



MIKE CURRY



WORSHIP LEADERS GETTING A CHANCE TO WORSHIP.....HEAVEN TOUCHING EARTH

Out of the snow....into the sweat

I have given up on trying to figure out how you prepare yourself mentally for 40 hours of travel. The burning eyes, dragon breath and sleep deprived dull thud of a headache are never welcome. But this morning (Monday, 1/11) when we finally touched down at the tiny

airstrip in Calbayog City, Samar the ministry adrenaline juices began to flow. My first shower in two days, a good scrubbing to get those overcoats off my teeth and collapse into a bed....what a blessing. The schedule-challenged rooster below my window nor the

constant sound of the public transport motorcycles can't disrupt this rest! Now it is off to our first session to meet these men who have travelled from around this island to switch roles for a few hours and receive the Word instead of constantly giving it away.



I CAN GET USED TO THIS!



PRAYING FOR AN INJURED BOY



FOCUSED AFFECTION

World hunger.....

I am asking the Father to speak clearly through me and my translator and that these men and women will have ears on their hearts.

I am learning, as God continues to open doors around the world for me to be with groups of pastor and leaders that there are no new needs.....we have one common need in ministry.....the power/presence of God. It is a "world hunger" for the bread of life.

Tonight I watched men and women worship with a passion that only comes from intense hunger and thirst for God. These are more choice servants who have given themselves to the Lord and His Body in towns and villages across this island of Samar that I can neither spell or pronounce.

Poverty, disease and hopelessness fill the streets I walked tonight in this fishing village. Love, grace, mercy, compassion, vision and hope filled the room I just left. It will spill into these streets and streets like them all over this island. The poor will be made rich. The diseased will be healed and hope will fill the evil void of hopelessness. I know that because of the stories I heard tonight. Stories of perseverance and patience. I know that because these are "called out" people. They will keep taking the Good News to this island for the same reason the disciples answered Jesus "where would we go, You alone have the words of life". These are people who know their only hope is Jesus. They are not rookies and they are not naive. Oh, there are rookies mixed in, but I met men and women with 20 and 30 years of experience. Many of them are second and third generation disciples of the

great church planters and evangelists that first brought the Gospel to these islands.

Tonight, around the dinner table it was a modern update of Foxes Book of Martyrs. Stories of those who have suffered death and disease in order to bring the Gospel to a forgotten people group. It was an update of the books of Acts as I heard fresh stories of the power of God put on display to heal the sick and drive out demons in order to validate the testimony of these men and women and the Gospel they are bringing. And tonight was strength to my tired bones. Fresh stories of victory, fresh news of the Kingdom of Light being advanced at the expense of the kingdom of darkness.

I always struggle (initially) with receiving the hospitality that greets me in places like this. Tonight we sat at a banquet feast prepared in a room where a window air conditioner had been added for the comfort of the American guests. Three types of meat was prepared for us; chicken, fresh fish and beautiful crabs, a wonderful local soup that I fell in love with and sweet rice. Desert was the sweetest fresh mangos I have ever put in my mouth. I am sitting at a feast reserved for holidays and royalty.....I don't need it.....I don't deserve it. But.....it has the intended effect. I feel absolutely welcomed by these strangers who are my brothers and sisters of a different tribe and language.

One of our team members brought a powerful and timely word about the Body of Christ and our interdependence on one another. It

was a good word for men and women who spend most of their ministry days in isolation.

Tomorrow I am taking money to a pastor I met this evening who lost his personal preaching Bible and library to the last typhoon (eight in 2009!!!). Losing and rebuilding are a way of life here on this most eastern Pacific island. There is no barrier for the storms that roll in from the sea. These people just "hunker down", ride it out and then rebuild when the storm leaves. I'll leave you to make the obvious and poignant spiritual application for yourself. I know, that is what I will be doing as I drift off to sleep tonight.

I'm in the presence of spiritual giants. Men and women with backbones like logs!! I'm in the presence of the Father and I expect He is planning to put on quite a display of his love, grace, mercy and power over the next few days. What a blessing to get to be in the midst of this Holy stirring. Thank you for sending me. I can't imagine missing this!!

I preach three times tomorrow. Praying for anointing and power. These people need to sit under the glory of God, not my best human preaching effort.

Tuesday, January 12

Amazing power.....amazing grace.....amazing receptive hearts. As I preached this morning there was a complete freedom and total access to these selfless servant's hearts. I brought my life message of grace vs. the performance that so easily and pervasively infiltrates even the most

Ohhhhh.....how he loves us!!

legitimate of ministries. The tears of release and repentance came freely. As I finished and sat down one pastor's wife began to sing of how we are loved so freely by the Father. The chorus was new to me but obviously not to my Philippine brothers and sisters. Soon, there was a chorus of praise and spontaneous prayer that filled the auditorium. It is one of those "Holy Ground" moments when you don't really want to move.

