

The Missionary MEMO

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Tips and Tidbits for Cross-Cultural Missionaries

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One Atheist's View of Missionaries in Africa

By Lynn Raburn

In December, 2008, Matthew Parris, a writer for The Times of London, who grew up in Africa, returned to the land of his childhood. In his day the land was known as Nyasaland. Today we know it as Malawi. Parris is an avowed atheist but his trip to visit several secular charities refreshed beliefs from his childhood about the impact of Christian missionaries. He wrote:

“But travelling in Malawi refreshed another belief, too: one I've been trying to banish all my life, but an observation I've been unable to avoid since my African childhood. It confounds my ideological beliefs, stubbornly refuses to fit my world view, and has embarrassed my growing belief that there is no God.

Now a confirmed atheist, I've become convinced of the enormous contribution that Christian evangelism makes in Africa: sharply distinct from the work of secular NGOs, government projects and international aid efforts. These alone will not do. Education and training alone will not do. In Africa Christianity changes people's hearts. It brings a spiritual transformation. The rebirth is real. The change is good.

I used to avoid this truth by applauding - as you can - the practical work of mission churches in Africa. It's a pity, I would say, that salvation is part of the package, but Christians black and white, working in Africa, do heal the sick, do teach people to read and write; and only the severest kind of secularist could see a mission hospital or school and say the world would be better without it. I would allow that if faith was needed to motivate missionaries to help, then, fine: but what counted was the help, not the faith.

But this doesn't fit the facts. Faith does more than support the missionary; it is also transferred to his flock. This is the effect that matters so immensely, and which I cannot help observing.”

Parris' reference to his childhood included time spent with MK (Missionary Kid) friends as well as time in the African villages. His contacts then included adult Christians who worked for his family. He said of the African Christians,

“The Christians were always different. Far from having cowed or confined its converts, their faith appeared to have liberated and relaxed them. There was a liveliness, a curiosity, an engagement with the world - a directness in

their dealings with others - that seemed to be missing in traditional African life. They stood tall.”

This conviction of the positive difference Christianity makes was refreshed in Parris' mind when he noticed that many of the most impressive members of the secular aid organization he visited were strong Christians. While they were not open and verbal about their faith, he observed their devotional studies or church attendance. He also observed a difference in their work ethic.

“It would suit me to believe that their honesty, diligence and optimism in their work was unconnected with personal faith. Their work was secular, but surely affected by what they were. What they were was, in turn, influenced by a conception of man's place in the Universe that Christianity had taught.”

Parris also takes issue with those anthropologists and sociologists who insist that missionaries should leave the tribesmen to their traditional beliefs and superstitions. He points out the anxiety and fear of the traditional way and laments the lack of initiative endemic to a tribal hierarchy. In contrast he says,

“Christianity . . . offers something to hold onto to those anxious to cast off a crushing tribal groupthink. That is why and how it liberates.”

That an avowed atheist can see so clearly and express so openly the benefits of missionaries in the third world should greatly encourage missionaries and missionary senders. And, in an age when the temptation for many is to declare the work of the missionary outdated and so replace the gospel preaching missionary with the development profession, Parris issues a warning,

“Those who want Africa to walk tall amid 21st-century global competition must not kid themselves that providing the material means or even the knowhow that accompanies what we call development will make the change. A whole belief system must first be supplanted. And I'm afraid it has to be supplanted by another. Removing Christian evangelism from the African equation may leave the continent at the mercy of a malign fusion of Nike, the witch doctor, the mobile phone and the machete.”

The full article may be read online at http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/matthew_parris/article5400568.ece

TV On Your Computer

By Lynn Raburn

“You used an illustration from a US TV program and we can’t watch those programs in our country.” The missionary who told me that was sincere but he was wrong. If he has internet, US TV programs are available to him. From a variety of sources and with a variety of speeds, he can use his computer and watch previous episodes of TV programs or a variety of movies. Here’s how it’s done.

Slingbox

Mike Rogers introduced me to Slingbox in Romania several years ago. At the time, he had more than one box in operation and he let me use the spare. Wherever I was in the world, I could use my laptop to watch the cable service in Olympia, Washington, just as long as I had Wifi.



It works like this. The Slingbox (hardware) is connected to a Cable Box, Satellite Receiver, or DVR (Digital Video Recorder) in the United States. It is also connected to a broadband internet server (Home network). The Slingbox feeds the TV signal over the internet so that you can access it. Once you have installed the Slingbox software on your computer or 3G phone, you can access and control your Slingbox back in the States with your computer. There is password protection so that no one else will be watching your programming and only one computer at a time can access the Slingbox.

When you load the software and log onto your Slingbox, you can flip through the channels and watch anything that happens to be on at that particular time. It’s pretty cool to be in Australia and watch the local news for Little Rock—except I was using Mike’s Slingbox so I got the local news for Olympia. One of the issues with Slingbox is the time difference. I remember Juli getting up before dawn to watch her favorite program. The solution is that Slingbox now has the capability of operating your DVR. You can use Slingbox to set your Stateside DVR to record a program and then play it back on your computer at your convenience.

