



# Center for Medical Missions

*A ministry of Christian Medical & Dental Associations*

## **November 2012**

Welcome to this month's *Your Call*. I wonder if I spoke with you at the Global Missions Health Conference (GMHC) earlier this month? It was so much fun to chat with folks who are already receiving *Your Call*. I'm so sorry if you were not able to attend. I'm sure it is difficult during the school year and for those in a clinical setting. Maybe if you go ahead and put the dates of next year's conference on your 2013 calendar, you will be able to arrange the time off. The dates of the 2013 conference are November 7 – 9.

I would like you to get another set of dates on your calendar for 2013 – the dates of our Orientation to Medical Missions conference. That conference will be held July 26 – 28, here at CMDA's headquarters in Bristol, Tennessee. If you are planning to head to the field for your missionary placement between July 2013 and July 2014, I strongly encourage you to plan to participate in this orientation. I checked with a couple young missionaries, already back from their first assignment, and they assured me that this pre-field orientation was significantly valuable. Keep watching the CMDA website for more information.

Thanks so much for your suggestions of sites that might want to welcome students and residents for international rotations. You still have time to send me additional suggestions as I've not yet sent the surveys. I learned of a couple additional sites at the GMHC. Hopefully I'll have the revised Handbook ready for distribution early in the New Year.

With Thanksgiving just a couple of days away, I want to take a moment to wish you a very Happy Thanksgiving. I hope you will get to spend it with family and friends. I believe each of us have many things for which to give thanks! Life may be hard at times but the simple fact that the Lord is always with us is cause for thankfulness. If we were to take the time to sit and actually write a list of our blessings, I believe it would fill pages. I know mine would! Thank you, Lord!

[Susan](#)

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### **New Volunteer for the Center for Medical Missions**

We are excited to introduce you to our newest volunteer, Mr. Scott Reichenbach, RN, BSN. Scott has been a friend of CMDA's Center for Medical Missions for several years and recently found a little free time that he wishes to use to encourage young people with a mission call, connecting them to opportunities for service. We are excited to have his help and it won't be long before you are too! Scott has been privileged to visit many mission hospitals and ministries around the world. He brings years of knowledge and experience to this volunteer role and great enthusiasm for encouraging those whom the Lord will use to carry out the Great Commission through medical ministry. Scott's email is [scott.reichenbach@cnda.org](mailto:scott.reichenbach@cnda.org).

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### **The Be-Bad Attitudes**

by Rev. Stan Key

Food for thought: Matthew 5:3-16

Taken from the RSV translation (Revisionist Satanic Version)

Blessed are those who have their act together and are spiritually with-it,  
For they illustrate what god's reign in this world really looks like.

Blessed are those who are healthy, wealthy and happy,  
For they have found the true meaning of life.

Blessed are those with power, money and influence,  
For they already possess the earth.

Blessed are those who are saved and satisfied,  
For they don't have to be bothered by conviction of sin or calls to full surrender.

Blessed are those who have received mercy from God and others,  
For they know it is more blessed to receive than to give.

Blessed are those who get everything their heart desires,  
For they see themselves as god.

Blessed are the winners... those who always get their own way,  
For this is what it means to be a child of god.

Blessed are those who use godliness for personal advancement,  
For they have learned how to serve two masters and inhabit two kingdoms at the same time!

Blessed are you when you are popular and everyone thinks your religion is really cool.

Blessed are you when many flatter you and say nice things about you. Rejoice and be glad! It just doesn't get any better than this.

You are the sugar of the earth. This is what godliness looks like. So be nice! Don't offend people by your words or actions. Be sweet all the time, with everyone. Without sweetness, sugar would be just white powder; worthless, good for nothing. You might as well throw it away.

You are the mirror of the world. So fit in and conform. Be a reflection of the people around you. Don't stand out as different. And never point out other people's sin! Let others see how your thoughts and actions are a mirror reflection of the world in which we all live. Then they will see your good works and praise your god in heaven for making you this way. Your life will reassure them that they too can profess godliness... and yet live like the devil.

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### **E3- My Everything, for Everyone, Everywhere**

by David Stevens, MD, MA (Ethics)

I suspect you may not have been able to attend this year's Global Missions Health Conference. If you were one of the almost 2,500 in attendance, this article will be a review for you of the final plenary message I gave on Saturday morning. It's a message

that anyone who feels God has called them to serve in medical missions needs to hear.

