

# The Center for Medical Mission's e-Pistle April 2016

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You are receiving this issue a little later than normal as I've just returned from this year's CMDE Conference. I have to say, this was a most enjoyable conference for me as I got to talk to many former colleagues from Tenwek as well as a whole passel of participants from pre-field training classes. I believe I talked to more outreach workers than all the previous conferences combined.

If you had wanted to attend but were not able, I'm so sorry. The Bible teaching and healthcare classes were quite good. The food was declared the "best ever." The weather was rather nice for me since I don't do well in heat, but those serving where the temperatures rise over 100 degrees thought they might freeze. It was hard to watch the children in the swimming pool. Among the over 700 participants were 163 children. They had a great time too!

The next CMDE Conference will be February 13-23, 2017.

\*\*\*\*\* I am looking for some help for this summer's pre-field training courses. \*\*\*\*\*

We will be training MedSend grant recipients and other new missionaries on July 14-17 and Samaritan's Purse post-residents on July 21-24. The new healthcare missionaries are really appreciative of having resource missionaries available throughout the training, especially since the trainers have all been out of the field for more than 10 years. The missionaries who have served this role in the past have really enjoyed it. There is not a lot involved, mostly just being available to chat with the participants over meals and during the breaks.

I need a couple to share "lessons learned in our first term" and also some to serve on a panel which answers participants' questions about the "medical missionary family." I have no one identified at this time, so I'm heading toward getting desperate.

Can you help? Would you like to help? I will see that you are housed and fed well during the training, but beyond that it will only be something small for your travel. If you could serve either one or both of these classes, I will sure be grateful. [susan.carter@cnda.org](mailto:susan.carter@cnda.org).

I'm aware that many times this e-Pistle arrives when you simply can't take the time to read through it. But I want to call your attention to a couple of especially important items that you can help with. The first is recognizing Renee Hyatt who has been putting the SCAN together for 30 years. The second is the opportunity to tell us if you have a need for nurses at your ministry site. If you can't read everything, would you at least look at these two short articles? Thanks so much!

## **Included in this issue:**

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## **Recognition of Renee Hyatt's service (SCAN)**

Renee Hyatt has been faithfully serving CMDA and medical missionaries for 30 years by compiling articles presented in the SCAN. If you have been blessed by the SCAN, would you write Renee a quick note? Send it to

## **Cura Animarum: Grave Concerns**

**by Rev. Stan Key**

*Originally published in Face to Face: Intimate Moments with God ©2013. Reprinted by permission of the author.*



### **Matthew 28:11-15**

Imagine how the first century newspaper in Jerusalem would cover the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The front page might have an article that looked something like this:

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**BTP – Biblical Times Press**

**Jerusalem, Tuesday, April 15, 33 AD**

#### **Body of Jesus Missing**

The body of Jesus of Nazareth has disappeared. Police are baffled by what appears to be a bizarre case of grave robbing, and the city is filled with rumors as authorities try to account for the empty tomb.

Last week, in highly publicized events, Jesus (33), was arrested, tried and crucified. Late Friday afternoon his body was laid to rest in a tomb belonging to Joseph of Arimathea, a member of the Sanhedrin. Claiming to be the "King of the Jews," Jesus was condemned by the Roman authorities for political insurrection. Jewish leaders, however, noted that the real motivation for his execution was blasphemy: he claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Both Jewish and Roman leaders hoped the execution would put an end to the turmoil surrounding his life and ministry. They believed his death would crush the movement he had started.

Early Sunday morning friends of Jesus went to the tomb with spices to anoint his body. Eyewitnesses state that the stone was rolled away and the body missing. Though Jewish authorities had placed a guard at the tomb, all of the soldiers were apparently asleep when the body disappeared. When Jewish leaders were asked what punishment would fall on the guards for such failure in duty, authorities would only say that the matter was being handled privately.

When asked about the incident, Caiaphas, the High Priest, refused our request for an interview. However, in a prepared statement, his public relations officer said simply that the disciples had stolen the body. When asked about a possible motive for such a crime, he had no comment.

The story took a bizarre twist when some eyewitnesses gave a different explanation for the missing body. "There was no grave robbery," said Mary Magdalene assertively. "Jesus rose from the dead. He is alive and I've seen him." Other reports of "Jesus sightings" are under investigation by our staff.

