

Whirlwind Missions

Outreach Update

March 2004

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Hello, my Friends!

This has been one of the most difficult months I can remember. One of my dearest friends, who was only 39 died of cancer leaving a wife and three young boys. Gayla needs your prayers. The following is my letter to her.

Hello, Gayla!

Sister, we've only met once when FBA helped me at an Outreach Event at Oakbrook Pointe, but I feel I've known you for years.

I wish I could say that I was brave yesterday during the funeral, that I was able to keep my emotions in check, but I couldn't. I wept and wept. I was sitting across from you and your boys and every time I saw Jacob I just broke down. Even as I type this I'm chokin' up.

You may remember me, I work with Whirlwind Missions. Your husband was a huge advocate for me, as he was for so many others. My dearest memory of Ken was one afternoon when he came to visit me at my mission at Azalea Place. I had just completed a mission conference with another partnering church. I mentioned to him, "Ken, after Perimeter has their mission conference they help me with block parties at the missions. Why can't we do that at FBA?" He asked me, "How many missions do you have?" At that time it was twenty five. "How many people does it take to host the event?" I told him about ten to which he replied, "Put us down for all twenty five, because if we can't get 250 people out of our whole church to help you we need to close our doors!" Thus Impact Atlanta was born. The first event we had over 450 people from FBA participate and over 40 people accepted Christ that single day! That's what I call vision. Ken had guts. He was willing to support what he believed in and that one decision resulted in a new mission at Willow Branch and a full time missionary (Bennett Eckandem) working in the Muslim center of the whole South East.

Ken was always there for me whenever I needed advice, labor or materials for the missions. He believed we must "Take the Church to the People" and actually did it!

There are two kinds of army. Regular army--with the thousands of people, behind an impenetrable fortress, with all the supplies they could ever need. And then there's Special Forces--small fire teams, behind enemy lines, training indigenous leaders. Ken was a Special Forces officer. He mobilized the troops, got them out of their comfort zone and into the battle. I'm not sure why our King has called him home. We may never know why. I remember last November when Brother Gearl talked about Ken after his brain surgery and said, "Ken is experiencing the highest degree of pain that doctors can measure." I thought, "Why, Father? Why are

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"Take the Church, to the People!"

you allowing Ken to suffer so much?" To which the reply came, "Tim, this is war, I did not even spare my Son."

We are living in the last days. This war is coming to an end. The battle lines have been drawn and the evil one is on the move. Yesterday reminded me again of the urgency of the mission. In my days when I worked for CBS I was nearly killed three times. Each time I thought "this is it." I look through eyes that have seen death many, many times. And yet, Ken's passing has renewed my vigor, my desire to reach this city for Christ no matter what the cost.

Four years ago I was dealing with the death of Emerson, a little boy who was active in our mission. He died with brain cancer on his fifth birthday. I was with him just moments before he died. My heart was broken and I really went through some changes. I was so angry that God had taken Emerson from us. I shared my grief with my brother Jim and he told me, "You know, Tim, in the scale of eternity, our time on Earth is so brief. Then you'll be with Emerson forever. It's not 'Good bye,' it's just 'See ya later.'"

It's not "Good bye, Ken," because I know I'll see you later.

My love to you, your sweet boys and your whole family. The Father weeps with us.

Tim



Uncle Harold and Aunt Betty



Ken Whaley

Check out our Photo Gallery at www.whirlwindmissions.org.

As most of you know, I'm a Missionary Kid. For years we live separated from our relatives back in the USA. The MKs are encouraged to refer to the grown up missionaries as their "Uncles and Aunts." In many ways I am still closer to those missionaries that I grew up with than my own blood kin. The night after I wrote that letter I received email from my mom that my Aunt Betty had died.

Strangely enough there were two families of Cummins that lived in Nairobi, Kenya: Harold and Betty Cummins and my folks Al and Peggy. Betty was my mom's best friend for years. My folks and the "girl" Cummins (Cathy and Libby are their two daughters) were close for over three decades.

Aunt Betty was always ready with a big smile and warm embrace. She loved others more than herself—and that's rare in this world. I can still see her dressed in a sari (Indian dress) playing Gujarati music for the Indians who we were trying to reach for Christ.

Earlier in the month my mom had mentioned to me that Aunt Betty wasn't doing well. She was such a big influence in my life that I wrote myself a note to make sure I contacted her to pray with her, perhaps for the last time. Every day I'd look at that "to do" list and say, "I've GOT to call Aunt Betty." But there was always something that squeezed out that priority.

When I read my Mom's email I silently cursed myself for my tardiness. I couldn't believe that someone as important to me as my Aunt Betty had died and I hadn't told her. I wept and was ashamed of myself. I resolved to make the funeral in Missouri and I did. Although I didn't get to see my Aunt Betty for the last time, I did have a wonderful time with her family as well as the many missionaries that came to the memorial service that my Dad led.

So what have I learned from the passing of Ken and Aunt Betty? Seize the day! Don't let another day go by that you don't tell your loved ones, "I LOVE YOU! You're important to me."

Our most precious resource is TIME. Wouldn't you agree that time is finite on this planet? How do you spend it? I had a long talk with my father-in-law Bill Doverspike yesterday. He asked me, "Tim, do you think there is an age when we should die?" I told him, "The sad thing is not when people die, but the living who act like they're dead already." So many people are running on autopilot never making real choices in life just going from one habitual action to the next. I resolve to live.

I can't think of a seven day period that I have wept more in my life. Two mighty warriors gone to be with our King. Last night I had a dream. I saw the Father surrounded by his angels and the saints. And I saw Ken and my Aunt Betty waving her little hand at the King and saying, "Don't forget about Tim!"

I sure did love you two. I love you Kathy, Ashley and Jesse. I love you Mom and Dad and Jim. I love YOU for being on this team. To God be the glory.