

Worth the Price



ANDREA JOHNSON/Editor

I love hearing people's stories. That's why I was elated when President Farmer decided to publish Open Bible's latest history book, *Heart for the*

Harvest, as a biographical history.

Throughout the book, I was amazed at the similarities in people's lives once they heard the "call of God." "The call" cost them. They stepped out in faith when doing so was not humanly logical.

When I read the stories from "The Global Harvest" section, I wondered what possessed a family with young children to leave their loved ones, a successful ministry, and the comforts of home to live among a seemingly primitive, superstitious people who solved disputes with bows and arrows. I posed that question to former missionaries to Papua New Guinea, Mike and Cathy Brandt, who now minister in Mexico. The Brandts have two children, Mikayla, who is studying to be a nurse and is passionate about ministry in Mexico; and Aaron, a high school senior planning on missions ministry.

Mike grew up in Rapid City, South Dakota, with Native Americans as his closest friends. As a young adult he was drawn to people of other cultures and developed a longing to be on foreign soil, working and ministering to and with a culture not his own.

"Knowing beyond a shadow of a doubt that we were called to the mission field and having that intense longing," Mike said, "is what sustained us through the process of packing up our life in America, saying our goodbyes, and dealing with questions and concerns about our kids' schooling and future.

"Thirteen years and two foreign languages later, it's hard to think of one thing we've

sacrificed because we have gained SO much. The time it felt most like a sacrifice was actually leaving New Guinea, taking Aaron from the school he loved and removing him from the place he called home. But again, we knew it was time to leave and we needed to obey."

Two years after leaving New Guinea, the Brandts praise God for His faithfulness and provision. "The greatest blessing has been watching our children settle into life on Mexico's border and thrive. They both love Jesus and are zealous for the Kingdom. If these are the kinds of hardships that God allows through sacrificing for the call, then it's more than worth it all!"

We tend to center our lives around our families, not God. How many of us have refused God's call because of the safety, educational, or material "needs" of our families or because the timing isn't right? As our children grow up, we wonder why they are worldly, materialistic, and self-centered.

Like Scrooge, we cling to all that is dear to us. We build material wealth; the stock market takes it away. We seek the American dream; our families break apart. The dream turns into a nightmare.

Jesus said, "If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?" (Matthew 16:24-26).

Mike and Cathy gave up the things of this world. But the things most dear to them, Mikalya and Aaron and many other souls, they will have for eternity.

Andrea Johnson,
Managing Editor

4 THE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR CALLING

By *Jim Beard*

At least 1,200 pastors in America leave the ministry each month. Discover how you can avoid being one of those statistics.

6 NAVIGATING THE CALL

By *Bruce Pfadenhauer*

Wouldn't it be easier to discern God's will for your life if He gave you a detailed map? Bruce's navigational tools will guide you on your journey.

7 CALLED TO THE MARKETPLACE

By *Angela Gidley*

God calls many people to minister outside the church walls. Read how one man found his calling in the marketplace.

8 SOUND THE TRUMPET: 2009 NATIONAL CONVENTION

By *Andrea Johnson*

Who won the Frank W. Smith Excellence in Ministry award? What were the evening services like? Whether or not you were able to attend, you will enjoy highlights from this year's National Convention.

12 GIVING TO MISSIONS- DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THE SAME GOAL

Compiled by *Delores Winegar*

Gone are the days when people flocked to churches to hear missionary tales of far-off countries and natives' need for the gospel. Nonetheless, missionaries still labor diligently around the world. Learn creative ways you and your church can help them fulfill the Great Commission.

Plus Much More!