As worship closed the leadership began to distribute money that had been provided by and American donor for each pastor's wife to purchase a new dress and new

THE MESSAGE OF GRACE IS GLORIOUSLY DISARMING BRINGING THE SWEET GIFT OF REPENTANCE.

shoes. The celebration of God's provision spilled into the streets and now the ladies are in shops all over Samar telling the shop owners how God blessed them! I wouldn't be surprised to see the Kingdom expanded by these ladies this afternoon.

Just before we left for lunch a young boy (I'm guessing 6 or 7) was brought to us for prayer. He had taken a bad fall and his back and side were bruised and swollen badly. I suspect a bruised kidney at least. We asked if the boy had seen a doctor and the answer was no. The family is poor and students at the Bible school. Needless to say.....the boy is at the doctor, will be x-rayed and treated thanks to those of you who sent me with full pockets.

GOD HAS PLENTY!!!

I will preach twice more today. Praying for God's continued presence.



SAMAR



LUNCH TIME



HOST CHURCH



STREETS OF SAMAR



THE BIBLE SCHOOL



MIKE CURRY



RUNNING TO GIVE, WORSHIPPING WITH ALL THEY HAVE, GRATEFUL FOR GOD AND YOU.....

Out of their poverty.....

Wednesday, January 13

Wow! What a difference a good night of sleep makes!! Rest is such a gift from the Lord. Other than the rooster below our window and the constant drone of motorcycle taxis on the streets below, last night was a

blessed night of rest. In a few minutes I will meet the team downstairs for our next full day of conference sessions. Today I will preach twice introducing these men to the concept making disciples by living a life worthy of imitation (stolen from my dear friend

Dave Busby). These messages have absolutely changed my thinking and the course of my life and ministry. I am praying for similar fruit that remains in these men.

I'm refreshed and ready for the day. Your prayers....my fuel.



TYPICAL HOME



FROM MY HEART



NEW CLOTHES!!

I opened my eyes before the offering prayer ended, I never expected this from these poor ministry couples!

One of the things I enjoy about international ministry is that time doesn't seem to matter when ministry is taking place. I guess the fact that not many have watches helps as well.

This morning we started with a time of testimony as we usually do each session. There is no hesitation or reluctance in these people to share both the blessings of God and the needs of their lives. As I listened to the reports of God's blessing from the shopping spree of the previous day (the pastor's wives were all given money to buy a new dress and a new pair of shoes), one of the pastor's wives smiled from ear to ear as she pulled her pants

above her ankles to proudly show of her new glittering gold sandals. I immediately thought of Teresa and my granddaughters.....like all women they love "sparkly" things.

I listened as one pastor's wife described the blessing of being able to stay in a hotel for the first time. She told us the bed was so "cushy"....it wasn't hard like the floor at her home. Her room even had it's own bathroom and you could turn the faucet and hot and cold water came out automatically!!! It didn't take long for the Holy Spirit to remind of all the times I have complained when as a frequent hotel guest I could not get upgraded to my suite!

When I thought I could not stand anymore blessing, I saw Bro. Bo (director of Advancing Native Missions) get up and make his way to the front.

I NEVER KNEW GOD LOVED US SO MUCH! A HOTEL ROOM, FOOD, NEW CLOTHES. OVERWHELMED!



TOUCHED



SURPRISED BY HIS LOVE



RICE FOR PASTORS



TAXI!



PASTOR'S MOTORCYCLE

Surprised by His goodness

I didn't know what he was doing since he was not scheduled to speak. Bo is an encourager.....a lover of God and his servants and a giver. He walked over behind one of the pastors and his wife who were standing at the front of the auditorium and put his huge arms around their skinny shoulders. And then he began to tell this story: *"This couple pastor in the mountains about six hours journey from here. It is a very poor village and their church is quite small. The village only has 150 people in it. The pastor and his wife have four children, their oldest son is 13 years old and plays the drums during their worship at church. His drum set is made from plastic bottles that he fills with water to provide the different pitches for the sounds. His cymbals are the lids from his mother's cooking pots and even the lid from slop jar in the bedroom used for evening bathroom relief when the family does not want to walk outside. Imagine that.....pots and pans and toilet items being used for worship in the house of God!!! I think God would have us take an offering right now and buy this pastor's son a set of drums."*

Immediately I thought, "good thing us American's are here". There is not enough money in this entire congregation of poor missionary pastors to buy a set of drums".

After Bo prayed, there was a wire basket placed on a chair in front of the pastor and his wife and the invitation was given to come and give.

I tried to step forward with my offering (actually, your offering since you sent the money I have with me) and was nearly trampled. The entire group of pastors and wives was literally running to the front of the building to

drop their gift into the basket. There was laughter, high fives (in pure Philipinno form) and hugs all around. I have NEVER seen people have so much fun giving an offering.