Perhaps you made a commitment during a mission trip or after a stirring challenge in a service. Or maybe you just felt a gradual growing realization, like I did, that God could use the aptitude He gave you in science, your ability to work with people and your aspiration to share the gospel and to reach the world. So you made a vow to God to follow His leading and to go. You shared your commitment with your parents, your friends and even the little old ladies in your church who told you how wonderful you were to give up all the money you could make in the U.S. to serve the poor!

I hate to give you a dose of reality, but the historical estimates are that only one to three out of 100 who vow to go actually end up on the mission field. Don't get me wrong. I know you were sincere in your pledge. You want to, plan to and will try to keep your word, but you made a promise you were not prepared to keep.

That reality came to mind as I listened to an Andy Stanley podcast of a sermon he preached on "The New Rules of Love, Sex and Dating." He made the point that couples are not prepared to complete the marriage commitment they have made. It makes sense, doesn't it?

One of my missionary physician heroes is Dr. Jim Foulkes, a surgeon who spent his life at Mukinge Hospital in Zambia. Jim is in his mid-eighties and still runs marathons. Now, in high school, more than a few years ago, I was pretty good at running the mile. I still have some ribbons tucked away somewhere. Today, I could tell Jim that I would like to enter a race with him. I could promise that since I'm 25 years younger, I would run hard and finish the race. Would I? No...signing up, promising and even starting the race doesn't mean anything unless I make the effort to prepare, to run every day like he does for months on end.

Neither can you promise yourself past your lack of preparation. As Andy Stanley put it, "Promising makes you accountable but it doesn't make you capable." If students don't prepare for the MEDCAT test by taking the right courses as undergraduates and studying hard, they are fooling themselves that they are going to pass with flying colors and get into medical school.

The time to prepare is now when you don't have a lot of extra time and probably lack the motivation to do it. But if you don't, you have a 99 percent chance of not making it and looking back on your life later on with great regret. So what is required of you to prepare to be a missionary? Look at the life of the Apostle Paul.

A few weeks ago, I was in Greece standing where he stood and reading the stories from Acts. In Philippi, Macedonia, the first place he went after crossing from Asia Minor to Europe, he was harassed day in and day out by a girl who was demon possessed and could thus divine the future. She followed Paul and Silas around yelling, "These men are working for the most high God" (Acts 16:17, paraphrase). Finally Paul, fed up with her and the constant disruption, turned around and cast out her demon.

The men who owned her were enraged because they lost their lucrative business in just a moment. They roughed up Paul and dragged him into the agora, the town square, to the office of the Praetorian who immediately convened a formal public trial. The place of judgment was the "Bima," a raised stone platform on the square where the high officials of the city set looking down on the citizens. They rewarded those who pleased them and meted out punishment to those who didn't in front of the whole population.

Paul's accusers stirred up the townspeople and the judges ordered Paul and Silas to be stripped. Before the Bima and the huge mob, Paul's arms were tied around a stone pillar with an iron ring in it and he was scourged with a whip that had pieces of bone and metal embedded in its thongs. While the people cheered, their backs were flayed. They gave them only 39 lashes because the Roman authorities claimed they were showing mercy by sparing one of the 40 lashes they were supposed to receive per the sentence. Then they threw him in a dungeon.

An isolated incident? No. Read Paul's own recollection of his missionary career:

*"I've worked much harder, been jailed more often, beaten up more times than I can count, and at death's door time after time. I've been flogged five times with the Jews' thirty-nine lashes, beaten by Roman rods three times, pummeled with rocks once. I've been shipwrecked three times, and immersed in the open sea for a night and a day. In hard traveling year in and year out, I've had to ford rivers, fend off robbers, struggle with friends, struggle with foes. I've been at risk in the city, at risk in the country, endangered by desert sun and sea storm, and betrayed by those I thought were my brothers. I've known drudgery and hard labor, many a long and lonely night without sleep, many a missed meal, blasted by the cold, naked to the weather" (2 Corinthians 11:23-27, MSG).*

So what is required to be a missionary? --- Everything. Everything you hold dear. Unless you deny yourself and pick up your cross, you can't follow Him. You are very unlikely to experience what Paul did, but your service will no doubt require sacrifice.

So how do you prepare now to give your everything?

Solomon tells us in Proverbs 14:8 that, "*The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways, but the folly of fools is deception*" (NIV 1984). In other words, if you have

good sense, you carefully consider the consequences of your actions now knowing they will affect your future. A prudent person knows that all of life is connected. They know what they do now will impact tomorrow. What they do today will become their past and will affect their future. Where Solomon says “ways” is better translated as customs, habits or behavioral patterns. On the other hand, fools deceive themselves and they will end up somewhere they are not heading toward.

So what habits and patterns take you down the right path to be prepared for the mission field? Let me touch on the ones I’ve seen with the most positive or negative effects.

