

# BERNARD AND RAWN'S BRIEFINGS

SERVING THE GREAT COMMISSION MOVEMENT OF NIGERIA

February, 2005

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## “Just” Married!

This is a caption for the letter you SHOULD have gotten a year ago.... Please accept our apology, forgive us and read on!

Bernard's and my excitement began in the days prior to the wedding as we started welcoming people to our wedding city of Jos, Nigeria.: out of town guests included my Dad, his wife Norine, Mom, and my brother Mark, as well as Bernard's family, other villagers, and friends from various parts of Nigeria and Ghana. The day was glorious! You will get some idea inside, but let me share some highlights here, too. The American “rehearsal dinner” doesn't really have a Nigerian counterpart. We used the night before to gather Bernard's relatives, plus mine to just get to know each other and celebrate my Dad's birthday. Mom cooked American fried chicken, rice, gravy and green beans. We all had a great time .



Americans do not have a counterpart for the Nigerian “Bridal Dance” - both Bernard and the host pastor were amazed that I was planning to simply walk in with both my parents. Nigerian brides take time to festively dance in. It was interesting to learn about the custom, but I was thrilled to have Mom and Dad guide me down the aisle to “Great is Thy Faithfulness” sung by two of my bridesmaids.

Let me share some other Nigerian aspects of the day. Signing the marriage register happens DURING the service. Worship music was played and people sang and danced while myself, Bernard, our parents, the best man and Chief Bridesmaid (maid of honor) each signed three copies of the register: one for us, one for the church and one for the government. The dancing during the reception is focused primarily on the couple... with others coming in to join them and “spray” them with money. Gift-giving at the reception is another chance to dance. People dance up to the couple with their gift and are given a wedding souvenir at that time.

Another American aspect of the wedding was a unity candle ceremony. This created a memorable moment—it wouldn't light!! We even got to the stage of digging out wax with a car key in order to succeed. As I write this, we have just had our first anniversary — We PRAISE GOD for His faithfulness.

Below: Bernard's parents: Chief James Ugwuoke and Lolo Regina Ugwuoke.



Above: Bernard getting the "final touch" of a boutonniere. He and all his groomsmen dressed alike so that people would have to "guess" who the groom was.

Left: These are all the ministers who were present during our service—they all prayed for us after we were joined.



Above: the groomsmen included 2 brother-in-laws: Lucky and Uche, younger brother Ifesinachi and friends Nnamdi, Okwudili, Ifeanwi, and Andy (best man).

Below: now we are officially married—we have signed our register!





Our walk down the aisle: Rawn with Rev. Vern Woodlief (mom) and Wayne Woodlief (dad).

Below, the Bride's family: Brother Mark, Mom, the couple, Dad, Dad's wife Norine. Many Nigerians are blessed that my family agreed to have the wedding in Nigeria.



Left: one great Nigerian tradition is the committee of friends. These people, close friends to the bride and/or groom, help make everything run smoothly.

Below: receiving the ring from Bernard was a wonderful moment for me... one of many on that wonderful day: January 17, 2004.



My bridesmaids included a teaching colleague, Sheila, 2 mission colleagues—Jennifer and Rachelle (the “Gure Gals”), a prayer partner, Kemi (the chief), her younger sister Joke, my pastor's daughters - Esther and Ozioma, and Ocheze, a mutual friend of Bernard's and mine.

## FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION IN THIS GENERATION

### 2004 IN BRIEF: SOME OF WHAT KEPT US BUSY

January — wedding, move to Enugu, honeymoon,

February — settled in and unpacked, Bernard started as Regional Coordinator.

March — Leaders meeting in Jos, visited Abuja.

April — Thanks to Enugu Committee of Friends and History Handful conference in Abuja.

May — Rawn attended prayer training and discipleship course, Bernard took a seminary course.

June — Finished discipleship course and went to mobilize

for next training in Calabar.

July — Our region hosted the National Women's Retreat and Rawn was sick.

August — Annual General Meeting in Jos, and a wedding.

September — Travel to Calabar and Lagos

October — Rawn attended and Bernard taught for the theoretical part of Nigerian staff training.

November — campus ministry and two family weddings.

December — Lokaa Jesus film premiere and village.

We're On The Web — Check us out at:  
[www.rawnandbernard.com](http://www.rawnandbernard.com) or  
[www.bernardandrawn.com](http://www.bernardandrawn.com)

WE WILL BE IN THE USA  
from Feb 21– April 16 For our  
itinerary - e-mail us or call Mr.  
Woodlief (Dad) at (617) 323-  
2109 or Rev. Vern Woodlief  
(Mom) at(562) 696-4229.

### PRAISES AND PRAYERS

**W**e thank God for

- generally good health this year.
- safe travels thru Nigeria, especially the south-east.
- good progress in cultural communication between Bernard and I.
- a faithful team of prayer and financial partners.
- our first year of marriage—our honeymoon is eternal!
- bringing some family members to a saving knowledge of Christ.

**P**ray along with us

- for us to be blessed with a baby this year
- that our communication with you will be much improved.
- to regularly supply our website masters with information (God bless Sherry and Erika!).
- for Bernard to have wisdom as the Regional Coordinator and to work well with the 3-man administrative consortium.
- for Rawn in the new staff training process to have a fruitful ministry at the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus (UNEC).
- for the Lokaar people in Crossriver State to share their newly premiered JESUS film.