I finally made my way to the basket and dropped my offering in. On the way back to my seat, I leaned over and whispered in Bro. Bo's ear, *"whatever the shortage is, I will make it up. I want this young man to be encouraged and I want this to be a testimony to his village"*

I'm embarrassed!

Embarrassed because when the church secretary returned with the envelope of counted pesos and the announcement was made.....there was more than enough to buy the finest set of drums in this city!!

Poor?! Hardly! These people may only make \$5 or \$6 per week, may live in a one room hut on the backside of an island I can't even pronounce, may have more rotten teeth than good ones.....but poor is one word you could never use to describe them!!

When the total of the offering was announced the place literally erupted in applause and shouts of Hallelujah!! They had just been part of a miracle.

I listened as other testimonies were shared as to how others had been praying for drums and musical instruments. But, they were thrilled that in God's timing today was the day that God's blessing had come to this pastor and his family. No jealousy. No envy. Pure joy.....

If God loves a "hilarious" giver, He loves this place and these people!!

Right now the pastor's and their wives are gathered in the auditorium for the group photo in their new fine clothes. Smiles are the order of the day.

So far these people have sat on thin, wooden pews for 12 hours in the past two days listening to sermons and teaching. As we left lunch, two pastors took me by the arm and told me they could not wait to see what the Father had to say in the afternoon sessions.

I'm ruined! Ruined for religious environments that judge sermons by their brevity and entertainment.

I'll preach twice more today. I plan to finish empty. These people have ears to hear. Ears.....on their hearts. Who knows when the next time is that I will have such a fertile soil to place God's seed into.

Thank you. Thank you for allowing me to use my gifts and your money to take the Good News and the encouragement of the Father to this place.

We finish the pastor's conference tomorrow. Friday, we take a "water taxi" (motorized outrigger canoe) to an island that is three hours away (if the seas will calm). We are going to visit and encourage. This island never sees the American missionary teams that come to the big cities of the Philippines. Then we will return on Friday night for a city wide youth event. Pray.....there should be many lost students there. I can't wait to see what the Father has for us.



MIKE CURRY



THE TEST OF FAITH....."WHAT WOULD ABRAHAM DO?"

The loaves and fishes.....Philippines version

Just when I think I've seen it all, God absolutely amazes me!!! I sat in complete awe at one of the most dramatic displays of the Word of God coming alive I have ever seen. It was our final morning and our final session with this group of wonderful pastors

and their wives. God had moved in power for over two days now. The worship touched heaven and at times sounded like it originated there. Yesterday (as I have already written you), God displayed his giving heart as a poor mountain pastor and his wife

received the fulfillment of years of prayer....a new set of drums for their worship team at home. Sooooo.....this morning when Bo Barredo (the president of Advancing Native Missions) called the pastor and his wife forward (the one's who had received the drums



PASTOR'S RICE DISTRIBUTION



SHINEY NEW SHOES



NEW BOAT!!

Would you do it?.....

I thought, "O.K. *He is going to use them as another object lesson for the group.*" Understatement of the day!! As Bo stood there with those giant arms draped around the tiny Philippino couple's shoulders, I couldn't believe the words that come from that deep baritone voice.

"Pastor", Bo said. "*Yesterday, God blessed you with the gift of this set of new drums that you had been praying for for years right? And it was a gift that you never truly believed you would see this week did you? I want to ask you a question pastor....If God spoke to you and asked you to give those new drums to another pastor and his church here.....would you do it?*"

I thought, well this is a great illustration. Of course the pastor will answer, "yes....*if that is God's will, I would give them*". Then, we will all say **amen**, applaud and get to the point of the sermon. I never saw Bo's next move coming.

"O.K., pastor", Bo said. *I want you to pray with your wife and ask God which pastor is to receive those new drums you were given yesterday. Then, I want you to walk over to that pastor, put your hands on his shoulders and bring him back here to the front of the auditorium with you*"

I saw the pastor's wife's eyes immediately fill with tears and a look of disbelief come over her face. These drums were a direct answer to years of her prayers. **HER SON WAS THE DRUMMER IN THEIR CHURCH WORSHIP BAND.** He had been praying for drums for years now while playing each Sunday on his set of plastic jugs and pots and pans. **NOW GOD WAS GOING TO TAKE THE DRUMS AWAY BEFORE THEIR SON EVEN**

GOT TO SEE HIS REFLECTION IN THE SHINE OF THEIR NEW FINISH?!!!!

The pastor bowed his head and begin to pray....lips trembling. It didn't take him long. He looked up from his prayer, dropped his wife's hand leaving her standing there in the altar at the front of the auditorium, and walked straight to another pastor. He put his hands on his shoulders, had him stand and walked back to the front of the auditorium. His new drums.....were.....gone.

