



The Stampers

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Dear Friends

We, as missionaries, have some experiences that are unique. In the years that we have been here in Kenya we have seen some missionaries come and go. They came to the field all "fired" up and ready to "show the 'old timers' how to do the work". They stuck around for a while but then they realized that it was not all as "glorious" as they had thought it would be. They were not able to handle the unique problems and situations that came along.

I recall our first meal in a Kenyan home. To begin with the pastor we were eating with was from the Kikuyu tribe. When talking they switch their "R's" and "L's". So when he wanted to talk about how "He prayed to God every day", he said "He played God every day". Then when we sat down to eat he led the way in using his spoon to take the "weevils" out of the plate of food he was eating. We did likewise. We just dropped the food with the weevils to the floor and the dog and chickens were there to get "their blessing."

There have been many other experiences through the years that I would not trade for any amount of money. God is good and has kept us healthy through the years. It truly is a GREAT LIFE.

I believe one of the greatest thrills of being a missionary is the times when after preaching in the various churches, the pastor (or sometimes one of the members) invites us to stay for a meal. Sitting around the table and enjoying the local food and fellowshipping is one of our favorite pastimes.

Just two weeks ago I preached at one of our churches that meets in a "mud-brick" building with dirt floors and a tin roof. The walls are cracked and we have to do some repairs on them very soon. The building was completely packed and I preached for almost an hour - AND NO ONE GOT UP AND LEFT. Even with my long preaching one was saved. When the service was over and I walked outside, to my surprise there were eight or more women sitting on the very sparse grass, with their children. There had not been room for them inside. After the service I started to leave and the pastor asked me if I could stay and take a meal with them. I was very pleased to say "yes". We went to his home and had tea while his wife prepared the rice and vegetables. I had a great time of fellowship with Pastor Patrick, his wife and their small daughter. Their house has mud floors and walls and it, like the church, has a tin roof with no ceilings. He supplements his income with two oxen that he uses to plow for his neighbors. One of the oxen has died and he needs to buy another one – but he needs one that is two years old so it can be a match for the remaining one. This is the man that graduated from our Bible Institute in Thika. He paid his transport to the Institute by raising chickens. Their daughter is afraid of me – I am the "mzungu", the foreigner. She sees no other foreigners except us. Each time as I sit in their home and she looks at me, she cries. To sit in their home and enjoy their hospitality, even with their meager means, my heart says again, "Thank you, God, for the privilege of being a missionary."

Please continue to remember us in your prayers. Thank you for your love.

Your co-laborers in Kenya,
Bob and Betty Stamper