

May 2013

# CHRISTIAN *Missions* IN UNREACHED LANDS INC.



## Africa's Hour, Africa's Challenge

**Cross-cultural Missions  
without Crossing a Border**

**Why Bother Praying for Missionaries?**

**Focus on India**





# Thinking It Through

ALLAN WILKS

## I'll Love You Forever

*"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35)*

In his 1986 classic children's book, *Love You Forever*, author Robert Munsch simply and tenderly tells of a mother's unconditional love for her son throughout his life. It is one of the best-selling children's books of all time, and no wonder—few can read it without an emotional response. We are irresistibly drawn to the ideal maternal love that endures all manner of childish behavior and adult separation, always returning at the end of each day to the promise of forever-love.

The climax of the story (spoiler alert!) comes when the son visits his mother near the end of her life and repeats back to her her oft-repeated promise to him. This perfectly imagined scene of returned love reminds us of the Lord Jesus on the cross, seeing His sobbing, heartbroken mother as she gazed on His tortured form and tenderly making arrangements for her future without Him, in spite of His own personal agony in the moment (John 19:26–27).

A love as strong as this, to transcend such great personal suffering, can only be described as fierce. Remarkably, Jesus' love for His mother stands as but an example of His fierce love for all mankind. John tells us that God offered His very own Son as a sacrificial lamb because He "so loved" mankind.

Best of all, this offered love is a permanent love. How every human being longs to be deeply, permanently, uncompromisingly loved by someone! This is why Munsch's tale resonates so deeply and it's why stepping into Christ's kingdom of light seems so much like coming home, to be in the most wonderfully satisfying place any person can be.

Those who love and follow the Lord Jesus Christ delight to dwell on His eternal promises, such as John 14:3 "I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also" and 1 John 2:25 "this is the promise that He made to us, eternal life." One of the greatest aspects of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a believer is that it acts as a seal of the promise of God's forever-love (Ephesians 1:13). And as if the mere fact of that guarantee isn't enough, the Holy Spirit goes on to daily remind the believer of Jesus' promise of sweet, never-ending love (John 14:26).

The apostle Paul, who endured much hardship during his

life, was deeply comforted and energized by his knowledge of the ironclad durability of the Lord's love. He asks his Roman readers the question "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35) He goes on to answer his own question by listing the direst things he can think of, based upon his own life experience: "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword."

If I ask myself the same question, my list will surely be different than Paul's, but the answer to the question must be the same—"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." (Romans 8:37) There is simply nothing that can sever the fierce bond of the love of my Savior for me, forged in the furnace of the cross. With strong, unyielding confidence, the beleaguered apostle goes on to assert that in fact, absolutely nothing "in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:39)

The forever-love of the Lord has inspired so many hymn writers, such as Frederick M. Lehman:

*Oh, love of God, how rich and pure!  
How measureless and strong!  
It shall forevermore endure—  
The saints' and angels' song.*

And Samuel Trevor Francis:

*O the deep, deep love of Jesus,  
spread His praise from shore to shore!  
How He loveth, ever loveth,  
changeth never, nevermore!*

And listen to the plea given by George Matheson, in response to that great theme:

*O Love that wilt not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
That in thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.*

Oh Lord, reveal to me ever more deeply the boundlessness, and grip me ever more firmly with the permanence, of Your incomparable love. May I be utterly constrained by it, in my love for You and for others. ■

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COVER PHOTO: Elsa Peterson and Sunday school class—Photo by Karl Peterson

# Africa's Hour, Africa's Challenge

by Karl Peterson

**This is Africa's great hour.** In the early church, the Gospel spread rapidly in the Middle East, Egypt, North Africa, and southern Europe. By the early Middle Ages the church had advanced farther into Asia and deeper into Europe. Later the Americas would hear the gospel of grace. Despite some efforts in the 1500s, it wasn't until the 1890s that the church began to advance in Africa as never before. At that time, only about 1.5 percent of the population was evangelical. Now the figure is approximately one in five (around 20 percent). That's staggering growth.

When we pray for Africa, we often intercede for its problems—disease, war, corruption, poverty—but there is also much good happening. The church is growing. Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda and Zambia are examples of “gospel hot-spots.” Across the continent churches are being planted, Bible schools are being established, old languages have new Bibles, and even Muslims are coming to Christ. It's a busy place for gospel ministry.

