

# My Inherited Treasure

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## My Inherited Treasure

### Intro

**A.** In his book Can Man Live Without God?, Ravi Zacharius defines true love: "Love and sacrifice go together and in the spending of love members of the family are enriched. That sacrificial love did not come from mindless matter, but from our Creator God Himself. Even our capacity to recognize love comes from God--He is love and He demonstrated that sacrificial love in an ultimate expression--the cross. (p.108-110)

Being raised in a christian family where sacrifice and love go together is what John Trent & Cary Smalley call The Blessing. I received the Blessing in full measure & running over. I didn't deserve it. I was just fortunate enough to receive the Blessing. So I approach this subject of my heritage hesitantly, feeling a little guilty and self-centered for teaching Challenge Groups on my undeserved Blessing. Yet you are the ones who have urged me to share my home life as an encouragement & motivation to you who are parenting your own children.

As you will see, my home life was not grandiose, nor were my parents famous. They were sacrificial, loving, trusting in God & living in obedience to Him. Being raised by them convinced me to commit my life to the Lord as early as I can remember & nothing was ever able to change my commitment.

**B.** "To give children good instruction and an inconsistent example is beckoning to them with the head to tell them the way to heaven, while we take them by the hand and lead them in the way to hell". Quote from Tillotson in E. Elliott's book The Shaping of a Christian Family.

In reading her book again I found the word which I believe summarizes my home life and gave me the foundation, the confidence, the balanced view of a

Christian life. That word is ORDER --it is the framework--the christian framework which my parents built around our home, their lives, my life--

Their calm control & disciplined orderliness was something I took for granted.

>>they prayed about everything--daily, much time

>>they studied the Word daily & read it to me, teaching me to read through the Bible every year & memorize portions.

>>our home was always open to everyone, but it was not chaotic. My parents saw having missionaries or Africans or Gov't officials stay in our home as a great privilege. Mother's hospitality was unpretentious but warm. Visitors ate what we ate and our home life was kept orderly as they went about their busy schedule.

>>another aspect of my orderly home-life was that I never knew we were poor--money was a non-issue except as it was given to the Lord & His people in need. I only became strongly convinced I was poor when I came to Wheaton & compared my clothes etc. with other students & had to work so many hours a week to keep alive--then I became an avaricious materialist--not at all like my parents!!

As I recount the lives of my Father & Mother it's the Biblical principles I want to emphasize and this is the first one:

### I. A Real Christian Home is an Orderly Home

It is enfolded within Christ's life from top to bottom every day all day and night. And that is very reassuring to the children being raised-- a visible sign of an invisible God of order and sovereignty. I felt safe in my home with my parents calmly controlling my environment. But it was not tribal or isolated from the culture--rather it was the 'light'. Christ commanded us to be involved--

>>God keeps open house for the universe. (Chambers)

My dad loved people & he was especially expansive in his hospitality: "Come on in, we'll set another place at the table--plenty of food. Alta, so-and-so is here for

dinner". We'd set more silverware another plate, and there was always enough. This would be after Dad offered them a drink he called "The Hoyt sundowner". It was a refreshing combination of fruit juices from our garden---pineapple, passion fruit, loquat, orange & lemon. Dad did this especially for the British gov't officials because they always drank so much alcohol (e.g. cocktails before dinner). So he kidded them by calling ours "The Hoyt sundowner". They loved it!! He had a driving range from our front yard down to his shop & they always drove a few balls before we served dinner. Dad played tennis & golf with the gov't officials at Kakamega & Kisumu whenever he went there. He was good!!

When I talk about the Principle of: Christ Centered Orderliness I'm not talking about legalistic neatness and rules. Though my parents did pray daily, study the Word & we had family devotions... The principle is much deeper and broader than external functions.

