

NEWS AND VIEWS
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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Once upon a time... is all too often the beginning of some fairy tale told through countless generations. Some have happy endings kind of like a Hallmark movie. Some end horribly with trolls eating little children. But some stories that begin that way are still being written.

So let me tell you a story. Once upon a time a young man left his native land for a faraway dream. He was able to come to an unfamiliar culture and benefit from studying in this strange environment. You see, the God he served had a marvelous plan for him. But soon and very soon, he began to sense his need not only for the Lord, but also for a suitable helper for this journey in life. He needed a wife.

So one day he traveled back to his native country. Like a man on a mission, he followed the will of the Lord to the woman God had chosen. With joy and much anticipation they were both able to travel back to the faraway land so the man could continue his studies and their journey as a couple could begin. They were married in the church where the man was appointed to serve and began to raise a family and worship within this church family. Like so many roads we travel there seems to be a time when a bump in the road causes a delay in the journey. This bump came by the arm of man's government. The couple was summoned and required to travel back to their native land and take care of some business with their immigration status. Thinking their journey would be a short one they left their three young sons in the care of another church family. The bump quickly grew into a series of insurmountable mountains in the middle of their road. It seemed that no one could move that mountain. For more than a decade, pleading to the government and praying to God seemed to end up in the same place. Nothing moved. For a long time, the mountains remained.

Once upon a time... a man and his wife labored mightily for the Lord while enduring the painful separation from their sons. Hope seemed to flare up from time to time only to quickly disappear with the next immigration appeal and ruling. As the man and his wife faithfully served the Lord, and you think it couldn't possibly get any worse, it surely did. One dark night the family in the faraway land who were charged with the care of the couple's children had to tell them their father had suddenly and unexpectedly died. The sons began to weep...the church began to weep...the widow began to weep...and weep...and weep...until the voice of the Lord gave her the message. *Weep for the other widows right here where you are...minister to their pain out of your own.* When the story is a faithful tale instead of a fairy tale miracles begin to happen. This faithful widow began a small widows' and orphans' ministry in her native land. The Lord began to multiply the number of widows and the resources needed to make a difference in their lives. When we trust the Lord in our tragedy we can see He is truly faithful to restore our broken hearts and shattered dreams.

Once upon a time... when the elder son became twenty-one, he gained legal status from the government of man to bring his mother from her native land to this faraway land...which by the way was his and his siblings' native land from birth. You might think that this story couldn't get any better...but it did. In a prayer meeting one night not too long ago, this precious widow shared that in one of her most painful times shortly after arrival in this faraway land...the Lord God whispered to her in that still, small voice...*I will build you a house...* Despite her questions as to how this thing will be, she made the choice to believe God and trust His Spirit. And it soon will come to pass. And a celebration is scheduled. And you are invited to attend.

At 4:00 pm on Sunday, June 28, 2015, Mrs. Abiodun Akinsola will have her new home dedicated to the glory of God as this story continues. The address is 4202 Evans Drive, Raleigh, NC. I hope you can make it...I am so glad not to have missed this *Once upon a time* kind of story.

Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it...(Psalm 127:1)

Blessings to you,
Pastor Sam