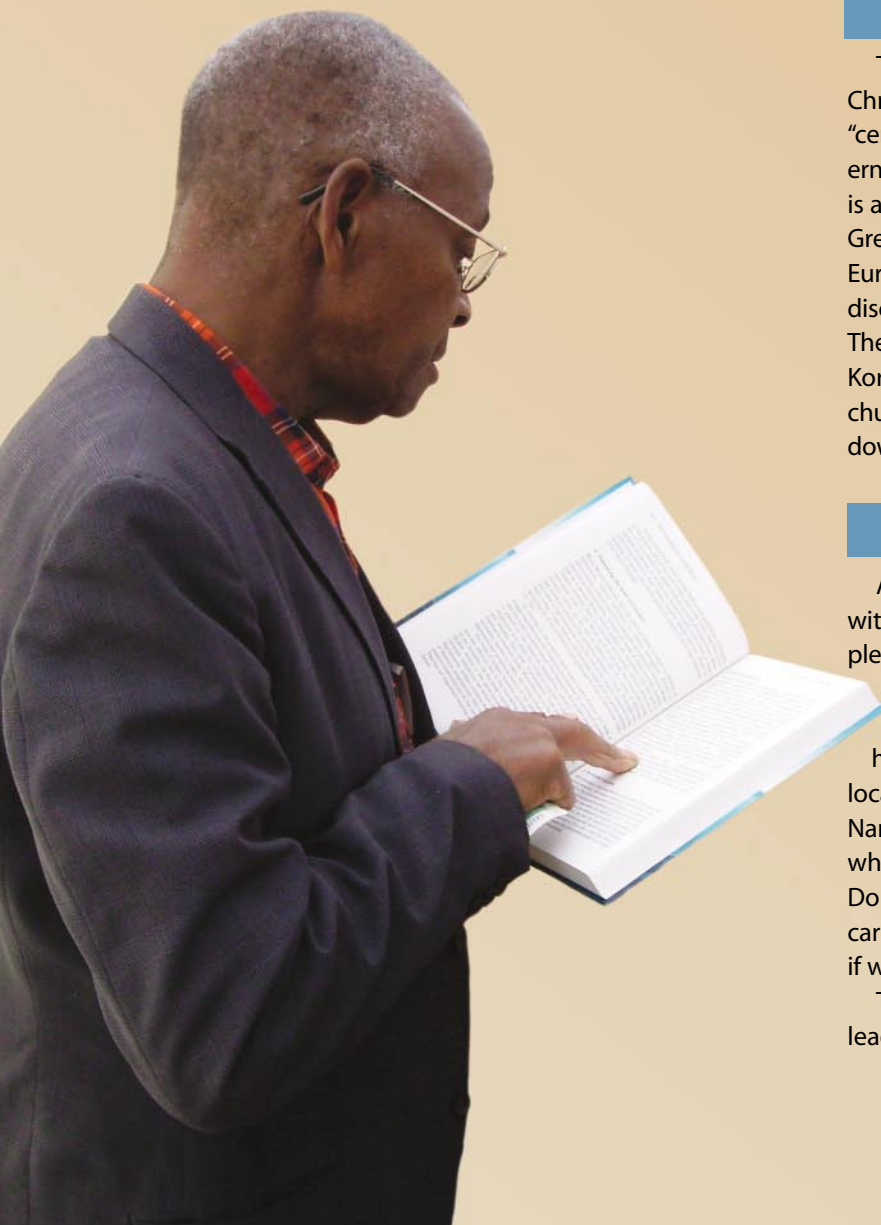
## Global Shift

Today, mission-focused people speak of a global shift in the Christian faith. This refers to the slow change of the church's “center of gravity” from the northern hemisphere to the southern and from the west to the east. This does not mean that God is abandoning the church in the West; rather it is proof that the Great Commission works. For the last 100 years the church in Europe and North America has taken Christ's command to make disciples of all nations seriously; it has sent, given and prayed. The result is the explosion of churches in places like Brazil, South Korea and China. It is now easier to find a schoolboy walking to church with a Bible in hand in the bush of Angola than it is in downtown Glasgow. This is truly Africa's big hour.

## Africa's Challenges

All this church growth sounds so great, but not all is well with the church on this continent of more than one billion people. Serious problems come with rapid church growth. My friend Domingos embodies some of these problems. Due to his hard work, the churches in central Mozambique have grown rapidly—so rapidly that he now supervises 32 local meetings! Every year at our church leaders' conference in Nampula, Mozambique, we hear stories from church leaders who shepherd five, ten or twenty congregations. Brother Domingos confides in me, “I have these churches under my care... but I know almost nothing about the Bible. I don't know if what I'm teaching my people is right or wrong. Help!”

Two major problems we often see are churches without leaders and churches with undertrained leaders. We do not



expect shepherds with seminary doctorates in ministry; we merely seek men who know the Bible, doctrine, and the marks of a healthy church, and who morally qualify for church leadership according to the pattern of 1 Timothy 3.

### Africans Reaching Africans

When the Gospel enters a new community or country, one of the surest marks that it has taken root is when the churches in that area begin to send their own missionaries. They no longer depend as much on outside missionary support. Our Brethren assemblies in Mozambique are a good example of this. Portuguese brothers initiated the assembly work after WWII. However, the movement died out for the most part when many white missionaries were forced to flee the country when it gained independence from Portugal in 1974. But today there are more than 80 assemblies operating throughout the country. Who planted them? It was Malawian and Zambian missionaries and evangelists—Africans reaching Africans! But the church is experiencing growing pains. Due to the poverty of many churches and poor infrastructure African churches struggle to support their own missionaries. The traditional foreign missionary model in the West might not be easy for them to imitate. These churches are in need of new models for sending and supporting missionaries.

### The Bible in Our Language

Wycliffe Bible Translators tell us that approximately 175 of Africa's more than 2,000 languages have complete Bibles. About 340 have the New Testament, and up to another 900 languages have a Bible translation in progress. Unlike Islam, which claims that their holy book can only be adequately read in Arabic, the Bible and the Christian Gospel can be translated into all languages to reach the world.