Simon Peter, the leader of Jesus' disciples, was contacted on Monday and confirmed the resurrection theory. "We're not talking about a spirit or a hallucination," he said, "I've spoken with Jesus, touched him and watched him eat broiled fish. He is definitely alive. The evidence will convince anyone honest enough to want to know the truth." We asked Peter to arrange an interview with Jesus so our staff could corroborate his story. "I doubt he will agree to that kind of a meeting" is all Peter would say.

The city is deeply divided with passions running high. As rumors continue to circulate, people are rapidly lining up on both sides of the issue. One astute city official put the matter this way: "Neutrality in this case is simply impossible! It is as if everyone is being forced to choose one side or the other. Is Jesus the living Lord? Or is he a dead imposter? There is enough evidence to make faith possible but not enough to make it inevitable."

The case remains open.

*I didn't become a Christian because God promised I would have an even happier life than I had as an atheist. He never promised any such thing . . . Rather, I became a Christian because the evidence was so compelling.*

Lee Strobel

Point to Ponder: The empty tomb is a historical fact that even Jesus' fiercest enemies confirm.

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## **Do You Need Nurses? If so, please participate in the survey.** by Dr. Mary Hermiz

On February 19-20, excitement filled the air at Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. More than 1,700 healthcare students and professionals attended the first Mobilizing Medical Missions (M3) conference organized by surgeon Dr. Paul Osteen.

Opportunities to learn and be inspired were numerous! There were 35 speakers who presented in many breakout and plenary sessions. What a thrill to hear from Aileen Coleman, a nurse to Jordan for 60 years—and she still hasn't stopped! At the other end of the spectrum was Alyssa Choo, a nurse working in the inner city of San Francisco, California. Gripping stories were shared by these and the other speakers.

Ok, I'll admit I am biased toward nursing! I've been a missionary nurse for 38 years serving in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Kenya. I also spoke at the conference and shared my story as well. But as I left the conference, my heart was heavy as I found it difficult to answer the question put to me by many nurses in attendance: "Where can I serve?"

How I wish these young people were around when I was in PNG and Kenya. At Tenwek Hospital in Kenya, we were desperate for nurses. How can you run a 300-bed hospital with four to six nurses? How can you start a school of nursing with only a few RNs in the hospital? You can't. With God's help and a lot of advertising, we finally got 10 nurses so we could start the school of nursing. The school has now trained 351 national nurses. So Tenwek doesn't need general missionary nurses. (Some specialty trained nurses with a heart to train are still welcome.) But **I know other places need nurses—we just need to make the needs known.**

For the last several years, I attended the Global Missions Health Conference and was in CMDA's booth with Susan Carter. My job? To help nurses find a place to serve. Not an easy task with no readily available document to assist me. Before the conference started, I would go and visit some of the booths looking for a list that could help me direct nurses. I found a few, very few.

And so **I am on a mission!** I would like to develop a handbook for nurses similar to the one CMDA has for medical students and residents. **If you would like to make the nursing needs of your ministry known**, please visit and complete a survey that will give me the information needed <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NQ2016> Or if you know of an organization/ministry that is in need of nurses, both short and long-term would you let me know? [mary.hermiz@wgm.org](mailto:mary.hermiz@wgm.org) Remember I will need contact information for that organization.

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## **Wailin' Mamas** by Judy Palpant

*My heart exults and praises sing To Him that heard my wailing voice. My winter's past, my storms, are gone, And former clouds seem now all fled. But if they must eclipse again, I'll run where I was succored. -Ann Bradstreet in the poem: "May 13, 1657"*

I carry my children in my throat. The lump lodges there. Palpable. Hopes and fears spread like diphtheria toxin from the throat to the heart, or the other way round.

I'm not alone. Audible or inaudible, mothers everywhere groan.

Often, in Kenya I remember hearing a mother's loud, lonely lament over the death of her child. It tore the air. Ear

splitting. Heart rending.

"Oh, Mama," I'd say, pausing in my daily routine to ponder this woman's dashed hopes. Only a tall cypress hedge separated our home from the hospital. I could not see her lonely figure, yet the wailing haunted me.

Here in the U.S., more than one of my friends has let out deep, guttural moans as they attempt to articulate stories of trauma in their adult children's lives or reasons for alienation from them.

Yet another friend wept watching a wild wind carry off outdoor wedding flowers and decorations. Heavy rain pelted the dance floor. "This is not how I pictured my daughter's wedding," she exclaimed.

Tears are primal and pervasive in a mother's life.