- Your View of Money – Newsflash: Missionaries don’t make much of it. No healthcare professional makes the money they could in the states. You will have your needs well met, but not your whims. You need to develop the habit of frugality now by limiting your debt and living more modestly than other students, residents or young professionals. If you do, you probably won’t have the latest iPhone, a new car or the latest fashion fad.

Knowing where I was headed, I found a free room my first year of medical school over the garage on a rich woman’s estate. She felt safer having a medical student nearby in case she got sick. (As if I knew any real medicine at that point!) When I got married at the end of the year, we lived in a cheap apartment building near school so we would only need one car. The kitchen was so small you could stand in one spot and reach anything on the three countertops without moving. We weren’t exactly in love with our asbestos tile floor or the aqua blue vinyl couch. We were at street level and the windows covered the whole walls in our bedroom and living room. They had to be covered for privacy but that would cost a fortune. My wife Jody found a set of red velvet curtains that cost almost nothing after someone custom ordered them and then brought them back to the store. Ugh! Crimson red and aqua! Actually, it got us ready for our little two-bedroom cement block house during our six months in language school. A national couple lived there before us and painted the cement floor green and the walls pink, and also put up orange curtains!

The Bible says in Matthew 6:19-24, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven...For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...No one can serve two masters...You cannot serve both God and Money” (NIV 1984).

Keep your debt under control, be thrifty, drive an older car and stay on a budget. You won’t be any less happy and you will be prepared for what God has in store.

Your Need for Prestige – You wouldn't be in healthcare training if you weren't smart and worked hard to make good grades. It is easy to let your self-worth be tied up in being known for what you can do. Very easily this can mutate from excelling to honor God to honoring yourself. That can morph into a prideful heart needing to have the right job, an impressive title or living in the right section of town.

It can be tempting to all of us especially after years of self-denial during training. I know. I've had to fight that battle. I was a top student in my medical school class and was an AOA graduate. I was the chief resident of my 40 resident family practice program. I was asked to come on faculty when I graduated and was offered a number of prestigious and lucrative practice opportunities. Before I realized what was happening, I was starting to rationalize away my call and even tried to bargain with God by promising to teach Sunday School, go on mission trips and have a great Christian practice if He just let me stay here in the U.S. All good things, but they weren't God's plan for my life. You are insecure not believing that your security is in God. As you follow God's leading, you need to find your worth in His call. To paraphrase Charles Spurgeon, "If God has called you to be a missionary, don't shrivel to be a king."

The Bible says it even clearer in James 4:6, *"It's common knowledge that 'God goes against the willful proud; God gives grace to the willing humble'"* (MSG).

Your Desire for Security – Newsflash: The job remaining to be done in missions is not safe. Many of the unreached people groups needing to hear the gospel are in radical Muslim parts of the world. The good news is that the safest place to be is in the center of God's will.

What you fear more than God's pleasure in your obedience is a stronghold, an idol because it has more power over your psyche than God does. Fear will keep you in bondage so that you lack the freedom to follow God's plan.

What do you fear? Maybe it is snakes. When we had our first child, Jody feared that Jason would be bit by one of the deadly snakes in Kenya and die in her arms. She couldn't get that picture out of her mind.

It was reasonable in one sense. We had spitting cobras that can squirt venom six feet into their prey's eyes causing blindness. We had puff adders that like to "play dead" along frequently traveled paths until someone accidentally steps to close and they inject their deadly venom. Black mambas, with their neurotoxin, are very aggressive and can slither up to 12 miles per hour to strike a running man. On the other hand, snakebites were very rare. You have a much greater chance of dying in a car accident than from

lion, elephant, hippos (they kill more people than any other wildlife), snakes, buffaloes or crocodiles.

One day in her devotions, God spoke to Jody and reassured her that if He ever allowed Jason to be bitten, He would give her the grace to deal with it.

Maybe it isn't snakes but flying in small planes, bugs, rats, dirt, weird foods or terrorists that you fear. And that dread has grown into a terror that has a strangle hold on you. The only way to deal with such Goliaths is through prayer and drawing close to God. Claim His promises. Trust Him and then step out now to exercise your faith muscles. They grow as you put them under stress. Remember Proverbs 14:26, "He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge" (NIV 1984).

Your Emotional Needs – You may not realize it, but you may have set up roadblock to completing your call. I had a good friend during training. He was a highly competent physician and was warm, caring and compassionate with a great passion for Christ. We had proven he was fit for missionary service on short-term trips. He felt a call into missions but he said he couldn't go until he found the right spouse. He was a great catch for any girl. A few years into practice, he married a sweet Christian girl who then refused to go the mission field with him. He put his emotional need for a wife above God's call on his life hoping that she would come around. She never did.