### Culture and Gospel Clash

When the Gospel enters any new culture (Western, African or Asian) there must be a clash of worldviews. The African worldview includes ideas such as a heavy interaction between the spirit world and the physical, the intimate contact between the living and the deceased, the far-off distancing of the one true God necessitating layer after layer of mediators, and countless customs and practices. When introduced to the Gospel, a new believer naturally asks, "What stays and what has to go?" May a family visit their deceased father's grave plot? Or even, may a believer build his or her house as a round hut or must it have square corners? These are important things to a Mozambican Christian. Some missionaries (and nationals) want to throw out all cultural customs and practices. Others are not discerning enough and want to retain it all. There is nothing better than a godly, sensitive, national believer well-versed in Scripture to discern these issues.

### The Fragmentation of the African Church

Approximately 15,000 denominations operate throughout Africa, and the number grows daily. Though unfortunate, this is an anticipated element of rapid church growth. The situation is heightened by the fact that many who lead the churches are not as well-grounded in Christian theology, often resulting in unnecessary church divisions.

### The Urbanization of Africa

Africans are moving to the city in droves. They sense a push: wars in the African countryside have made many to flee to the large cities. They also sense a pull: the city is where the good jobs, schools and hospitals are found. The African city has become dense and diverse, marked by sprawling slums, poverty, crime, disease, prostitution, joblessness, and the loss of good African cultural mores—a dangerous place to live, but a fabulous place for the church to flourish!

## Prevent History from Repeating

Before the apostles set foot in Europe, the Church in Africa was advancing. During the first centuries following the apostles, churches, Bible schools, libraries and missionary enterprises flourished across Africa's Mediterranean coast. Then beginning in the mid-600s the visible Church was almost entirely snuffed out (Ethiopia and what is now Northern Sudan escaped this demise). Islamic forces extinguished entire swathes of Christian congregations. How could this happen? Why did professing believers line up to renounce their faith and convert to Islam? In his excellent book, *The Kingdom of God in Africa*, church historian Mark Shaw tells us that not only had the Church become lifeless and ritualistic, but the leaders were no longer trained for Christian ministry. Many had become merely church functionaries and not passionate evangelists and shepherds grounded in God's truth. What is to preserve the professing Church in Africa today from being swept away by another wave of false teaching? Nominalism and a lack of trained leadership contributed to the demise of the medieval African church. These very factors are evident today. But those of us working on the ground in Africa (national and missionary alike) are committed to doing everything possible so that history won't repeat itself.

### Plant Healthy Churches

Does Africa need new churches? David Livingstone's heart was torn, looking out across the African countryside, seeing the smoke of a thousand villages without Christ. Here in Cape Town, our largest slum alone has 1,000 churches. Do we really need more? Yes! Many churches are small cults; others simply imitate the big TV preachers. Africa needs healthy churches and this often comes from new church planting.



## Teach and Train Leaders

We must equip those in ministry. Many biblical education models are used: correspondence courses, extension or mobile Bible schools, internet theological education, traditional classroom education, conference ministry, and book programs.

## Send Good Missionaries

Over the last 200 years there have been calls for a moratorium on missions. "Bring the missionaries home!" Undoubtedly a few individual missionaries should come home, and some mission contexts probably need a smaller mission presence than others. But we still need missionaries, and many more of them. New areas need to be reached. Existing areas need to be strengthened. The great weakness of a missionary is that he or she is an outsider—we may never understand the local context as well as the national. But this weakness is also our strength. Coming from the outside, a missionary brings new ideas, initiative, and experience. We see things the insiders don't and we often aren't bound by a parochial mindset or local politics.

## Become Effective Sending Churches

Missions work doesn't "just happen." Missionaries are sent (Acts 13). William Carey, Adoniram Judson, and countless others were effective in their mission work because believers and churches back home were holding the ropes for them. Elders and leaders of local churches must be proactive in their preparation of sending missionaries by doing the following:

- Study the Bible and read about issues in missions. Many good books are being written on mission matters today. Our elders must know what is happening on the field, beyond just reading missionary newsletters.

- Proactively prepare potential missionaries. Mentor believers and put them to work locally.

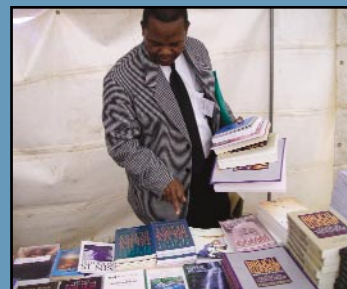
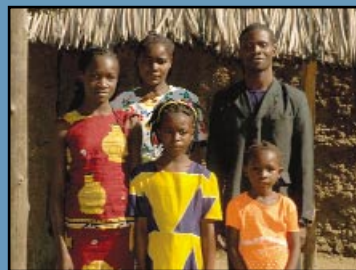
- Engage more heavily with missionaries they already support, especially the servants they have commended. Provide them with the six areas of support: moral, logistical, prayer, financial, communication, and re-entry (from Neal Pirolo's book, *Sending as Servers*).