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If they could talk, our home's walls would tell many stories of my own wailings. When our daughter Andrea graduated from college and headed off to her first jobs, she assured me she'd taken all the books she wanted. I culled through those remaining, readily putting some in a pile to pass along. Others seemed foundational to life. I picked up the Bible we gave her as a child with her name etched in gold. Left behind. In my hands, these treasures proved to be evidence of her increasing rejection of faith. Distress and despair kept me company for hours. People walking past our home that day must have thought something terrible had befallen me. It had.

Some days later I poured out my astonished heart to a friend. As we walked, I asked her, "What does a mother do with her daughter's Bible?" "Use it yourself," she suggested. "For now, it is God's gift to you." So I did. During my quiet time, I discovered my daughter's marginal notations, underlined passages, quotes from pastors and mentors. They reignited my own hope and faith.

During this same period, I worked on photo albums for our three kids. One day I took boxes of photos to a shop where I could use their large tables and equipment. I organized and stacked the pictures of their early years. Our firstborn's pile of photos with his grandparents, aunts and uncles was double that of his two younger siblings. How come? Ah, he was already five years old when we left for Kenya. Even though God provided wonderful African aunties and uncles for our children, there had been a cost. Fighting waves of sadness, I packed my stuff, went home and laid everything out on the ping pong table in the basement. My heart faced the facts. Tears flowed freely, but the photo albums were finished in time to give them to my adult children for Christmas that year.

And eventually, I wrapped up our daughter Andrea's Bible and packed it in my luggage for a trip to Arizona to visit. She had since returned to the church although with her questions still in hand. Now married, she was working on her spiritual memoir. As she unwrapped the package and saw her old Bible, she said, "Thanks, Mom. This means a lot to me." I told her about the day I packed her books and wailed. She responded: "I actually did have another Bible with me. "But your mother didn't know that," her husband quickly added.

The saga continues with the next generation. After my daughter-in-law Darien took her youngest child Clara to her first day of kindergarten, she stopped by a coffee shop for a latte. Time and again, she dropped out of line, motioning the person behind her to go ahead. Grief lodged in her soul. How could she go on without her little pal Clara? That day, now two years ago, she never found her voice.

Recently, she pointed me to the comparison of motherhood to the slow ascent of a majestic mountain. "Nobody told me I'd be climbing and crying so often." Having nearly summited Mt. Rainier's 14,400 foot peak twice, she understands high goals, struggle and disappointment.

Hymn writer George Matheson also knew something of the symbolic climb. Having lost his eyesight at age 18, he knew uncertainty with every step. He also leaned on God's promises. In stanza three of "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go," he wrote: *O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to Thee; I climb the rainbow through the rain...* Picture pilgrims toiling up the side of a rainbow-stepping into the rarified air as gray mists change to prismatic splendor at their feet. Matheson's 1883 hymnal committee, however, had objected to the word "climb" and suggested he use "trace" instead. Reluctantly, he complied and we lost the more active verb.

But whether climbing or tracing rainbows in our laments, God is moved by our tears. Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem. He carries us in His throat. He hears our travail. The sign of His covenant promise, the rainbow, was never more vivid than after the burial of my dear friend's adult son who committed suicide. The stormy weather accompanying the service under the graveside canopy gave way to a brightly colored arch in the sky. It's vibrant, rich colors spread across the front page of the local newspaper the following day.

On the Via Dolorosa, Jesus told the women of Jerusalem not to sob for Him but to cry for themselves and their children. Mary had been forewarned by Simeon at the time of Jesus' dedication, "And a sword will pierce your own soul too" (Luke 2:35b, NIV 2011). The weeping prophet Jeremiah exhorts us to pour out our hearts like water for our children (Lamentations 2:19). He also charges the women to teach their friends songs of heartbreak and to model lamenting for their daughters (Jeremiah 9:20). Did the Hebrew women do this?

Some mamas are given to shared tears. Some of us shed them privately on our pillows. The Psalmist assures us that God hears our sobs. He stores our tears in bottles. Every moan is registered (Psalm 56:8). "Listen to this! Laments coming out of Ramah, wild and bitter weeping. It's Rachel weeping for her children, Rachel refusing all solace. Her children are gone, gone-long gone into exile" (Jeremiah 31:16, MSG). The sisterhood of mothers joins Rachel. To be a mother is to cry. I wear a bracelet with a charm. One side reads "live" and the other "cry." They go together.