My home was a micro-cosm of God's Kingdom combining godliness and contentment which the Bible says is "great gain". The example of my parents was more profound than I can explain--it was an anchor for me keeping me harbored in Christ even when I was sent around the world to Wheaton College. I was never tempted to leave the Lord & go into the world system, so it must be the reality of God's life was more real and attractive than any life in the world. Their life did not have "things" or "prestige" or "money" or "fame". Rather I look back at my home as my safe haven where my love bank was filled regularly, where life was exciting every day with much activity, & yet strangely calm & secure. Homey things like mom reading aloud to us as we popped corn over the fire or roasted peanuts, Dad playing games with us like chess, puzzles & card games. Long discussions about the mission work & then praying about it. I felt needed & involved-- an integral part of what they were doing & how God was directing them.

## II. Pioneering: a hard life. Surviving through persistence and dependence on God

I need to trace my heritage back to their families and homes and find other principles which were built into my parents.

Both my parents' families rolled into Kansas from Iowa in covered wagons. The time was in the 1880's.

My grandmother Elmina Howard, kept a journal. She was a Quaker minister who with her brother held many revival meetings: "There were many conversions and some consecrations. We had unusual power as the HS moved".--this was written in 1888. In 1889 her ministry & life was cut short when she died at the birth of her 13th child--she was 46. My mother was only 8 years old. At 12, the whole family moved to Oklahoma. Mom's father had remarried and the step-mother was not a loving woman, so my mother was worked very hard. It was difficult pioneer life living in a 2 room shack with sod piled up against the walls outside to protect from the bitterly cold winds during the winter. For heat, the men drove the wagon 20 miles to a stream where they cut down black-jack trees; the younger children collected dried cow-chips (manure) to burn along with the wood.

The older girls taught the younger children & soon started a Christian school for all the children in that area of Oklahoma. It was called Stella Academy for my Aunt who taught, and later became a boarding school for girls. The family had a pump organ and had church service on Sunday for all the families. That's how Mom met Dad & his family.

Mother got her teaching certificate after graduating at 16 & was going to teach at the Academy...but suddenly her father died, and the family broke up because the step-mother left & went back to Iowa. Mom decided to go to Friend's University for a BA. She worked her way through by cleaning & cooking for the President's

family--up at 6:00 making breakfast, studying past midnight to keep her straight A average in Languages--Latin, French, and English.

Mom was a very lonely young 17 year old, an orphan, no money, no family--hard work. But her journal is full of Scripture quotations & recounting God's care for her, her spiritual insights & the C. E. youth group she was in.

II. This is the second principle I see:

Her difficult and sad childhood did not make her a 'victim' or angry with God. She drew closer to the Lord, depending on Him and building an intimate relationship with Him. She was the one who spent the last hours with her father as he died, and her brother who died of Typhoid fever. Tragedy produced compassion and a deeper walk with her Lord--not anger or alienation. As a missionary she was able to comfort those who suffered, and she was not damaged by her loss of both mother and father. That speaks to me volumes about the loving family she had and her mothers deep faith. Mom said as her mother lay dying she prayed through all her 13 children asking the Lord to look after them & she felt confident they would all be saved.

Both my parents had committed Christian families. As I mentioned, they worshipped together & Dad went to the Academy also. But his Dad made him finish the harvest in the fall before he could go to school, & took him out of school for spring planting. Still, he ended up at Friends University like Mom did. However, as he joked, his major was football & he never let his studies interfere with it. He was the star all 4 years--and captain the last 2 years.

I know he had his eye on Mom all through college, but played it cautiously, dating other girls as well as Mom. He always managed to give Mom a football ticket--I'm sure so he could show off for her. Mom told me that whenever he was tackled she'd duck her head & pray for his safety until her friends said he was up unhurt. Football players had very little protection from injuries in those days & he

carried the ball a lot as the fullback. But he was a big man & exceptionally strong. I've seen quite a few articles about the football field named after him when he retired.

### III. Marriage: One in Christ, united in ministry, variety of gifts Eph 4, 1 Cor 12, Rom 12

My mother knew Dad was interested in her but she had the foolish idea that she should serve the Lord as a single. A dear old Quaker woman minister took mom to task: "What a foolish idea! How could thee help parents and youth if thee never married nor had the blessed experience of family life? I hope thee will get that foolish idea right out of thy mind at once. Go right ahead and marry Fred Hoyt, he's a fine christian man. Marriage is the best preparation thee could have for the ministry."