- Adopt mission projects. Churches can support a Bible school or teacher, furnish a Bible school library, give reference books to church leaders, and other possible initiatives.

This is Africa's big century. There is great growth, but there are also real problems and needs. This is the hour for the church to pray, invest and send. ■



*Karl and Glynn Peterson were commended in 1995 by the assemblies in Ardsley, Pennsylvania, and Boulder, Colorado.*



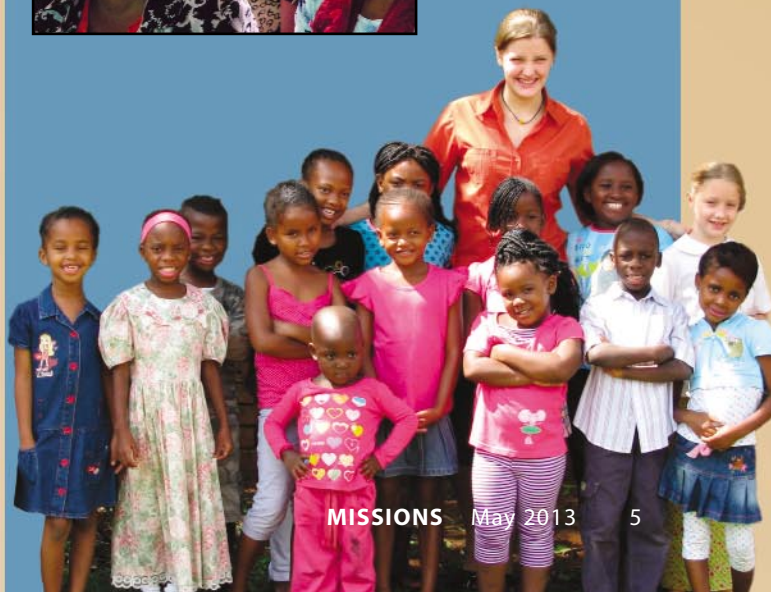
**Clockwise from top left:** Joao Antonio Sulude, one of the men participating in our monthly book program, with his family; Sonia with an African baby; Book table; African child.



**Above:** Annual church leaders' conference in Nampula, Mozambique.

**Left:** Women listening to the meeting.

**Below:** Our daughter Elsa and her Sunday School class.





# STEP

# Cross-cultural Missions without Crossing a Border

by Sonja Bassett and Angela Loudon

Summer Team Evangelism Partnership (STEP) is the fulfillment of an idea that senior missionaries, Richard Yarrall (commended from New Zealand) and John Duckhorn (former CMML missionary) first dreamed about in 2004. They and their families had served together as missionaries in Colombia where they saw God do an incredible work transforming many lives. Throughout their years of ministry experience they witnessed God's love, grace, and faithful provision of all their needs. They could see how God might use a program like STEP to give young people a glimpse into the life they love as full-time workers for the Lord, perhaps even inspiring some of them to commit their lives in service, whether in the US or overseas.



Leadership team: (back L-R) Richard and Nancye Yarrall, Bill Loudon with Cedric Loudon, John Duckhorn, Jeremy Bassett, (front) Angela Loudon and Sonja Bassett.

## The Purpose

Richard and John created the STEP program with a two-fold purpose: to expose participants to the needs and ministry opportunities available among the immigrant population within the US borders, while at the same time training and teaching them topics such as cross-cultural ministry, evangelism, and discipleship. The program includes a wide variety of teachers, interviews with local immigrants, field trips into the "melting pot" of Los Angeles, and opportunities to serve and reach out in underprivileged and overlooked communities.



Julio Lopez, Jeremy Bassett, and Brandon Gloor leading a kids' club at a predominantly Latino apartment complex.

## The Team Members

The Lord has brought a variety of participants to join the program every year, and every time each participant is encouraged by how God used them, and goes home with a broader vision for how they might be useful in His work. The participants ranged from new believers to those mature in their faith. Despite these differences, we see the Lord unite and use the most unlikely team situations!

We asked a few members of the STEP 2012 team what stood out to them about their experience. Laura responded, *"That's hard because everything was great! I loved the outreaches and getting to know the kids. I loved the cultural experiences at the mosque and in downtown Los Angeles; it was really neat to find so much reception to our witnessing there."*

Kevin replied, *"I had only been saved for 10 months when I joined STEP. I really wanted to spread the Gospel to children and learn cool ways to accomplish it. Going to STEP really showed me new ways to spread God's Word. Some of the best moments at STEP were the fellowship—it truly felt like we were all a family! And, an amazing moment was to see the mother of some of the kids get saved!"*



The team preparing to head out for an outreach.





**Clockwise from top:** A kids' club (the building we are set up against is a shrine to the Virgin Mary); Small group of girls reviewing the daily Bible lesson with team members; Richard Yarrall sharing the Gospel with Latinos in downtown Los Angeles.

**Left:** Brittany Taerud with children at an outreach.



## The Program

STEP began in 2006 and, for the first five years, the program's primary focus was on Latin-American ministry. However, in 2012 we decided to broaden the focus to the whole world. Initially we were not sure who God would bring as teachers and presenters, but in the end we were amazed at just how many corners of the world were represented: Nepal, the Philippines, Guatemala, Malaysia, Bolivia, Indonesia, Colombia and Mexico.