Now for this to work, you are obviously going to have to have a friend or family member in the USA who is willing to provide you with TV programming and internet usage. You need a “host” for your Slingbox—someone who will hook it up to their cable or satellite and feed it over their internet. To complicate matters, when you are controlling the Slingbox from wherever you are, they can’t control it at home. They have to watch what you watch. Slingbox Pro is the answer to this problem. The Slingbox Solo runs \$179.99 but for \$299.99, you gain the capability of watching TV without limiting what your Stateside host is watching. Not only that but you get HD output.

The other downside to the Slingbox is that, according to Mike, it consumes a fair bit of bandwidth at the host. Chase Reynolds father-in-law said he had not noticed this so maybe it won’t be an issue for you either. The good news is that it requires very little bandwidth to watch the programming on your computer. I had no trouble using Mike’s Slingbox using Wifi or Wireless. There were times when the signal was spotty to begin with but the software cache solves the issue if you stay on a channel for a few minutes.

If you want more information—lots of information, just go to www.slingbox.com.

Internet Sites

Okay, so you don’t want to lay out a couple hundred dollars for a Slingbox. There are still options. In the previous issue of the Memo, I mentioned www.hulu.com. A couple of missionaries reminded me that Hulu is available in the United States but not overseas (your IP address gets you blocked). Tammy Plaster wrote, “In the last edition, you mentioned using hula.com for watching TV programs. Now that Kevin and I have wireless internet in our apartment, we seldom use the TV anymore. However, because we’re outside of the USA, hulu.com is not available to us. We use surfthechannel.com or yidio.com for stream our favorite programs. I visited both sites and found that they are “Index” sites which direct you to another site to download a file or watch streaming video. Some of the links actually took me to places that expected me to buy the video. No thanks.

Orville Jenkins suggested a couple of other index sites for internet TV. www.worldtvpc.com and www.ashampoo.com list several sites where TV programming and movies can be accessed from your computer. Orville also mentioned two sites that require one-time fees, www.tvforyourcomputer.com at \$39.95 and www.dtv4pc.com at \$19.95.

Go to the Source

The best bet may be to go directly to the source. When I tried Tammy’s recommendation of yideo.com (that’s not a typo), I found that it often took me to the network sites, www.nbc.com, www.abc.com etc. You can browse those sites and find the episodes of your soon to be favorite program soon after it airs. I hate CNN International with a passion. I equate them and CNN itself to Benedict Arnold. So, I was glad when I found <http://live.foxnews.com> for fair and balanced reporting. Chase Reynolds gave me the best tip about these sites. I missed the Alabama vs. Florida game while I was in Australia. When I got the time, I went to www.secsports.com, clicked on Video, then Alabama, and watched the Crimson Tide Roll over the Gators. Aren’t computers wonderful?

Make Plans Now to Attend the
**2010 International
Missionary Retreat**
September 6-10
Akadule Hotel Ephesus, Turkey

Retreat Schedule:

Arrival, Monday, Sept. 6 for 6pm Service
Tues.-Th., Sept. 7-10, Retreat Services & MK VBS

OPTIONAL TOUR
7 CHURCHES OF ASIA TOUR

Cost: \$400/adult \$300/children 7-12 yrs old) children 6 and under Free

Tour Includes: 2 nights hotel accommodation in Izmir, 1 night hotel accommodation in Pamukkale, Breakfast & dinner, Entrance fees to related sites, Professional tour guide, Transportation with 45 passenger bus & van, Transfer from airport to hotel, Parking & tolls.

Itinerary: **Thursday**, September 2; Arrival in Izmir, Turkey. **Fri-Sat:** Tour Smyrna, Pergamum, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. **Sunday:** Tour of Ephesus, St. John Basilica and Ephesus Museum then transfer to Adakule Hotel.

If you plan to attend, please email
Laburn@faithNLR.org
with names and number in family.
Please do not make your own reservations.

**This Retreat is for
Cross-Cultural Missionaries Only**



Akadule Hotel

Location: Kusadesi, Turkey (cruise ship port), 2 km from ancient Ephesus.

Accommodations: In-room A/C, Free Wireless Internet, Family Rooms Available.

Facilities: Pool and water games, Water Park on hotel grounds, Traditional Turkish Night with folk dances and bazaar shopping, Kids Club, Tennis court (available for night-matches), Table-tennis, Billiards and Pool, Darts, Scuba diving, Watersports (water-skiing etc.), Basketball, Beach Volley Ball, Fitness center.

Rates: \$65 /adult per night All-Inclusive (Full Board, ie., lodging, meals, drinks, snacks, facilities). Child Discount: Ages 0-6, 1st Child is Free, 2nd Child is Discounted 50%. Ages 7-12 is Discounted 50%.

