

# Your Call

Keeping you focused on God's call for your life

An e-newsletter encouraging and equipping you for a career in medical missions



Center for  
Medical Missions  
A ministry of Christian Medical & Dental Associations

## March 2016

Welcome to this issue of *Your Call*. For those of you still in training, I trust your studies are going well. With the nicer weather, I'm guessing many of you are ready for outdoor activities. I remember back in my university days when it was awfully hard to stay focused on studies when the nice weather beckoned.

It won't be long until many of you reading this will graduate. I trust the Lord has shown you the next step and you are following hard after it. It can be a scary time for some. Are you relocating for the next step in your training, or are you entering the world as a fully trained professional? I know some are ready to head to the field as healthcare missionaries as we have 18 trainees in next week's new medical missionary training. Some of the attendees will head to the field as early as April. Will you join us in praying for these, as well as everyone who are anticipating changes in their lives?

I was hoping to have the Handbook for International Rotations updated by now, but with next week's training, I've had to lay the handbook aside until later. But much of the information in the current version is still accurate, so if you are anticipating an international rotation, please feel free to consult the handbook at [www.cmda.org/internationalrotations](http://www.cmda.org/internationalrotations).

As always I am here to help where I can. Please feel free to contact me if you think there is a question I can answer or a connection I can help you make.

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## Where the Battle is Won...Or Lost

by Rev. Stan Key from *Face to Face, Intimate Moments with God*

*"You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you" (Psalm 82:6, ESV).*

*Deep within every human soul resides a kingdom where self is sovereign. In this little fiefdom of autonomy the unholy trinity of me, myself and I reigns supreme. Here, I sit on the throne of my life enacting decrees, making judgments, forming decisions and controlling my destiny. Outside, I must adjust and even submit to the reality of others and their little kingdoms. But here, within my inner citadel, I'm in control. Not even God will violate the borders of my kingdom within. Biblical psychology calls this inner kingdom "the will." In no other aspect of our being are we more like God than in this capacity to exercise sovereign control. Indeed, as far as this kingdom within is concerned, we are "gods" (Psalm 82:6). The Bible has much to say about the will.*

- 1. The will is the only thing I really possess.** One day all my earthly belongings will disappear: wealth, talents, health, possessions, etc. Ultimately, the only thing I truly possess is my will.
- 2. The will is the only thing God really wants.** The gospel makes it clear that what God really wants is not my money, time or talents. He wants me! He wants my will. This means abdicating the control center of my life so that He can reign uncontested as sovereign Lord. The only thing I really possess is the only thing God really wants.

3. **The will is twisted.** But here's the rub. The moment I begin to discover Christ's intention to rule in my heart, I discover that His will and my will are in conflict. What He wants, I oppose. And what He detests is the very thing I want. The thought of abdicating control strikes terror in my heart. I don't want what He wants! (Genesis 6:5).
4. **The will must be conquered.** Like a wild horse, an untamed soul must be broken. The will must be conquered. Until this happens, I will be like a wild stallion, impressive to watch from a distance perhaps, but useless for God's purposes.
5. **Victory through surrender.** In this battle, victory comes through surrender, not when I get my way but when He gets his! I win when I lose. But surrender is harder than it looks. "I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out" (Romans 7:18, NIV). No one abdicates control without divine help. The Good News is that grace can do what I can't. He enables me to will and to do what I know I should (Philippians 2:13). But I have to ask for His help. I have to be willing to be made willing! Few people understood this better than Oswald Chambers:

*The battle is lost or won in the secret places of the will before God, never first in the external world. The Spirit of God apprehends me and I am obliged to get alone with God and fight the battle out before Him. Until this is done, I lose every time. The battle may take one minute or a year, that will depend on me, not on God; but it must be wrestled out alone before God and I must resolutely go through the hell of a renunciation before God. Nothing has any power over the man who has fought out the battle before God and won there." —My Utmost for His Highest*

*Friend, who sits on the throne of your life? Ultimately, there are two options and only two: my will be done.. thy will be done. Neutrality is impossible. Not to decide is to decide. What will you choose?*

*Point to Ponder: Breaking the will, like breaking a house, is often a violent battle, but the end result is a thing of beauty.*

*Prayer focus: That God would reveal areas in your life that are un-surrendered.*