The STEP program is two weeks long. Generally the first several days are focused on training and preparation, followed by at least one full week of daily outreaches in the greater Los Angeles area. Practical training classes include how to lead a children's small group and use a sketchboard to give a Bible lesson. There are also Bible studies and one-on-one discipleship times. During mission presentations, people from other countries share about their culture and lifestyle. The team also participates in cultural-exposure field trips. One of the coolest things about STEP is that you don't need a passport, a visa, or a few thousand dollars to participate.



Bill Loudon teaching a training class.

## Participate

Visit [step.latinoministries.org](http://step.latinoministries.org) for more information and to print an application. STEP is for Christians 18 years and older. Participation in the STEP program is not guaranteed; each applicant will be individually considered. Contact Jeremy and Sonja Bassett at [jeremy.sonja.bassett@gmail.com](mailto:jeremy.sonja.bassett@gmail.com) with any questions or use the website contact form. ■



Kayla Laurila in a small group session.



*Angela and William Loudon have helped lead STEP since its beginning and were commended in 2008 to the Lord's work in Colombia by Westminster Bible Chapel in Westminster, California.*

*Sonja and Jeremy Bassett help lead STEP and, Lord willing, plan to serve the Lord full-time in Burundi beginning in 2014.*



# MK Corner

Missions Magazine Chats With Missionary Kids



Liliana (16)



Sarah (10)

## The children of Dale and Rosemary Konkol—Day 24, Paraguay

by Annie O'Connor

Liliana and Sarah Konkol, the two younger daughters of Dale and Rosemary Konkol, (*Missionary Prayer Handbook*, Day 24), recently visited CMML while on furlough with their parents. We enjoyed getting to know these sweet girls as they spent time with the office staff. We sat down one afternoon and discussed what life is like for them as missionary kids in Paraguay. Here is what they had to say:

**What do you like best about being a missionary kid?**

*Liliana:* We have other MK friends.

*Sarah:* We can speak two languages.

**Do you feel different from other children you know?**

*Liliana:* No, I don't feel different.

*Sarah:* Yeah, me too—I don't feel different.

**What would you say is the hardest part of being an MK?**

*Sarah:* Traveling a lot.

*Liliana:* I would say it's that I'm home-schooled. None of the kids know what home schooling is.

**That leads me to the next question. You attended a local school and now you home-school, which do you prefer?**

*Sarah:* I like attending a local school because there are more people your age.

*Liliana:* I like both. In a local school you're around other people and other friends, but in home-school you have more flexibility and you can travel around and all that.

**You speak English and Spanish. Which language do you think in?**

*Sarah:* Spanish.

*Liliana:* I think in both.

**What are your friends like where you live—are they all MKs or do you have Paraguayan friends?**

*Liliana:* I have Paraguayan friends but I also have MK friends.

*Sarah:* Yeah, same here.

**Are most of your MK friends local or are they far away? How often do you see them?**

*Liliana:* They're from other towns; we see them about three times a year.

**What are some activities or hobbies that you're involved in?**

*Liliana:* I play the flute in a band and I play volleyball with my church friends on Sunday afternoons.

*Sarah:* I make bracelets and a lot of projects.

**Do you help your parents with their missionary work?**

*Liliana:* Yes. I teach or watch the little kids on Sundays during the sermon.

*Sarah:* I try to be a good example. And I also invite my friends to church.

**Do you enjoy being on furlough in the US?**

*Liliana:* Yes, I enjoy it.

*Sarah:* No, because we still have to do school work. Haha!

**Your sister is a student at Emmaus Bible College. Is it hard to be far away from her and how do you stay in touch?**

*Sarah:* We Skype.

*Liliana:* It's hard to be away from her and we communicate through Skype and Facebook.

**Do you want to attend college in the US?**

*Liliana:* I do want to attend college in the US.

*Sarah:* I don't, because my parents are in Paraguay and if I'm here [in the US] then I'm really far away from them.

**What do you want to be when you grow up? What country would you want to live in?**

*Sarah:* When I grow up I'd like to do fashion design. And I'd like to live in Paraguay.

*Liliana:* I'd like to be an elementary school teacher and I'd probably live in the States.

**When someone asks you where you're from, what do you say?**

*Sarah:* Paraguay.

*Liliana:* I mostly say Paraguay.

## Pray For Missionary Kids!

Did you know that 372 children are listed in the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*? They each face unique circumstances and appreciate your prayers. Please remember to pray for missionary children each day.



Missionary kids at 2010 European Workers Conference—Photo by Allan Wilks



# Why Bother Praying for Missionaries?

## HERE'S WHY!

by **Nathan Bramsen**

What a joy it is to be alive (although to be with Christ would be more glorious) and share with you the wonders of His protection and guidance.

Recently, my brothers and co-workers Johnson (from Cameroon), Justin Gauvain (*Missionary Prayer Handbook*, Day 2) and Jonny Hayes (*MPH*, Day 2) and I were driving into Niamey when our vehicle was attacked by a mob intent on burning the vehicle while we were still in it. It was a complete miracle that we escaped! What encouraged our hearts so greatly was the beauty of the Holy Spirit and the way He worked.