Like my mother before me and my daughter after me, we are three generations of women who weep for different reasons. My mother's recent "I'll be praying for you, Dear" carried deep understanding. She knew how I felt about heading to Seattle to say goodbye to our youngest son and his family as they left for five years in Australia. She once said goodbye to us as we took our kids to Kenya. And I empathize with my daughter feeling exhausted and isolated in her motherly care for four young children.

The poet George Herbert describes our woes as *earnest sorrows, rooted miseries...sure-footed griefs, solid calamities*. He models godly lament in his poem "Bitter-Sweet:"

*Ah my dear angry Lord,  
Since thou dost love, yet strike;  
Cast down, yet help afford;  
Sure I will do the like.  
I will complain, yet praise;  
I will bewail, approve;  
And all my sour-sweet days  
I will lament, and love.*

This morning when I went to wake up my 95-year-old mother, she was singing in bed. For some inexplicable reason in the last few months she has traded in her sighs and groans for humming and singing. It is constant, even annoying at times. Never mind Pandora playing "*The Nutcracker*," she's singing "*Fill My Cup Lord*." She smiled and lifted up her hands. "I'm just singin' in the rain," she said.

A few years ago, my mother told me, "I've given up worrying." Now, when she mutters under her breath, she tells me she is praying. I believe her. Her mother-pilgrim journey continues-praying for me along with her other children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Landing on the side of hope and joy, she's cashing in on all those years of travail. This is scriptural. After Rachel refusing solace, the prophet quotes Almighty God as saying: "Stop your incessant weeping, hold back your tears. Collect wages from your grief work. God's Decree. They'll be coming back home! There's hope for your children. God's Decree" (Jeremiah 31:17, MSG).

As a child, I memorized David's comforting words in Psalm 30:5b: "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" (KJV). Over the years, I've heard these words glibly quoted, as the metaphorical "night" lasts for weeks or even years. Still, the dawn of God's faithful promise predictably brightens as we climb the rainbow through the rain.

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## **Millennials in Adulthood**

by Dr. Ron Koteskey

The Pew Research Center has been following the millennial generation since the first ones were born in 1981. This generation now ranges in age from 18-33, and it now comprises one-third of the people from which missionaries are selected. Because they are now adults, the Pew Research Center conducted three surveys between January 23 and February 26, 2014.

New generations always differ from previous ones, and that has been the case with the millennials. At the turn of the century, they were different from the Builders, Boomers and Busters, but those differences between the generations were primarily cultural. A decade into the 21st century, Pew research revealed some of the differences included more important issues of morality and religion.

The results of the 2014 studies were released in early March as [\*Millennials in Adulthood: Detached from Institutions, Networked with Friends\*](#). This 68-page document reveals that the majority of millennials have some characteristics that may require the attention of mission agencies. Even the subtitle of the 2014 report is quite different from the 2010 report which was "*confident, connected and open to change*."

## Different

Many of these differences between millennials and previous generations are neutral and potentially valuable advantages. The first paragraph of the report describes millennials as "relatively unattached to organized politics and religion, linked by social media, burdened by debt, distrustful of people, in no rush to marry, optimistic about the future...and racially diverse" (p. 4). Some of these characteristics are neutral or positive.

- Unattached to organized politics
- Linked by social media
- No rush to marry
- Optimistic about the future
- Racially diverse

However, other characteristics may be a hindrance to being a missionary.

- Unattached to religion
- Burdened by debt
- Distrustful of people

Additional characteristics found in the majority of millennials in the studies may be even more problematic. These characteristics are listed below and include the page numbers on which they appear in the report.

## Not religious

Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of the millennials did not see themselves as religious. Only 36 percent of them said that the phrase "a religious person" described them very well (pp. 14, 45). In addition, more than four in 10 (42 percent) of millennials said that they either did not believe in God or were not sure about His existence (p. 13). Nearly three in 10 (29 percent) said they were not affiliated with any religion at all, the highest levels Pew studies have found while conducting this series of generational studies (p. 4).

If an agency's goal is to provide humanitarian aid, millennials may be effective in that work. However, if the agency's goal is to bring people to faith in God, people who see themselves as nonreligious and question God's existence are not likely to be effective missionaries. They would not be likely to believe that Jesus is "the way, the truth and the life," and that there is no other way to God other than through Him (John 14:6).

## Unmarried—with children

Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of millennials were unmarried, and the average age of first marriage was 29 for men and 27 for women, the highest ages in modern history (pp. 5, 9). Fewer millennials were married (26 percent) than was true of any of the other generations when 18 to 23 years of age.