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## **Will You Help?**

### **Take Survey and Get Free e-book Preach and Heal**

*As you may know, CMDA is a co-sponsor of MedicalMissions.com and the Global Missions Health Conference (GMHC) in Louisville, Kentucky every November. One purpose of CMDA, as well as the GMHC website and conference, is to support those who want to begin a journey into healthcare ministry, whether across town or across the world, whether to a safe neighborhood or a dangerous place. Please take a five to 10 minute survey so we can learn how people may explore moving for ministry or missions. Your input will help CMDA and also help develop the GMHC website and future conferences.*

*A report on the survey will be shared in a future edition of Your Call. At the end of the survey we will give you the e-book Preach and Heal by Charles Fielding, MD. Please begin the survey by clicking on this link:*

*<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LRGWNVK>*

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## **Legacy**

**by David Stevens, MD, MA (Ethics)**

*I never met these two men, but they left a rich legacy to me. The odd thing is that neither was rich. But what they left was so valuable, so precious, that it has affected me, my family and tens of thousands others. Here is the story.*

*My dad came from very humble beginnings. His dad worked for 52 years, from the age of 14, as a mechanic on the C&O Railroad. He and my dad's mom, Hattie, didn't get married until their late 30s. That was very rare in the 1910s, but she made a commitment as a single woman to raise her dead sister's children before she "tied the knot."*

*Dad was their only child and lived a small town life in Russell, Kentucky. While he was in high school, my dad met the man who left him his large legacy. He was only about 10 years older than my dad, fresh out of seminary, and he was hired as the first youth director in Dad's home church in the late 1930s. He led my dad to Christ one Sunday evening at the end of their weekly meeting.*

He had no idea that the seeds he planted in my dad's life would bear much fruit. While a ward clerk in a number of Army hospitals during World War II, Dad grew tremendously in his faith and felt the Lord's call to become a pastor. He returned to finish college and met my mom, the daughter of a sharecropper from Pennsylvania who had never been out of the state until she went to college, the first in her family to do so. They got married during his first year of seminary. The next year my sister Jan was born, two years later I came along and then my younger brother completed our family a year later. By then, Dad was pastoring three small country churches, "a three point charge," in Eastern Kentucky.

A year later he left the pastorate with three children under five, no regular paycheck and a bank loan on a 30-foot trailer, our new home. For the next two years until my sister turned six and started school, he parked that trailer beside each church where he was preaching a revival for anywhere from 10 days to two weeks. We settled in Wilmore, Kentucky, where mom went back to college and got her teaching certificate. For most of my grade school life, Dad was out preaching for two weeks at a time and then would spend a week at home. While he was gone, Mom taught second grade and kept the home fires burning. Each summer we would travel with Dad to camp meetings all summer long so we could be together. I have wonderful memories of Dad preaching and the altar being full of people afterwards, with him on his knees leading people to Christ. The summer I turned eight, one of those at the altar was me and Dad made a beeline from the podium as the service closed to lead me to Christ.

Another man gave me a second great legacy through my dad in the early 1960s. He was from New Jersey and worked for IBM. My dad met him at a meeting and they became good friends. He called and offered to pay Dad's way to do something almost no one did at that time, and that was to go on a short-term missions trip. My dad saw the impact that experience had on him and the others in the group. He felt God's nudge to start GO International, a short-term mission organization, to take Christians from the U.S. overseas on service trips. He realized that God used getting people out of their comfort zone to profoundly deepen their walk with Him and call some of them into long-term missions. From then on, he spent half his time overseas and half his time preaching in the U.S.

I received a greater portion of my legacy in 1965 when my dad took me on my first mission trip at the age of 14. I think I helped paint a building on the mission compound in Cap Haitian, Haiti, and I probably didn't do that good of a job. I do remember one thing vividly. And that is a missionary nurse working in a two-room clinic on the edge of the compound with patients lined up around it twice waiting to be seen. I looked into the open clinic door and saw her diagnosing and treating patients. Back in those days only doctors did that, but there was no doctor. Every once in a while she took a patient into the adjoining room, where I saw her on her knees leading them to Christ.

Three years later, as a senior in high school, I began praying God would reveal His vocation and will for my life. Over a few months, He gave me a growing realization that He wanted to take my love for science and use it to meet needs like those I had seen in Haiti. He was calling me to be a medical missionary. Eleven years later, after college, medical school and a family practice residency, my wife Jody and I arrived in Kenya. God was bearing rich dividends from those two legacies I had been given by two men, men I had never met. These two men passed their legacies to my dad, who then passed them on to me.

