

Creative Giving

Ile was badly disfigured with leprosy when Mrs. Titcome, a missionary in Ethiopia, first met him. She took advantage of the opportunity to speak to him of the love of Jesus. Over the course of many subsequent visits, Ile receive Jesus and among other things began attending the local village church.

Ile's condition worsened. His ears and nose were nearly eaten off by the disease during an early era when no cure for leprosy existed. His sores were ghastly to look at; even more they gave off an obnoxious stench. The Church leaders asked Mrs. Titome to suggest to Ile that he sit outside so as not to offend the others. He agreed and was not offended and thereafter sat and listened from under a nearby tree.

The Church heard of the need to have the Word of God translated and printed for a nearby tribe and were asked if they wanted to help. It took \$150 to pay for printing portions of Scripture for the Jebba people. The elders were surprised at the amount thinking it was a lot of money. But they promised to raise the money in a couple of months.

Ile heard all this and after the service asked Mrs. Titcome “will you help me sell my garden plot?” I want to help the Jebba people to have the Word of God?” She told him, she could not do that.

About two months later, the Church met to gather the offering for the Bible Society. As Mrs. Titcome neared the church, she heard a hoarse voice call to her from the crowd. She walked over to Ile, sitting under the tree. He was very weak and could hardly talk but said in a whisper: “I have sold everything. Since I can't go inside the church, will you give this money to Jesus.” He placed a few coins into her hand; and, as she walked into the church, she noted that the value of the coins came to .75 cents (Year 1922).

A few days later leprosy claimed Ile's worn out body. But his gift, together with the other offerings, was enough to meet the goal of sharing the Word of God with the Jebba tribe.

This true story reminds us how we can give creatively when we die. After death we will not be able to drop our gift in the offering plate on Sunday. But through our last will and testament we can include God's kingdom in the distribution of our remaining assets. If your heart swells with gratitude for all that Jesus means to you, why not be a person who not only gives while living, but gives after death?

Note: For information about charitable giving after death, consult your financial advisor or legal counsel.

Burt Harding