Now Bo, moves to the new pastor and his wife who have just taken possession of the drums. He spends a few minutes asking them if they have been praying for drums for their church. They say, yes. We have been begging God for instruments for our worship for months now. Bo asked them if this was truly an answer to prayer and a gift from God to them. Then, he asks us all to rejoice with him in God's provision for this couple and his church. Obediently, we all applaud....but half-heartedly. The first pastor (former recipient of the drums) stands there with his weeping wife while the new owners are smiling in their disbelief of God's provision. Then comes Bo's next question. He turns to the new owner of the drums and his wife and asks them, "*Pastor, you never dreamed you would be leaving here with the provision of a new set of drums for your church did you? You would never be able to afford instruments such as these on your own, would you?*" The pastor affirmed Bo's questions. "Pastor", Bo said. "*I want you to pray with your wife. Ask God which pastor He would have you give this new gift of drums to today*".

Now, there is a tension in the air that can be tasted. **I'm** not even sure where this is going now. The pastor and his wife pray while the first pastor and his wife try to hide their tears and disbelief. Now, the second pastor and temporary owner of the drums makes his way into the congregation of pastors and places his hands on the shoulders of the new recipient of God's provision. By now, it is hard for any of us to know how to react. One pastor and his church have been blessed greatly.....at the great expense of another. Over a span of some twenty minutes, Bo repeats this scenario three times. Now there are four pastors and their wives standing at the front of the auditorium and one set of drums....**not to be shared!** One set of drum, four needs.

Before Bo began to serve God full time, he was a brilliant attorney in the Philippines. His presentation and dramatic pauses would have made the most capable of trial lawyers jealous of his skills.

None of us know how to respond. Even I am saying to myself, *Lord this isn't funny any more. You need to call off the dogs here....this illustration has gone far enough!*

And then Bo stands in front of the four couples with his back to the congregation. **His lesson?**.....Just as God asked Abraham for his only son and he held nothing back, I asked you for your most precious and newest possession today.....and you held nothing back. Being the master of the interview technique, Bo asks each pastor and their wife to share their feelings just now of what went through

O.K.! This illustration has gone far enough!

their minds and hearts as they prayed who would receive the gift that they thought was meant for them.

As each testimony was shared, the poignant reality of what God has done for all of us through His gift that cost him so dearly was contrasted against the living drama unfolding before our very eyes.

Then, the invasion of grace and mercy. Bo said, "I want you all to look at me". Each pastor and wife standing at the front of the room fixed their eyes on the man who represented their spiritual authority and the covering through which much of their personal and church support flowed from the U.S. Bo walked to each pastor and wife, called them by name and said...."you have a new set of drums". And then the next pastor and wife; "you have a new set of drums in Jesus name". A third time: "you have a new set of drums". And then the final and original pastor and his wife who had started this drama of giving and receiving; "you have your set of drums back in Jesus name".

The room is electric.! There is shouting, lifted hands and deafening applause. What was an unbelievable gift yesterday of one set of drums.....has now multiplied into four!!! Wow!!

Then Bo calls a young pastor's widow to the front who had testified to God's goodness and provision in spite of her loss and need. She had asked us to pray for her children that God would provide a way for their education somehow. Bo takes her by the shoulders and says, "this Christmas a donor provided a wonderful gift designated for scholarships for pastor's children to

attend school. Your children's education is paid for in Jesus name."

More applause, more rejoicing erupts.

Then Bo call a mountain pastor and his wife to the front and asks them what they have been praying for. Their answer.....a motor boat. They have been crossing the river in their region to take the Gospel to an unreached people in a village. Some of the unbelievers have been angered at this Christian invasion of their pagan community and each time hide the only boat available so this couple cannot cross the river to bring the Good News. Bo looks at the couple and says, "In Jesus name, you have your own motor boat. No more depending on rented motor boats."

The place is absolutely wild with worship now!!

Then Bo quietens the crowd one last time and calls one of the oldest church planters in the room to the front. The man has only one eye as a result of an accident, and his face is deeply lined from age and the hardship of life in the remote mountain villages. Bo knows the man and his history. He asks the church planter leading questions that helps us all know his story. He has been planting churches along a mountain river for years now. The People's Army (a revolutionary remnant of the former communist regime) have been harassing this church planter and following him with threats of harm. Traveling the mountain paths is becoming more and more dangerous. Bo asks, "Would a new motor boat help you plant more churches in greater safety?" The lines in the pastor's face

give way to a half smile....."yes, that would be a great help."

"Then, in Jesus name.....Bo says, "you have a new motor boat."

There is an aroma in the air. It smells like Jesus. There is a thickness in the air. It feels like a fresh dew of faith has just fallen on us all.

About thirty minutes and roughly \$3,600 is all it took to move the faith of every man and woman in the room from theory to reality.

