

Changed Lives

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:
old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

II Corinthians 5:17

The theme of our Mission for 49 years has been “Changed Lives”—49 years of changed lives around the world, from the Congo to the Sahara, to Siberia, to the Amazon, to the isles of the sea, to the backside of the wilderness.

Recently, I have been reading the history of the London Missionary Society. This organization was established about six years after the mission society started by William Carey. It was a great movement. The London Missionary Society, with the help of churches, purchased a ship to send missionaries to the South Pacific. They named the ship the *Duff*. Over 30 missionaries had surrendered to go to the South Pacific. In 1796 the *Duff*, with its Christian crew, undocked on the Thames River in London and sailed out to the open seas with their missionaries. Great crowds lined the shore of the Thames to wave and cheer as the *Duff* sailed past.

Arriving in the South Pacific, the *Duff* set several groups out on different islands. Those early missionaries went through horrible persecution and some were murdered by cannibals. Eventually, though, with the arrival of John Patton and others, 200 to 300 thousand cannibals were converted to Christ. Several weeks ago I walked through the village in Scotland where John Patton had grown up. I saw the place where his house had been and saw the church where he had worshiped as a lad growing up. This work of missions is a work of destiny. We are dealing with issues of life and death, darkness and light, hope and despair, heaven and hell.

I visited a church in England recently that Mary and I had started over 33 years ago. Some of the people that were won to Christ 33 years ago had gone to Heaven, but some of their loved ones remain. It was a glad reunion. A lady by the name of Ruth Meikle met me at the door and said, “Did you hear about George?” (George, her husband, had recently died.) It had been 33 years ago that I led George to Christ. He became one of our trustees at Lifegate Baptist Church. He once said to me, “I used to fight against Him, but now I would fight for Him,” referring to God. Another dear man, George Burt, had also died. George Burt was a Scotsman who had moved to England. He became a wonderful Christian and could sing “The Old Rugged Cross” in his Scottish accent like

EDITORIAL

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nobody else. The last time we saw George Burt was when we visited his home a few years back. He was days away from death from cancer. The family was gathered around, and I went over and shook hands with him. He was sitting in a chair on the far side of the room. I told him that I loved him. He would not let go of my hand, but held it up to his lips and kissed it and said, “Brother Ray, I love you too. I have loved you for a long time” (ever since I led him to Christ). We all sang “The Old Rugged Cross.” Tears wet the carpet and we said goodbye.

Had I not won anybody else in England, George Burt would have been worth all the effort. When I led him to Christ, God changed his world and his eternity. Queen Esther was told she had come to the kingdom for such a time as this. David in I Samuel 17:46 said, “...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.” Attach your name and your life to those verses. Think of the work of supporting and sending missionaries, and know that you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this that all the earth may know there is a God. ■

Joining the BIMI Team



New candidates waiting for approval to serve as missionaries with BIMI.