
Sunday, February 4, 2018
Did You Know?

One Summer

I became a Christian during my first year of university. In the summer after my third year, I went on my very first mission trip for one month to the countries of Kenya and Uganda. I didn't really know what missions was all about back then, but I had an earnest desire to serve the Lord in any way possible. Part of that earnest desire actually came from a button that I saw someone wearing or maybe I bought it, I can't remember exactly. In any case, back in the day, there used to be these buttons about 5-6cm in diameter that you could pin on your backpack or jacket. This yellow button had the words, "Christ died for you, will you live for him?" from 2 Corinthians 5:15. The complete verse reads like this: "And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." That verse spoke so powerfully to me.

It was a verse that continued to haunt me throughout my years as a college student. That verse explained to me what a life impacted by the Gospel should look like. Christ died for me. Therefore, I should cease living for myself. Instead, I should live for him who died for me. When I read that, it made complete sense. The Bible also says that we are not our own because we were bought at a price. That also made sense to me. I had no dibs on my life. I had no right to say I was going to this or that and that's why I went on my first short term mission trip.

That trip was amazing. We saw the beautiful green colors of the Ugandan countryside, the arid brown of the Rift Valley, the brilliant shades of red in the garments the Maasai warriors wore. We travelled to Lake Victoria, and saw the very source of the Nile River. We smelled the stench of the rivers of sewage in the massive slum area outside Nairobi called Kibera. For the first time, I saw systemic poverty. We conducted door to door evangelism, had open air rallies, shared testimonies, and I even had a conversation with a witch doctor. I still remember what she said when I invited her to the rally. "I know Jesus is a more powerful healer than me, but I don't fear him." Sadly, she didn't attend. I got to witness the differences in faith expressions of my African brothers and sisters and I came to love them. I learned even more about surrendering my life to God during that trip. That trip taught me so much and it had a profound effect on my spiritual life.

As your pastor, I want to challenge all of our members who are college/university aged. Before you graduate, consider giving one summer (or longer) to missions. Many of you have already gone on the typical 1-2 week trip, and if you haven't, then go on one, but let's up the ante and give 2 months or more to reach the lost in unreached places like KG, Cambodia or India. I can't think of a better way for you to spend a summer. Speak to Pastor Tim and he'll get you going in the right direction. Remember that you need to be a member and have taken the Discipleship 1 class. Start praying, start planning.

Soli Deo Gloria.
Pastor Peter