We hadn't heard another sermon. **WE HAD SEEN ONE!!!!**

I don't know what the drums, the scholarships and the motor boats will produce in terms of measurable ministry results. But I know this: **I will never forget this morning!!!** And I promise you this.....if there was anything I have been holding tightly to, my grip has been loosened. **And**.....if I ever doubted the Father's love for His children (*and I have on occasion*)....**I don't doubt it this morning.**

The theme of the conference was Refreshing tired feet. *Tired feet have been refreshed.* **Fresh faith** has shod those tired feet.

I almost feel sorry for the devil today. His job just got exponentially harder on this island of Samatra.

Pray!!! Satan hates the Light.

Mike Curry

Calbayog, Samar---Philippines

MIKE CURRY



THIS ISLAND HAS A HISTORY OF DARKNESS THAT LIVES TODAY. THE LIGHT MUST COME!!

Living Martyrs

Sunday AM, January 17,

Davao City, Philippines

I just finished preaching the Sunday morning service at River of God Church (El-Bethel) here in Davao City. The worship was rich led by university students which made me feel right at

home. The major university is located just across the street with over 30,000 students. I preached in the second service which is the one most of the students attend. God moved in power, met need and got Glory. I don't take that for granted and I'm not try to

"brush past" that, but this morning was certainly not "about me".

The pastor here, Blair Cuares, shared a bit of his story of his expedition into the mountains yesterday. He has been traveling there to an unreached group of muslim natives. They are notorious



STUDENTS RESPOND



ABANDONED IN WORSHIP



GOING PUBLIC

Wow! The presence of greatness

men on this island. They are warriors and very violent. You heard of their work last November as they killed a group of local missionaries and aid workers.

I listened as Pastor Cuares shared how fearful he was yesterday as he climbed into the dugout canoe. How his wife and oldest son asked him "what will we do if you do not return this time?" I have read lots of missionary stories. We seem to all be infatuated with the ones where the missionary goes to the heathen headhunting tribes. Well....these people are the descendants of headhunters. In the lobby of my hotel is a display of the ancient weapons they used and a full life carving of two warriors. One of the warriors has in his hand about a three foot length of braided blonde hair.

Relax....I'm not going to these people. I wouldn't make it 1/4 of a mile up this river without being kidnapped. And since Light Ministries has a policy that we do not "negotiate with terrorists" nor do we pay ransom, I don't want to leave Teresa a widow just yet.

But the pastor shared how God was bringing these muslim terrorist to Christ. It is slow work. The life-change does not come immediately. He told me of sitting in a hut yesterday teaching one of the new believers. He said he caught himself regularly glancing over at the cache of weapons in the corner with the RPG (rocket propelled grenade) launcher sitting on top. He said I have no choice.....someone has to go. Jesus is the only hope to stop the bloodshed and free these people from their bondage.

WOW! Standing in the presence of Kingdom greatness.

The Lord spoke to this pastor this morning in a very obvious way. He didn't try to hold back his own tears during the message and his knee was the first to touch the altar when we concluded in our common prayer of brokenness. I was so glad I was able to minister to him personally and his church. It is such a joy to give.....

Receiving?!.....that comes a bit harder.

As I was getting ready to leave he shook my hand one more time and in it was a tiny brown paper envelope. He said, Mike you have blessed me and my people today and I want to plant this gift into your ministry. I immediately pushed it back into his hand and told him to put into their "seed faith" offering box for the new church building. He wouldn't have it. Simply said, you have no right to rob me of the joy of giving. I put the envelope in my pocket and took it out just a few minutes ago. Written on the outside is this message, **"Sir, thank you very much for a touching message. MORE POWER TO YOU!"** Your brother, Ptr. Blair

Inside was a 1,000 peso bill (about \$23). THAT IS A LOT OF MONEY IN THE PHILIPPINES!!

I guess it might be a sin, certainly not the best stewardship, but I am not going to spend that 1,000 peso bill. I'm not even going to give it away.

I am going to pin it to the world map that I see across my office desk each day. I want to be like Pastor Blair. And I need, **"more power to me"**.

That 1,000 pesos would buy a good sack of rice, help pay a pastor's house rent or buy a couple of Bibles. Or....it will serve as a constant reminder that on a Sunday morning in the Philippines, God used me to encourage a man whose feet I should be washing. He believes the Spirit of God lives in me. He believes there is power and anointing on the message God has given me. I think I'll just wave that 1,000 peso bill in the devil's face the next time he comes around with his slanderous accusations against me and this ministry.

How many times does it happen? We come to give and encourage.....and we leave more blessed and encouraged than those we preach to.

Tonight, I head to another youth meeting. There should be several hundred students. The storm clouds are building outside. The thunder is rolling and the lightning is flashing. We will have to travel through a dangerous neighborhood to get there and return after dark. WHAT A MARTYR I AM!???

It is not like stepping into a dugout canoe going to preach Jesus to Muslim warriors. "What time I am afraid, I will trust in THEE".....and.....I will remember pastor Blair.