### A Flaming Miracle

It was like any other day in Kwara Tagi, Niger. It was 9:00 a.m., warm and sunny. We had just finished our morning prayer meeting and were headed into town to drop off a mattress and to renew some government documents. Johnson, Justin, Jonny and I jumped into my Honda CRV (otherwise known as “Camilla”) and off we went. Little did we know of the coming adventure.

To give you a brief preface, this region of West/North Africa has had its share of conflicts recently and consequently many students have been rioting over various issues.

After dropping off the mattress, we continued on the Tillaberi Road toward the city center of Niamey. As we approached the Rond-Point Yantala (a main traffic circle), we noticed a car making an awkward wrong-way left turn (which is nothing new in a city with wild driving practices), but other cars kept going through the circle like nothing was wrong—until we pulled into the circle.

After making it halfway around, we were all-of-a-sudden jumped by a mob of approximately 20 guys, though only three were really doing the job—the rest were yelling. One young man was pointing at my face through the windshield and screaming something. In seemingly a split second, they had thrown tires around the front half of our car (we were blocked

in by cars on all the other sides), threw another tire up onto our car, and had one tire in flames ready to ignite the vehicle from underneath with the four of us still in it.

Knowing what was happening (that we were about to be burned alive in our car), I looked behind but there was a taxi on my bumper so I couldn't back up, and I wouldn't be able to go forward without injuring or killing one of the guys. After what seemed like an eternity of honking (probably about three seconds), the taxi managed to back up maybe five feet, all while the mob was preparing the car to be burned and waiting for it to ignite.

Five feet was enough. Throwing “Camilla” into reverse, I backed up quickly into the taxi (yes, making contact, but not too much... that's what a bumper's for), pulled a quick three-point-turn into the jam of vehicles, managed to squeeze between two cars, and proceeded to tear around on the sidewalk, sending three people jumping out of the vehicle's way. (Don't forget, the horn was announcing our arrival.) Swerving between a couple of cars, we careened back onto the main road, heading the opposite direction and into oncoming traffic (which, praise God, was quite empty due to the spectacle of what was happening) before making it to our side of the road and veered off onto the first dirt road past the market. After making it about a kilometer down the back stretch, we pulled over and thanked God for the miracle He had performed. We prayed for the souls of these guys who were perpetuating the violence, that God would bring true peace to their lives. Then we called the embassy.

This is not a story about heroic guys, crazy driving, or the drama happening in this region. This is a story about God's





deliverance and protection. We know that if we had been burned alive this morning, we were ready to meet God because of what Jesus has done for our salvation, but we are thankful to be alive and sharing this story of His deliverance.

### The Protecting Prayer of the Saints

After the incident, I posted on Facebook, *"Wondering who was praying for me and the boys this morning at 9:30 a.m.*

*Niamey time (3:30 a.m. EST). A complete miracle we weren't burned alive in our car (or at the very least injured with the car destroyed) this morning. Mob attack. Praising God for His protection."* In the words of my co-worker Johnson, "The Holy Spirit was 'gossiping' again!" I want to give you a few examples of how the Spirit "gossiped." Let the following responses I received be of great encouragement to you on the power of prayer and ministry of the Holy Spirit...

The last few weeks, I've found myself waking up fairly consistently at 2:00 a.m. and last night was no different, except when I woke up at 2:00 a.m., I found myself in an intense cold sweat lasting nearly an hour. Like in days past, I prayed. But I prayed fervently for YOU. I focused on, and prayed, Ephesians 3:14–21 specifically for you. I'm in Missouri... That's CST, an hour behind EST, which means I was up and praying this morning at exactly 9:00 a.m. in Niamey and praying until 10:00 a.m. your time—IN REAL TIME.

A friend in Missouri

This morning at 3:30 a.m., I woke up from nightmares (too many crime dramas before bed). I said a simple prayer: "protect us and give us peace." At the time, I didn't understand why it was a prayer for "us" instead of "me," but now maybe I do. Over the past two or three months, God has woken me up seven or eight times specifically to pray for YOU, and every time, it's been at 3:30 a.m."

A friend in Massachusetts

I wanted to tell you that from 1:52 a.m. to 3:26 a.m. EST I was praying for the team in Niger. I woke up this morning at 7:28 a.m. and half an hour ago my father called me to give me the news! All I can say is "Bless the Lord oh my soul, oh my soul. I worship His holy name! Sing like never before oh my soul, I WORSHIP YOUR HOLY NAME!" [Lyrics from "10,000 Reasons" by Matt Redman]

A friend in So. Carolina

I was praying at 12:30 a.m. my time, which is 3:30 a.m. EST on the dot. I woke up with all of YOU on my mind. I've learned not to ignore that. I prayed for health, I prayed for safety, and I prayed for protection. Then I went back to sleep. I woke up an hour later having dreamed about the fiery furnace and prayed again. All glory goes to Him. I am praising Him this morning with a grateful heart for the deliverance of you all and for giving "Camilla" a way out. You are all supposed to be there... His obvious protection this morning is just a reminder that He is with you. Even when things get hotter than usual, you are all supposed to be there. His wonders NEVER cease. I'm just overcome with gratefulness this morning. He is so good. Rejoicing with all of you today!