Not marrying does not mean millennials are avoiding co-habiting and sex outside marriage. Millennials had more out-of-wedlock births than any of the other generations. In 2012, nearly half (47 percent) of births to millennials were to women who were not married (p. 10).

Like the other generations, millennials believed it was a "bad thing for American society that more children are being raised by single parents" (pp. 43). However, millennials lead all generations in out-of-wedlock births (p. 10).

If the agencies' goals include promoting sexual purity and intact families, many millennials may be poor examples.

## Support homosexual marriage

More than two-thirds (68 percent) of millennials favored allowing gays and lesbians to marry (p. 31). More than half (51 percent) of millennials said that "a supporter of gay rights" described them very well (p. 14). More than a third (35 percent) of millennials said it was a good thing for society if gay and lesbian couples raised children (p. 42).

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament (Leviticus 18 and Romans 1) forbid homosexual behavior. Millennials seem to be very much like the people mentioned in Romans 1:32, those who know God's decrees but continue to violate them and approve of others who violate them as well.

In the U.S., homosexual activity was considered a sin, then it became a crime, then it became a psychological disorder. Finally, in 1973, it was declared to be just an alternate lifestyle. Until about a decade into the 21st century, marriage was only between a man and a woman. Then some cultures redefined marriage. If the agency believes marriage is between men and women only, millennials may not be a good fit.

## Distrust people

More than three-quarters (81 percent) of millennials said they did not trust people. When asked, "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?" only 19 percent of millennials said that most people can be trusted (p. 7). Older generations were more likely to trust people.

Millennials may be less likely to trust others in their agency and less likely to trust nationals, even leaders of the national church. This may lead to creating discontent or even premature departure from the field.

## Burdened with debt

Two-thirds of millennials recently receiving bachelor's degrees have unpaid student loans, and their average debt is about \$27,000. Millennials are the best-educated generational group in American history. A third of Millennials ages 26 to 33 have a four-year college degree (or more); however, they also have record levels of student debt. Two decades ago, when the GenXs were graduating, only half of them had college debt, and the average debt was only \$15,000 (p. 9).

Many agencies do not accept individuals with debt, so two-thirds of the Millennials will not be acceptable, and it will be years before they will be able to serve. By the time they have paid off their loans, many of them are likely to have roots in their communities and a mortgage to pay.

## Less Conservative

More than two-thirds (69 percent) of millennials support the legalization of marijuana (p. 32). There is nothing wrong with being less conservative on some things, such as politics, and millennials are more liberal politically (p. 23, 39). However, previous sections show they are also less conservative on social issues, such as supporting homosexual marriage and bearing children out of wedlock. They are less conservative about many social issues, including the use of drugs.

Many agencies have policies about the use of psychoactive drugs, and such liberal views may conflict with those policies. Also, if millennials are serving in a country that exports marijuana or other drugs to the U.S., such positions may cause problems.

## Implications

This brochure is not intended to be a summary of the Pew report. That report is 68 pages long and covers many other issues, such as political trends, social trends and technology. Readers are urged to download the report and read not only the pages cited here but also the entire report and the appendices giving the details of the research, including exactly how the questions were worded and asked. The issues discussed here have been chosen by the author as ones likely to lead to difficulties if millennials become missionaries. Here are suggestions about actions that may help agencies and missionaries on the field.

**First, selection.** Some agencies may prefer not to have people with such views as members. Knowing that the majority of millennials hold these positions, as well as many others covered in the report and previous Pew reports, those agencies can detect and screen potential members out during their selection process.

Questions about these issues may be included in written information requested when potential missionaries apply, and then interviewers can explore them in depth and interpret them in the context of the person as a whole.

**Second, supervision.** If the agency wants to admit people holding such positions, it may want to have some sort of supervision in place to monitor how these positions influence performance during service. This may be in the form of mentors assigned to the candidates or in the form of field directors observing what the candidate is doing relative to these issues.

Again, this is not meant to imply that all millennials in that 18-33 year old category have any or all of these characteristics. It is meant to point out they are very prevalent in this group of people and agencies need to be aware of them.

For other topics, please visit [www.missionarycare.com](http://www.missionarycare.com). Also please let your non-medical colleagues know about these free resources.

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### Center for Medical Missions

P.O. Box 7500  
Bristol, TN 37621  
423-844-1000

[www.cmda.org/cmm](http://www.cmda.org/cmm)

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