Additional Costs: Round trip transportation from the airport to the hotel will be approximately \$15 per person.

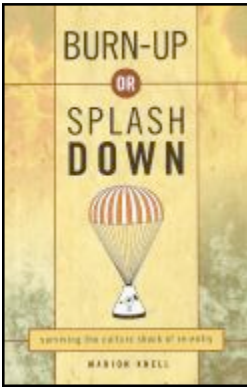
News on Missionary Insurance

Missionaries who are using Samaritan Ministries in lieu of insurance have followed very closely the saga of health care reform in the US capital. Late last year the House of Representatives passed a bill that would have forced members of Samaritan Ministries to purchase regular insurance or pay fines. Speculation was that insurance policies would be so expensive that members might still save money by using Samaritan Ministries and paying the fines. The bill passed by the Senate would have actually recognized the Samaritan Ministry plan as legitimate insurance. While negotiations were going on to reconcile the two bills, the State of Massachusetts overturned the apple cart by electing a Republican, Scott Brown, to take the seat vacated by the death of Ted Kennedy. This took away the Democrats' 60 seat, filibuster-breaking majority and spoiled any

chance of the bills being enacted. President Obama has vowed that he will not give up on health care reform but many of his party members are too nervous about their own November elections to give him the backing he desires.

It is not clear what is going to happen with health care reform but there is an ironic statistic that has come from the fray. **Samaritan Ministries has reported that their membership has increased by 30% since this time last year.** If you are interested in learning more about this program, go to www.samaritanministries.org If you decide to sign up, please give the name of a fellow missionary who is already a member as the person who referred you. That reference will save your missionary friend real dollars.

Two New Books for Missionaries



Burn-Up or Splash Down By Marion Knell

“After journeying into space, it is always a struggle for shuttles to re-enter the Earth’s atmosphere. And the struggle is similar for those re-entering their own country from being overseas for a length of time. Most people anticipate the major changes in lifestyles and customs that come with traveling to another country.

However, few foresee the difficulties they will encounter in coming home.”

Books on re-entry are hard to find and valuable when read. *Burn-Up or Splash Down* is a valuable book with good information. It does, however, suffer from a few deficiencies and quirks. Marion Knell resides in the United Kingdom and most of the illustrations and some of the specific advice is from the U.K. That is quirky enough but most U.S. missionaries will have trouble with Knell’s English perspective of missionaries serving out their “contract” and returning home. I realize that the book is intended for secular expatriates as well as missionaries but the idea of missionary contracts is more common in the U.K.

The deficiency comes in that almost half of the book relates to TCKs (Third Culture Kids). There may have been a time that there was insufficient information about MK (Missionary Kid) re-entry but that is no longer the case. Books like, *Third Culture Kids*, *Don’t Pig Out on Junk Food*, *Families on the Move*, and *Raising Resilient MKs* have given us significant enough resources.

Nevertheless, *Burn-Up or Splash Down* has now been added to our recommended reading list. After all, returning missionaries need all the help they can get so that they splash down safely rather than burn up on re-entry.

Lynn

Both of these books are available at CBD, Amazon, or the World Missions Bookstore.

The Missionary MEMO

Is a quarterly newsletter for cross-cultural missionaries and the pastors and churches who send them. It is a part of the **World Missions Ministry** of Lynn & Brenda Raburn, a missionary outreach of Faith Baptist Church, 109 Tanglewood Dr., North Little Rock, Arkansas, 72118. All articles are the property by copyright of the editor and may only be reprinted by permission.



Parents of Missionaries By Cherly Savageau and Diane Stortz

Parents of Missionaries is a comprehensive book on what parents of missionaries experience when their children leave for the mission field. Cherly writes from a counselor's point of view and Diane from experience as a POM of six years..

This book is an excellent resource for helping parents understand what their missionary child is going through. The authors go into great detail about what a missionary experiences during training, deputation, departure, life on the field and furlough.

Parents of Missionaries is also a great tool for helping POMs deal with grief. While many people will be excited about the new missionary, their parents will be feeling the loss. The authors go to great lengths to help the parents understand what they are feeling, why they are feeling this way, and how to deal with it.

The authors also address issues such as getting help and encouragement from other POMS, learning to relate to their adult children and the necessity of staying in communication with their children and grandchildren while they are overseas.

The book is written by two women and it is incredibly detailed and wordy and really needed a man to tell them to get to the point. It will, however, be a help to anyone who has a child going to a foreign mission field, or who is already there. Since it is the only book of it's kind, it is on our recommended reading list and would be great for a missionary to give to his parents and church.

Brenda

World Missions Ministry Website

Information about Lynn & Brenda Raburn’s World Missions Ministry can be found at www.worldmissionsministry.com or www.lynnraburn.com. Go there for copies of monthly reports, registration form for the **World Missions Seminar**, information about the **International Missionary Retreat**, or to purchase copies of Lynn’s book, *Getting Ready To Go*.