

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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**HEARTS OF LOVE
CHINA OUTREACH
October 5 - 21
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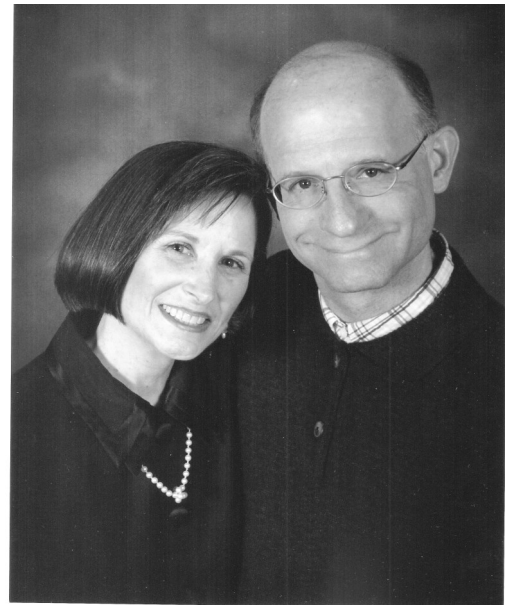
**For He Himself is our
peace ... and broke
down the barrier of
the dividing wall**

Eph 2:14

**Please pray for us as
we prepare to travel to
Hong Kong and China
in October. Pray for
our wisdom, protection
and safety, and pray
that everything we
carry arrives safely.**

On Our Way Once More

As you read this, we are on our way, once more, to Hong Kong and China. We might have just gotten there or we might still be in the air. If we are still in the air, then we are still stuffed into seats that are too small, too crowded together and just plain too... *everything!* I have learned, however (or at least am learning), that sitting in an airline seat on long flights is an instructive metaphor for our entire Christian lives. Jesus told us that we would always have trials and tribulations in life but that He had come to give us peace in all circumstances. In 14:27 Paul said that he had learned to be content in everything, that he could endure and do all things in Christ. Php 4:21 James told us to consider it all joy when (not if) we encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of our faith produces endurance and patience, the work of which, in our lives, would cause us to be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. Jms 1:2 The writer of Hebrews told us to 'come boldly before the throne of grace to find help in time of need.' Heb 4:16 Paul told us that our battle is not with flesh and blood (humans inside the plane's cabin who seem bent on making our lives miserable), but with demonic forces lying to us, seeking to destroy us. Eph 6 Paul said, 'Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.' Php 4



*He has committed to
us the word of
Reconciliation.*

*Therefore, we are
Ambassadors for Christ.*

2 Corinthians 5:19,20

I do need the God of peace and the peace of God to be with me on those long flights.

It's not always easy to meditate on those things, is it! I guess the thing that has helped me the most in enduring 14 hour flights, cramped into small seats, was when I felt the Holy Spirit impressing upon me the question... 'So... big shot missionary... what are you really willing to do or to put up with, to take the Gospel to the lost and dying... unseen and unsung?' From that moment on... about 4 trips ago... sitting in an airline seat has not been so much of an issue for me, but that's not to say those long flights are something I look forward to as a wonderful opportunity to draw even closer to God...

I'd always told myself I was willing to go through great fiery trials... dying in an airline accident... being arrested or imprisoned, starved and beaten... hurray for me... rah, rah... it's always easy to imagine we can endure what we know will probably never happen...but what about the ungreat, unfiery trials that definitely are going to happen... like a big person crushing against you in the next seat or a child fussing nonstop in the seat behind or his sister constantly

kicking the back of your seat while her mother does nothing about it!? What about those trials and tribulations or the ones that happen every day while driving or in a line at Costco? How about those trials... the ones where you don't see a purpose... where there are no Bibles getting through to the lost and dying... how about those every day trials Mr. bigshot mature guy?

Yeh, yeh fine whatever! Anyway...

This trip, I plan for one of my learning issues to be in relation to all the other myriad annoying things connected with being in foreign places among foreign people. Don't look at me like that... you know what I'm talking about... in places not made and structured like where we've grown up, among people who just plain don't think like we do... and if you're naive enough to think that *we're all alike, all around the world... they're just like us...* then you obviously haven't been anywhere beyond your back door. (and, in reality... being in China among the Chinese is a clear metaphor for our living here among Americans. We, as true believers, are foreigners here,

living in a foreign place. Those around us are not like us, and they don't think like us. If they are like us and think like us... then there is something wrong with us because that would indicate we are not thinking like God, with the mind of Christ... we are thinking like the World.