Sunday night, January 17

As we drive through the pouring rain and thunder I wonder if this will be like Kenya. A few drops of rain fall and the streets clear of people. Our driver pulls into the gate at a delapidated huge building. I is in the center of the city and obviously was once a theatre. As I walk in the starkness of the black walls, concrete floor and white plastic chairs contrasting against the central

New life comes....bondage is broken

decorating tone of.....drab gray covered in smudge and dirt. There is a sense of heaviness in the room. A lingering darkness. Can't put my finger on it? Oh well.....

As we begin to worship the room fills with college students. The worship musicians are the most skilled I have encountered on the Philippines so far. Not just musically, their passion for worship is several notches above anything we have seen. The students enter in to worship with abandon. The Spirit directs me to a message based on the story of the resurrection of Lazarus. The focus is on the fact that many have life but still live in the bondage of their grave clothes (unconfessed sin). These are serious disciples I am speaking to. There are disciplines in their life that are bearing fruit in many ways. Yet I see in their eyes,like all of us who follow.....we stumble. The enemy knows just which sin will lead to the stronghold that will bind us from freedom and effectiveness. As I finish preaching it is obvious that the Father wants to give some gifts...and SO HE DOES!! Repentance is a beautiful thing to watch. The brokenness and humility that leads to freedom and joy. I never tire of watching the Spirit do this favorite work of his.

After the service is dismissed I stood visiting with some of the ministry leadership. It was only then that I was told we were worshipping in what was formally the largest porn theatre in this city. Well.....that explains the darkness!!!

The leadership does constant work in prayer to reclaim what the enemy has taken in this building over the years. It has been dirty, gruelling, painful work in prayer but God is honoring it. Now this building is regularly filled with worship. New life comes, bondages are broken.....Glory falls.

Vision is a wonderful thing. Most of us, I included, would have seen this building as only fodder for a bulldozer. But this pastor.....he saw the streets around this building filled with needy broken people and imagined those people walking out of the doors of that theatre free.....not in bondage.

Amazing love the Father has for these people. Amazing love these people have for each other.

Rest this morning. Sit by the pool and look out over the bay. Read.....snooze, enjoy some fresh Mangos. The batteries need to be recharged. We start "full-tilt" again this evening with the second week of our pastor's conference. A couple of hundred men are arriving as I write from all over this Island. Some from the cities, some from the mountains and the marshes.

All....hoping God speaks. He must! He alone has the Words of life.

Your prayers.....my fuel.

By grace, your brother,

Mike Curry

Eph. 6:19-20

Swords into plowshares.....new war....common enemy

January 18, 2010

Mike Curry----Philippine Journal

Davao City

I didn't come to preach to these people! I didn't come to teach *THEM*! I didn't come to encourage *THEM*! I came to be reminded of how **BIG** God *truly* is and how much He *truly* loves me, you and this world.

I sat at dinner tonight with the two pastors in the photo below. The one on my left is a muslim. Former commandant of the Philippine muslim forces who declared war in the 1970's and killed untold hundreds of Christians. The man on my right is a former Philippine Army marine. In the 1970's he was looking for the man on my left so he could kill him and his army. Tonight we had dinner together;

IN THE 1970'S THESE TWO MEN WERE SWORN ENEMIES TRYING TO KILL EACH OTHER.....

then worshipped Jesus together. Both men are now pastoring in the most remote parts of this island. They are taking the Gospel primarily to the fierce muslim warriors here. They have a *new war* to wage now. A common enemy to defeat. The enemy does not have flesh and blood and the war was not declared by men but in the heavenlies. **These men are warriors!!** *Warriors of the cross.* They are absolutely fearless!! And God has given them favor in a region that made headlines just a few short months ago when Christians were massacred by the very tribes they are preaching to today. Pastor Ely (the former muslim standing on my left) now speaks nine languages. He walks from village to village, tribe to tribe teaching his former fellow muslims about the true Christ who gave him life. Pastor Dan (the former marine on my right) meets with the muslim elders in his village each

THE FIELD



HOME



BROKEN



YES, I BELIEVE



VIEW FROM MY HOTEL



MAY THEIR TRIBE INCREASE!!

morning for coffee. He said, *“it takes me a long time to drink my coffee. I sit and stir my cup as I use the Koran and the teachings of Jesus...speaking in arabic to introduce these muslim friends to Christ.”*

Pastor Dan said recently he was on his way to teach one of the many “underground” discipleship groups he ministers to. He received a text (in the middle of the jungle!!!). It was from a man in the village where he going telling him there was a *“bullet headed for his mouth if he opened it again and spoke of Jesus in his village.”* Pastor Dan showed the text to those traveling with him (all former muslims who live in the region). Immediately they said, *“Pastor Dan, the bullet will have to go through us first.”*

I wish I could give you details and tell you more stories. If I did, I’m afraid I would endanger these men. Tomorrow night I will sit a table with all of the leaders who are ministering in “underground” ministries to the muslim terrorists on this island. The meeting will be “closed door” and security will be in place to make sure no one “interrupts”. Even the waiters will be screened in case the conversations and testimonies could be overheard. That would endanger these men and their vital Kingdom work.