Now it was my time to begin leaving legacies in other people's lives, but I had no idea how God was going to do. I saw tens of thousands of patients over the next 11 years while serving at Tenwek Hospital. Close to 40,000 patients at our clinics and the hospital came to Christ during that time. I had the privilege of starting and directing a community health/development program where up to 10,000 people a year came to Christ as we taught better health practices door-to-door. Today, that program has radically changed the health of more than 1.5 million people and brought multitudes to Christ.

I raised the funds and led the effort to build a 320-KW hydroelectric project to power the hospital. It saved many lives, and it also saved a quarter of the hospital's budget spent on diesel fuel to run our generators just 11 hours a day. Because of the savings, we could afford starting a nursing school, expanding the hospital, starting a chaplaincy training program for all of Africa and much more. Through God's grace, Tenwek went from being a bush hospital to a tertiary care center in those 11 years.

God wasn't done with my legacy and led me to Samaritan's Purse to start their medical relief outreach and help mission hospitals around the world. Then, in 1994, He brought me to CMDA to lead and expand this ministry.

What's my point? Peter Strople encapsulated it when he said, "Legacy is not leaving something for people but leaving something in people."

I was thinking of that today as I wrote a letter to be read at the retirement celebration for Billy Wayne Fuller. As it sounds from his name, he is from Alabama, a builder who packed up his family and moved to Africa to leave a legacy. He built that hydro plant and half of Tenwek Hospital's buildings. He left a legacy in Maasai working with the people there and also in Zambia building schools. He left a legacy in my life and tens of thousands of others.

To paraphrase the unknown author of a plaque I recently saw, your life is your legacy, so work for a cause, not for applause. Live your life not to impress others but to express your love for God. Don't desire to make your presence noticed but to make your absence felt.

I challenge you to think about your legacy now, because you are writing it today in other's lives, and you will write it in many more lives in years to come as you follow the Lord's call. Be a legacy leaver.

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## **Ziklag**

by Dr. Al Weir

*"But David thought to himself, 'One of these days I will be destroyed by the hand of Saul. The best thing I can do is to escape to the land of the Philistines...'" (1 Samuel 27:1, NIV 2011).*

***It's been 30 years, but I can still recall his look of disappointment. James was a medical student who had looked up to me when I had surrendered my life to God's call for international healthcare missions. It hadn't worked out. We hadn't lasted. Back after two years in Nigeria, seeking a career like other doctors who had never heard the call, I had let him down. James had envisioned me as a model of sacrifice for the Lord's work. I can still see his face. I was no longer his model for Christian living.***

*Do you know the term "hunker down?" We less educated Americans use it to mean sit on our heels to get out of sight for protection. That's what David did when he fled to the Philistines. The king of Gath actually gave him a town of his own called Ziklag. David planned to stay awhile. God's business had been a bit too dangerous, a bit too stressful; it took a bit too much out of him to stay in Israel.*

*In truth, I have spent much of my life running back and forth to Ziklag, and sometimes I have wanted to make my home there.*

*Sometimes Ziklag looks pretty good to me—sometimes a life dedicated to God becomes more than I bargained for. Sometimes for long stretches of my life, I have let go of God's mission and lived my own.*

*Sometimes it's just been too uncomfortable to endure the time pressures, the financial demands, the sacrifice of relationships and the just-plain loss of comfort that comes with living a mission-oriented life.*

*Sometimes I have wandered to Ziklag because I wanted to be self-centered rather than God-centered.*

*Sometimes God just hasn't come through when I really needed Him, the way I knew He should have come through, so I choose to seek fulfillment in the way the rest of the world finds it. I flee like David and set up a home where people focus on themselves and care for their families without the weight of serving our Creator.*

*And other times, I have fought the fight with God and watched Him win.*

*My effort and performance and even desire for God have been inconsistent during the life He has given me.*

*But He has loved me through it all.*

*Colton Dixon sings a song I hear frequently on Christian radio, entitled Through It All, which speaks of a merciful love that covers all of my inconsistent living. The chorus goes like this:*

*I have won and I have lost.*

*I got it right sometimes*

*But sometimes I did not.*

*Life's been a journey-*

*I've seen joy; I've seen regret.*

*Oh, and you have been my God through all of it*

*The ultimate success of my life rests far more on His love than on my effort. I may run away from the God who loves me and run from the mission He has for my life, but when I return, He is always there to welcome me home. All is grace.*

*Dear Father,*

*I have won; I have lost. I got it right sometimes and sometimes I did not. Life's been a journey; I've seen joy; I've seen regret-and you have been my God through all of it.*

*Amen*

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