Every trial, every annoyance, every problem... (sure, in Hong Kong and China, it is related to the same idea... 'what are you willing to do to take the Gospel...'), but in reality, it is even more basic than that... wherever we are, whatever we are doing... God is saying to us, 'What are you willing to do, what are you willing to put up with, what are you willing to patiently endure in order to allow Me to do *in you* what I desire?'

I've had to come to understand that when we've traveled to Hong Kong to carry Bibles into China, what's most important to God about the whole situation, at least as pertains to me, is not what He is able to do through me... how He can use me... but, rather, what He is doing *IN* me. He doesn't need me for anything. He could cause birds to carry Bibles into China... but He very much **wants me**, for me... He wants me to Himself as His very own... and He is at work *in* me, all the time, doing whatever is necessary to form me into the image and likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He intends to make me *LIKE* Jesus Christ... not as an imitation of doing *like* Jesus Christ... Jesus Christ already did it all for me. I measure up completely before God because. and only because, of all that Jesus Christ has done and finished for me and in me.

That's one of the big problems in the Church today fueling the great Apostasy, that prophesied great falling away into the '*lukewarmness*' of the end times '*Laodicean*' Church of these *last days*.

Countless pastors and 'churchgoers' are scurrying around doing and doing... thinking that by doing good works and practicing certain 'disciplines,' they are causing themselves and others to become more like Jesus, to become more pleasing and acceptable to God, and

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when problems come, they tell themselves, and each other, that those trials are an indication of God's displeasure with them... they aren't being good enough... they aren't measuring up. They have to do better... do more... give more money... that's what pleases God the most, they say, when we sacrificially give money and give till it hurts... there's a miracle waiting for you... just as soon as you send in enough money! The people to whom we take Bibles can't conceive of a prosperity gospel. Jesus told us that in these last days, the Church would be increasingly filled with false Christians... goats... tares... Laodiceans... false teachers spouting false doctrine and lies to those who gather around them, filling stadiums or filling TV airwaves... that they would be lukewarm Laodiceans. We are surrounded by the great Apostasy that Paul said would come before the Rapture and the Tribulation. These are not people who have left the Church... they fill the Church. These are the ones of whom Jesus said... '**Many** will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I **never knew you**; depart from Me, you who practice

lawlessness!' Matt 7:22 Not, I used to know you... I **never** knew you. They are hot and on fire for many things... they are hot for a gospel of prosperity, healings, self-realization and fulfillment. They are hot for seeking after imitation signs and wonders. They are hot for a social gospel filled with good works to make them feel good about their own self-righteousness. They are hot for positive confession and positive thinking. Of predominance, they are **hot for money**... money is the answer to everything. Live your best life now. They say we are rich because God is pleased with us... we have need of nothing. But all their wealth with rot away and burn up in God's judgment. They say we see the light... we are awakened and enlightened... but they are blind to truth and spiritual things. They dress themselves in multi-thousand dollar suits and dresses and spiked heels but God says they are naked, never having been clothed in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are hot and on fire for false revivals and many other things... but ask them about the truth of the Gospel, preaching to the lost and their need of God's Salvation, of Heaven and Hell, of sin and forgive-

ness, of God's promises and prophecy of the end times, of His command to 'Walk in a manner worthy of the your calling.'... to 'Seek first His Kingdom'... to 'Watch and wait expectantly for His imminent return'... about these things... their answer is... 'Eh... not so much.' 'We're not really into that old fashioned stuff... we're a modern day Church of modern day people... we're hip and with it. We're cool... especially toward that stuff... you might even say we're lukewarm regarding all that old fashioned doctrine type stuff. As our own nation falls deeper and deeper into apostasy, God continues to open a door for us to help get Bibles into a dark and demonized country where there are still millions of people hungry for God's Word... where people would walk a hundred miles for part of a Bible... ignorant, uneducated people whose walk with the Lord would shame many American Christians and even Pastors. Pray for us as we cross the borders daily, pray for guards to be distracted... pray for all those who will receive what we carry across the borders... pray for the pastors who are faithful even unto imprisonment and death. ... oh, and don't forget to pray for poor persecuted me cramped in that airline seat. ☺

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The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few. Matt 9:38

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