaving Lebanon in a worse state that when we arrived there five years ago, but despite the onslaught of bad news God has been faithful and it has been a rich experience. We are grateful to have been the hands and feet of a loving saviour and I hope you have enjoyed journeying with us and our refugee friends. We hope to see many of you face to face in the autumn!

Love,

Phil and Sylvie



*Photos from top to bottom: Sharing food together in a refugee home; an ancient church at Byblos; Sunday morning at the Life Center.*



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Please note that opinions expressed in link letters are those of mission partners, not necessarily of Church Mission Society.

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