I thought tonight.....***I have no business sitting at the table with these men.*** And then I remembered, that soon we will all be sitting at a “table” that we have no business sitting at. A feast that none of us deserve. And in the company of those who share our faith and paid for our freedom in Christ with their blood.

I don’t think I will leave that table tomorrow night the same as when I sat

down. God knows, ***I better not leave that table the same!!***

And tomorrow morning I stand to preach to ***these men!*** I have never felt so humbled in my life! The largest single crowd I have ever spoken to was just over 12,000. Tomorrow morning there will about 100 of us gathered in the church auditorium. I know God loves each setting, but tomorrow sure ***feels*** like it has possibly the greatest Kingdom importance of any message I have ever preached. *Pray that God will fill my mouth and then fill these dear servants hearts.* I could go with them to their village *one time* and preach *one time* before their muslim friends sent me to heaven. It’s really hard to hide this white skin and white hair in the jungle! But, these men have the favor of God and these people. Perhaps the message God gives them tomorrow (through me?) will strengthen them for a few more journeys up those mountain paths.....to.....no man’s land.

I had to laugh tonight as I walked into my hotel lobby. There was a group of pastors and their wives huddled with one of the ministry leaders. The leader was explaining how to use the card key to open the door; how to “mix” the hot and cold water in the shower; how to adjust the air conditioning so they won’t freeze tonight and asking them to please flush the toilets after they use them. You see, this is the first time many of these men and women have ever slept in a hotel room. It is certainly the first time many have ever had a flushing toilet. And hot water that comes from a spout in the wall!!!! **WHAT WILL THEY THINK OF NEXT?!**

I love it!! I absolutely love it!!

Oh, by the way. The reason that these pastors can come to this conference, sleep in a hotel, and eat food that they never dreamed possible is because one business man and his wife had a vision to minister to these heros that will never been seen on Christian cable television.

In a few days, our pastors and their wives will gather in Kenya for a similar experience because another business man and his wife felt the same calling.

MAY THEIR TRIBE INCREASE!!!

So that.....the tribes who have heard the Good News may increase.....

So that.....the Kingdom may increase.

Somebody pinch me!! I can’t really be getting to be a part of this, can I?

January 19, 2010
The Royal Mandaya Hotel
Davao City, Philippines

I just left the "upper room".

All of those guys in the painting with Jesus around the table?.....I just had dinner with them.

There are no photos tonight. Didn't want to risk these folks identity out there in "cyber land" and to be honest, I didn't want the distraction of trying to "capture the moment". I knew I would be sitting in the presence of greatness tonight and selfishly I just wanted to listen and drink it in.

And drink it in I did.

There will be no article from my journal tonight. There is no way I could condense what I just experienced before the sun rises here in the morning. And I must go to bed since I have a full day of preaching tomorrow.

Preaching tomorrow?!! There's a ridiculous thought!! After the testimonies I heard tonight, what these people have risked and continue to risk, the faith that they live by moment by moment. I sure am glad I realized that it is not my preaching, my life or my power that brings anything to the table. If I was depending on my skills and abilities to preach to this room full of spiritual giants.....I'd be slipping out of town tonight on an early flight back to the U.S.

I took good notes. I will write the story. It needs to be told and I plan to tell it. But tonight I am going to be selfish and just let it marinade in my soul.

I will tell you this: the "Apostle Paul" was the last to speak tonight. As pastor Ely told his story of is former life as a muslim and executioner in the "black shirts" regiment of the muslim terrorist army, he did nothing to try to hide the innocent blood that has dripped from his hands.

Now, it is his blood that his muslim family and friends are after. His testimony?.....**Die today....die tomorrow.....all die!**

It's one thing to preach it.....

It is entirely another thing to live it day by day.

It will take me some time to process all I hear tonight. As the Lord capsulizes it into something shorter than the "novel" form it is in tonight, I will do my best to pass this story along.

Let me just way thank you for praying today. I asked you to pray and you did. I felt it. I preached with great freedom and power this morning. I expect no less tomorrow.

Tonight, because of your generosity, we rented a private banquet room at our hotel, had a wonderful meal catered that these men and women could never afford. We ate like Kings and sat in the presence of THE King. All of the participants at tonight's dinner were by invitation only.

A select few from the larger group at this conference. These are the men and women who are taking the Gospel specifically to the most dangerous of the muslim areas on these islands. They

are alive tonight only because the Lord has sustained them one more day. We (the U.S. staff) needed to hear their stories, their needs, their struggles. THEY needed to hear each other's stories.