Most men and women want to marry, but to catch the right one, you need to fish in the right places. Be up front with your mission call. One of the best places to find a spouse who shares your call is at a mission conference or even on the mission field where you've gone to serve. Every year or two in Kenya, one of our single ladies would fall in love with someone who had come for a short-term experience and returned to the mission field married.

Maybe like us, the issue for you is your love for your children and the affect serving overseas will have on them. The general practice at our hospital compound was to send your children off to boarding school five hours away for second starting with second grade. We couldn't imagine that. We talked for hours about it. Homeschooling was in its infancy, but we talked of trying that, but what if we screwed up? If we could make it work, we discussed coming back to the U.S. when our first child started high school.

Then one day the Lord convicted me. It was as if He put the thought in my mind, "Dave, you think you can trust me with everything but your children? You have the same problem as Abraham had when I gave him a child in his old age. He loved Isaac so much that I had to tell him to sacrifice him to remind him of his first love."



Did we love our children any less after that? No, but the responsibility was not ours alone. We realized that God loved our kids more than we did and would take care of them as we obeyed Him. We homeschooled, had a one-room schoolhouse and told the kids they could go to boarding school when they were ready. The two older ones did in fifth and sixth grades. They loved it and it was so good for them educationally, emotionally, spiritually and socially. They were so much more mature than kids their ages in the states.

When God called us back to the U.S., do you know what my biggest battle was? I didn't want to bring my children back to the jungle here where they could be handed drugs, I had to worry about what they saw on TV or in a movie or even worry they could be kidnapped. No school would be as good as their Kenya boarding school. God has a sense of humor, doesn't He?

Through their most formative years in Africa, I worked very hard, but I had breakfast, lunch and supper with them every day. What doctor in the U.S. does that? If I was late, they could come up to the hospital and see what was going on.

Once again, I had to give my children to the Lord and again He proved faithful. All three of them are involved in full-time inner city healthcare ministry.

Luke 18:29-30 is your promise from Jesus when He said, "...No one who has sacrificed home, spouse, brothers and sisters, parents, children—whatever—will lose out. It will all come back multiplied many times over in your lifetime. And then the bonus of eternal life!" (MSG).

Paul sums up what giving "everything" requires as he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians),

*"...I have voluntarily become a servant (in the Greek that word is "slave") to any and all in order to reach a wide range of people: religious, nonreligious, meticulous moralists, loose-living immoralists, the defeated, the demoralized—whoever. I didn't take on their way of life. I kept my bearings in Christ—but I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view. I've become just about every sort of servant there is in my attempts to lead those I meet into a God-saved life" (1 Corinthians 9:19-23. MSG).*

Not only are we to give everything, but we must also remember that if God's love is for anybody anywhere, it's for everybody everywhere (Edward Lawlor). That is what motivated Nate Saint to go to the fierce Auca Indians in Ecuador and CT Studd to give up a career as a cricket star and take the gospel to China more than one hundred years ago. When James Calvert went out as a missionary to the cannibals of the Fiji Islands,

the ship captain tried to turn him back by saying, "*You will lose your life and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages.*" He replied, "*We died before we came here.*"

The way to prepare now is to live out what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:22-23, "...I have become everything to everyone in order to save at least some of them. I do all this for the sake of the Good News..." (Good News Translation). Simply put, you need to prepare by living out this motto now - *My Everything for Everyone Everywhere*. Do that and you will fulfill your calling and touch tens of thousands of lives with your skill and compassion. When you get to heaven, God will meet you at the gates saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord!"

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### **Missionary Mentoring**

For quite some time, the staff of CMDA's Center for Medical Missions has been talking about how helpful it would be if we could connect medical missionaries in the field with those of you who are preparing to serve. However, since most medical missionaries were not mentored themselves, they are not sure they know how to mentor. Realizing it will take time to get a formal mentoring program set up, we think we can offer some help via webinars. So, soon after the first of the year, we will announce our first Medical Mission Webinar. Our plan is to have monthly webinars which give you an opportunity to talk to medical missionaries as they serve. Stay tuned.....

### **International Wholistic Mission Conference**

A total of 70 workshops and a top notch lineup of speakers to equip you for wholistic ministry at home and around the world. Hosted by the Global CHE Network, January 9-11, 2013 in Peoria, Arizona. To learn more and to register, visit [www.wholisticmissions.com](http://www.wholisticmissions.com).