

Saturday, April 29, 2017



## **UNFINISHED**

### ***Writing the Next Chapter***

...

I enjoy any time at a Black Rock missions conference for its inspiration and quality, but as the years roll on (20 years of partnership now!), a new dimension is added: friendship. When I return, I feel like I'm returning to see old friends, including other Black Rock missionaries I've come to know over the years. And I anticipate meeting new ones, who will melt my heart with their passion and commitment. People going hard after that for which Christ seized them. Like-minded partners. You'll meet one of them below. Sometimes grumbling and complaining, sick or exhausted, discouraged or exhilarated, missing meals or overeating, we spur one another on for each round.

...

## Nevertheless

Kelly S (as she came to be called) rocked our worlds. A young single woman, she had just completed the very stiff challenge of working alone in a remote village on an island--no electricity, no water, no English speakers, no nothing. Her mission agency realized they couldn't properly care for her, due to the village's remoteness, and Kelly toughed it out and, in spite of the odds, made a significant impact. She finished her term a few months ago, no complaints, no resignation, which would have been understandable. On the contrary. Kelly announced what she believed to be her next call: to a closed country so dangerous to American missionaries a sober hush fell over the crowd as we considered what she was facing.

After consultation with her agency and the church, the consensus was: she was indeed called. Now Kelly has to erase her identity and cut herself off from things she holds dear. She can only tell her parents, not even her brother. How does one do this? Kelly answered with her favorite word in the Bible: "Nevertheless."

*"Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."--Luke 22:42*

I felt my own spirit sink under the weight of her sacrifice, feeling totally inadequate as a human being. And then the word of the Lord came to me:

"This is *my* call," Kelly concluded, perhaps noting many guilty, inadequate looks in the audience. "It doesn't mean it's *your* call, which you have to fulfill, whatever it is. If God called you to write, write. Make sure you do that."

I sat up straight. Had she read my thoughts? No, but God had, and redirected me with another word, *"If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."* (John 21:22)

That's one glimpse into the company I was keeping: heroes, legends, unsung and obscure, but whose names are written in the Book of Life. Each one doing his or her part. The Body working together to accomplish the mission. Thank you, Lord, and thank you, Kelly, for reminders, challenges, encouragements.

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I signed up for Kelly's prayer letter, got the chance to share this story with her, and have been repeating, "Nevertheless" as I continue my own journey into missions.



## KNEE TIME

*In Elijah's story, there was no rain to be seen for three years. But it is encouraging to know that when Elijah prayed fervently, the "heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit." (James 5:18) Such fervent prayer produces fertile ground for the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, etc.) to grow. Through years of famine and years of plenty, in all circumstances, we are called to pray ceaselessly. (1 Thess 5:17) (Unknown)*

### **Praises & Prayers:**

- **Praise** for the Black Rock Missions Conference, with its explosive, reviving culture, so committed to missions;
- **Pray** for a continuing good influx of funds, as two more partners had to drop out, and two others consider dropping in!
- **Pray** as I return to coaching the Spiritual Formation team through the preps for Incarnate in January. This month we're producing a video to prepare accepted applicants; **pray** against the technological gremlins, for adequate time for each one to do their tasks, and for health--one on our team had to drop out temporarily due to health issues; and me...
- **Pray** for my resilience and stamina! A recent stress test revealed "Overall challenges outweigh current coping skills, feeling stressed possibly discouraged." Ugh. Not discouraged, definitely challenged on all fronts. Please pray for challenges to decrease and coping skills to increase as I adapt to this new chapter.

*Pray that my service...may be acceptable to the saints there, so that by God's will I may come to them with joy and together with them be refreshed."--Rom. 15:11-12*

## **The Writer's Corner**

Transplants is out! I hope you have all received your copy, but if not, let me know!

It's always a joy to see the finished product birthed, and enjoy the feedback. I'd love to hear yours too, so write and tell me which poem you loved, or hated, or just plain didn't get!

Still need to order? Click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#).

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