A friend in Oregon

### Pray Without Ceasing

It didn't stop there. Another friend wrote, *"My dad woke up to pray for you that night. Like me, he had no idea what he was praying for, but he describes it as a pressing, terrible blackness—a sense of urgency."* I've never even met this man.

One of my closest friends, an Irish brother, had a different prayer that day. He prayed for the team in Niger that God would *"send us through the fire"* that we might be purified. God has a sense of humor.

There are more letters, but I just wanted to share a few to encourage your hearts that we have a Holy Spirit who is active. Thank you to everyone who wrote, encouraged, and reminded us that you are praying. We feel so blessed to be surrounded by the greatest team of prayer warriors. May this be an encouragement for us to "pray without ceasing," recognizing that His promptings are not in vain. When God brings a name to your

heart, stop, pray, and do not cease praying until the Holy Spirit gives you peace to do so. As I write this, I say more than ever, we are co-laborers. He is worthy.

This is the first time I've been involved in an incident that shut down a US embassy. We have finished the police reports and such, but pray that, *more than ever*, we would be burdened for the salvation of this nation. He is doing great things. Pray as well for the perpetrators of violence (these are chaotic days), that God would bless them with the knowledge of Himself. They need their eyes opened to His light. May He use us to minister that Good News.

Allow me to say it once more—thanks for praying! ■



Nathan Bramsen was commended in 2006 by Overbrook Gospel Chapel in Greenville, South Carolina.





# Report: Focus on India

by Annie O'Connor

On March 2 CMML hosted "Focus on India." More than 300 adults and children were blessed to hear from Abraham Thomas and Shalu Ninan, full-time national workers, Steve Rusk, an American who makes frequent trips to India, and an exciting panel with five young people who participated in the work short-term.

The conference began with a challenging video that described the work in India and focused on CMML's 22 missionaries and other national evangelists. The video, which can be viewed on the CMML website, presented how the cultural and political state affects the work and the persecution that many believers face.

Abraham Thomas described the work in Kerala, India, where there is the largest Christian witness. According to tradition, the Gospel came to India in A.D. 50 by the apostle Thomas; however, the Christian work ignited in the 19th century through missionaries such as Anthony Norris Groves, Tamil David and Handley Bird. Today there are 2,500 assemblies and more than 2,500 evangelists (national commended workers). Leading and supporting the work, various ministry organizations make an impact for the Lord through biblical education, literature distribution, and translation work. But the need is still great. A lack of financial support for workers, opposition from other religious groups, government anti-conversion laws, and other obstacles remind us of the great need for prayer. Brother Thomas encouraged us to partner in prayer with the work. He said, "If you pray or not, India will be blessed. But if you pray you will be a part of it."

**"Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."**

A report by Shalu Ninan, an evangelist in Chattisgarh, described the work in northern India that, for the most part, was without the Gospel for 17 centuries. William Carey is credited for starting the work in that area. Northern India has a unique culture and the work grew as the local language was used in ministry.

Persecution is still prevalent. Shalu told a story of four men who were jailed for a week simply for distributing tracts. However, the Lord uses even difficult situations—14 inmates were saved through these men. Our brother boldly proclaimed that "persecution is a blessing!" The national workers there need our prayerful support. Less than four percent of the North Indian population consider themselves to be Christian and 55 percent of the districts are without an assembly ministry.

Steve Rusk led a "Q&A" session with five young people. Steve and his wife Nancy travel annually to India and use videos to present the work to assemblies around the US and inspire people to serve short-term. It was such an encouraging time to hear the young panelists describe their passion for the Lord. As a young girl, Tracie Siler read a book by Amy Carmichael and felt the Lord calling her to the work. She is praying about returning to India full-time. A nurse with an interest in missions, Amy Chick served four months with HIV and AIDS patients. She shared how touched she was to see the staff present the Gospel to each patient. Sarah Scott served on two occasions and was struck by a local worker's dedication to hours of prayer. Since age 14, Emily Morell desired to participate in Indian missions and plans to return a second time. Isaac Injeti grew up in India and counts it a blessing to truly understand the culture. A graduating Emmaus Bible College student, and former CMML intern, Isaac is praying about serving alongside his family in India.

William Carey once said, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God." This is the motto for many workers in India. Sacrificing all, they proclaim boldly the Gospel of Christ. Throughout the conference we were encouraged to join in that work through prayer. Will you be a prayer warrior for India? ■



Volunteers leading the children's program



(From left) Joyce Thomas, Mary Parsons, and Judy Gallagher



Conference attendees preparing for the meeting



Conference attendees enjoying lunch



Children excited to attend the kids' program



Short-term missions panel led by Steve Rusk

Globe image at top: ©iStockPhoto.com/chrispecoraro

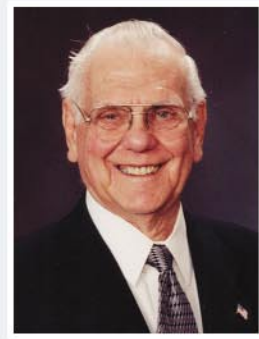


# Home with the Lord

## Leonard Brooks

*Missionary to the Philippines and CMML Building Administrator*

November 28, 1924 – January 11, 2013



**Leonard Cyril Brooks** was born in Manila, Philippines, on November 28, 1924, to missionary parents Cyril and Anna Brooks. He spent most of his boyhood and young adult life in San Juan, Philippines, along with his brother Ken and his sister Rose, where his parents helped establish San Juan Gospel Chapel, which is now the largest assembly in the Philippine Islands.

