



Christian Mentoring

JOHN MALLISON MINISTRIES

MY HEROES

Sacrifice, courage of missionaries inspire 7/6/2009

By Waylon Moore

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--At an IMB (International Mission Board) trustee meeting earlier this year, my fellow trustees and I paid tribute to the 32 retired missionaries and 11 others in missions service who had died in 2008.

I knew their stories. I had stayed in the homes of more than 30 of these soldiers of the cross. We had prayed together, eaten together, wept together and spent nights in huts together. My memory played back over hundreds of experiences with those now gone.

Some of those mentioned took bucket baths and lived without electricity and refrigerators. Some studied at night by flashlight.

One missionary killed cobras in his yard to make it safe for visitors. Some ate marsh rats and fried grasshoppers and other foods that most would find questionable — at the very least. Most cooked food from scratch every day. Others dug wells and carried water to their house or hut. They worked in hospitals saving lives or traveled to get water to thirsty people.

Some were subject to sickness themselves, including leprosy. Some had survived two or three typhoons.

In some nations, our missionaries have been threatened. Others have been kicked out of countries for witnessing. They have been in jeopardy during revolts. I have heard stories of families making nighttime car trips to get safely across a border. Some workers have lived in the line of fire, but they have stayed on the field for years.

I have seen the graves of missionary children who died. Parents wept, buried their loved ones and continued their work. I have prayed with missionary widows whose husbands died in auto accidents or from disease. Some missionaries fell ill and could have returned to the United States immediately, but they refused. They knew their health problems would keep them from being able to return to their lifetime love — living among the people they came to win for Christ.

Other missionaries I met preached around old trees because the local people didn't have money to build a church. But they saw dozens of villagers get saved and sing God's praises in harmony. Some missionaries took me street evangelizing into crunched, dirty alleys as crowds of people followed.

Many of these who have been called to heaven have met the hundreds they prayed for, led to Christ and trained.



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I salute these missionary friends and praise the Lord for His grace and perfect love for each one He called. They are my heroes.

To learn more about how you can support your missionaries on the international missions field, go to pray.imb.org and give.imb.org.

Waylon Moore of Tampa, Fla., is an IMB trustee.

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