I left the banquet room with them hugging, smiling and continuing to share how the Lord was working in their particular areas and ministries. Until tonight.....most of them thought they were the only ones doing this work. The strength they gained from their own testimonies of victory and struggle will fuel them to the next impossible ministry assignment the Lord has for them.

I have never felt so unworthy and yet so fortunate at the same time.

Unworthy to speak a word to such giants of the faith. Fortunate to be trust by the Father to be his "delivery boy". What a thrill to bring His message to these thirsty servants. What a joy to "pick up the bill" (with your money!) for those who will be sitting at the head table with the Father.

I don't want to sleep tonight. I want to just savor the aroma of the presence of God in that room.

Die today.....die tomorrow.....all die!!

By grace, your brother,
Mike Curry
Eph. 6:19-20



MIKE CURRY



"PAPA, WILL YOU ASK THE PASTORS...TAPAD TA?"

"Tapad Ta"

All of the sermons had been preached. Now it was time to go into the good byes that typically last almost as long as the conference itself. But wait....there was one more sermon. Not on the schedule, not planned (at least not planned by us!). Our host pastor stood

for the final prayer and called the four year old daughter of our cook for the week to come to the front. Even though the girl is not related to the pastor, she calls him "papa" and follows him all over the church clinging to his leg.

The pastor explained to all of the pastors at the conference that the young girl had a heart defect. There was a hole that needed repair. One of the doctors on the missions medical team said the tips of the little girls fingers were already turning blue due



ONE LAST POINT



OUTSIDE MY HOTEL



WALK TO MY HOTEL

I need “tapad ta” as much as the poorest

due to limited blood flow. The pastor simply asked if we could pray. Our leader, in his wisdom and unction from the spirit, stood and said, “yes, we will pray. But.....we will do more than pray!” He asked for an offering basket to be brought to the front. And then with no hesitation and no apology, he asked the poor pastors.....and.....the rich Americans to give so this little girl could live.

Once again I watched as out of their poverty these needy pastors and their wives rushed to the front of the room and the offering basket.

With no hesitation I reached into my pocket and emptied it of every “peso” I had. But.....as I walked back to my seat I realized my giving was not quite like the giving of these pastors. I am just an ATM away from replenishing my supply. They.....they gave away what was going to be their meal next week.

I can’t escape it. **DON’T WANT TO ESCAPE IT!!!** GOD HAS PLENTY! And it has nothing to do with what is in MY pocket.

The little girl will get her operation. Hopefully, she will live a long and happy life. Who knows the plans God has for her. But no matter how long she lives I know this. She was the sermon for my heart today.

Her request: **“Papa.....will you ask the pastors tapad ta?”**

In the Philippine native tongue “tapad ta” means: “please come along side me” or “let’s stand together, side-by-side”.

I believe that is what we all pray, isn’t it?

Papa (Abba Father). Will you **“tapad ta?”**

The Father has come alongside me for the past two weeks. Anointing has been in ample supply. My money never ran out. At each meal, food was set before me that nourished my stomach and delighted my palate. I have been with a wonderful team who has my common heart for the Kingdom of God to be advanced.....not.....the religious kingdoms of man. I have walked very dangerous streets and nothing has harmed me. I have slept and been safe. God has “tapad ta”.

And you?.....**You tapad ta as well.**

Your prayers, your love, support and care. They have all served as the skin the Holy Spirit has worn these past two weeks as you and He “came long side me” to “stand together.....side-by-side”.

Thank you!

At the header of this journal entry I wrote, “Philippine Journal...FINAL ENTRY”. I hope I am wrong about that! I hope this is not the final entry. I pray God continues to write “entries” on my heart and the hearts of these pastors as a result of His visitation these past few days. I pray that when we read the true “final edition” in Heaven, there will be entires that we dared not dream or imagine.

It is 12:10 A.M. on Thursday in Arkansas as I write. If all goes well, I will arrive Little Rock tomorrow afternoon (Friday) at 4:00 P.M. I dread the travel. I don’t even want to think about the 12 hour leg from Tokyo!! But if that is what it takes to experience “tapad ta”..

fuel the plane!!

I am not headed back to a bamboo hut suspended over a rice patty. I do not

have to walk a muslim guerilla infested path to get to my village. I do not have to wonder how I will eat next week now that I have given all my pesos for this little girls surgery.

But I need “tapad ta” as much as the poorest pastor here. If the Father does not “come alongside me”how can I go on from here.

Pray! There is one week of rest and then next Sunday, January 31 Teresa and I leave for Kenya. ANOTHER LONG PLANE RIDE!!

But maybe.....

Just maybe. We will experience **“tapad ta”** on the other side of the world just as I did here in the Philippines.

Could God truly be.....**that good...that big?**

Because you send, I continue to go.

By grace, your brother,

Mike Curry

Eph. 6:19-20

Davao City, Philippines