Len often fondly recalled what he considered to be a rather normal childhood, playing with his Filipino neighbors, being home-schooled by his mother, and helping to care for his little sister. It was during this time in the Philippines, at age 12, that he committed his life to the Lord. The family spent furloughs visiting grandparents in Buffalo, New York, and Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.

World War II was a pivotal time for the Brooks family. A month after Pearl Harbor was bombed, the Japanese occupied Manila and started rounding up Americans. They spent the next two years under house arrest.

In 1944 the family was taken to Los Baños Concentration Camp. For eight months they had very little food and by February 1945 his 6-foot-2-inch frame weighed only 110 pounds. It was that month, however, that they were rescued during the famous raid at Los Baños, the same day they were scheduled to be executed, along with 2,147 allied civilian and military internees. It is celebrated as one of the most successful rescue operations in modern military history. After they returned to the States, he was drafted into the US Army and served in Europe for eight months. Being a former prisoner of war, he received an early discharge, which allowed him and Ken to attend Emmaus Bible School. During his second year at Emmaus he met Esther Christensen, who became a close friend and, eventually, his wife of more than 63 years.

In his auto-biographical notes, Len wrote, "We were married at Maplewood Chapel on August 27, 1949, and had a short honeymoon in New England on our way up to Toronto for my last year at Emmaus. We started marriage with less than \$100 and Esther's old 1936 Buick but we were happy and very much in love."

From 1949 to 1957 they made a home in the Westfield, New Jersey, area. During this time they had their first three children, Nancy, David, and Stephen. Working with Esther's father, Len

learned to be a carpenter and was hired to help build Woodside Chapel, where they were actively involved in children's meetings and youth group. After the chapel building was complete, Len took a job with a member of the chapel who was an electrical contractor.

Feeling the Lord's call to the mission field, Len and Esther were commended in August 1956 by Woodside Chapel. Upon their arrival in the Philippines, Len became involved with church planting and the Bible School of the Air (BSA) ministry, a radio correspondence course which mailed out Emmaus Bible courses in English and Filipino dialects. Cyril and Anna had helped launch the program in 1950.

Len was also involved in Faith Academy, a school for missionary children. For 18 years they continued this good work, supervising the building and being dorm parents. Len was also the building and maintenance administrator and the head of transportation, as well as the head of the boarding development. They had their next three children Marilou, Kathy and Bobby during this time.

Because of Len's extensive carpentry and electrical knowledge, CMML asked the Brookses to extend their furlough in 1971 to help set up the new CMML facilities recently purchased in Wall Township, New Jersey. When their furlough ended, they were asked to stay on permanently as the building administrators.

Len became an elder at Fifth Avenue Chapel in Belmar, New Jersey, and, even after retiring from his CMML post in 1992, continued to travel to other assemblies as an itinerant preacher until just a few months before his home-call.

Len once shared the following story from his return to the States after the family's internment. As the ship docked at the harbor in California, he stood looking over the rail. Contemplating both the past and the future, he remarked to a friend, "The Lord has saved my life for a reason—I just don't know what it is." Many can attest that it would be difficult to narrow it down to just *one* reason. He leaves a legacy and heritage of faith in Christ that began with Cyril and Anna, and continued with him and Esther, and has now been passed on to his more than 50 children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. They are truly blessed and truly grateful. ■

**by Stephen Brooks Jr.**

# MISSIONARY KIDS EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE FUND



by Philip C. Parsons

Among the many challenges facing missionary families, the cost of educating their children must be confronted. The Missionary Kids Educational Assistance Fund (MKEAF) was formed by CMML to provide missionary families financial assistance to alleviate part of that burden.

The fund began with a legacy in 1968. The Cameron sisters, who were school teachers, provided the initial funding, and through the years the MKEAF account has been perpetuated by gifts from the Lord's people. It is a revolving account—funds on hand are distributed and then replaced by gifts received from individuals and assemblies. Each year missionaries are asked to report their children's annual education cost and for the 2012-2013 school year they reported a total need of approximately \$209,000. MKEAF was able to provide more

than \$110,000 to assist 45 missionary families, with 114 children benefiting from those gifts.

For 45 years MKEAF has been a wonderful provision to missionary families. From around the world, the appreciation from missionaries resonates. One missionary wrote, *"We praise God for the hearts of those moved to pray and give and share the burden of educational expenses. It is a real help and blessing and very much appreciated."*

The original \$50,000, although expended long ago, still blesses families! Education costs are rising and so must our commitment to provide for missionaries' children through MKEAF. We pray the Lord will continue to burden hearts to help meet this important need. *"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."* (Galatians 6:2) ■

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