Mom loved Dad but he was shy and cautious. Finally, in their senior year as "he said goodnight at the door he gave me a gentle kiss on my cheek--and was gone. I heard him whistling as he strode down the street. There it was, my first kiss, and I felt that kiss until I dropped off to sleep". In the spring of 1904 Dad asked Mom to marry him & she accepted---"he danced around the room like a crazy man saying 'At last! At last! I thought you would never say yes to me'" They were married a year later--she taught for a year , he helped his parents pioneer a new farm in California. After 3 years in Oklahoma and two little boys, they moved to Calif. where Dad ran the farm for his parents.

This is the time where I see my mother becoming totally abandoned to Christ. She read Frances Havergal's BIO Kept for the Master's Use & prayed each line of her famous song "Take my life that I may be consecrated Lord to Thee. Take my moments and my days let them flow in endless praise."

Soon after this a pastor and his wife sent Dad to a Layman's Missionary Conference in LA with the prayer that he would feel called to go as an Industrial Missionary--he was a Civil Engineer, and so capable of fixing machinery & keeping it in shape.

After Dad came back from the Conference he was very quiet for a few days. Then he woke Mom up one night with the question, "If God has called me to go to the mission field, will you go with me?" Of course, she was thrilled! Now they were united in ministry!

But my grandparents tried to persuade them not to go: how could you take our 2 grandchildren to Africa--no education, many diseases, no money? I get the impression their motivation was purely selfish--stay home and look after us!

My parents sailed for Africa in 1910. Dad was 31, Mom 29, Howard 4, Paul 2. They spent the next 36 years on the mission field with only 3 furloughs in all those years. It was pioneering mission work---Dad walked in, Mom was carried in a swinging basket chair since she was nearly full-term with their 3rd child. The Africans carrying her were singing so she asked Mr. Chilton, the founder of the mission what they were singing. "They are singing about this white woman we are carrying who has come all this way to tell us about the God of love and teach us from His book!". That is so typically African!--they sing as they work or play & tell stories in their songs.

What I see is that both Dad and Mom were united in their commitment to serve the Lord and they gladly left everything else out in their lives. They became "broken bread and poured out wine" together, even though their gifting was widely diverse: Dad was a practical organized builder, he could supervise & run many jobs--building roads, running a sawmill, building churches/schools....need I say he was a driven choleric!! Mom was a contemplative mel/pleg, a writer, Bible teacher, Bible translator, compassionate counselor & comforter--with great insight.

Dad was an extrovert risk-taker who loved nothing better than tackling a new difficult challenge, whether it was surveying and building a road, or climbing a mountain to see the gorillas, driving through the heart of Africa from South Africa to Kenya, hunting, pioneering a new mission station.

Mom was fearful, but she felt safe with Dad. She preferred to study, was not active physically but was warm and friendly. She loved the Africans deeply & served them with her whole being.

Were my parents sinners? Absolutely!! Dad had a fiery temper & lost patience with the Africans very often. But he loved them & they knew it. They worked faithfully for him for their whole lives--whenever he went on furlough they went back to the bush & wouldn't work for anyone else. Mom was a worrier until God convicted her it was a sin. She shared with me how nervous she would get when Dad was out doing some new dangerous risky job & she would pace the floor--waiting & praying. By the time I was born she had learned to cast her burden on the Lord. She never worried about her own safety--or us being attacked in our home. She trusted in the Lord for our safety, for us children, and our home life.

When it came to discipline they were certainly united: it was strict, included spankings with a switch & was consistently administered. But there was always explanation, prayer and love after the spanking. My parents helped me so much with my 4 sons: they preached consistency, strength and truth mixed with love.

I hated boarding school and tried in every way to convince my parents not to send me back each term. But they firmly explained that it was the only way they could continue as missionaries--did I want them to give up the Lord's call & His work for my selfish demand? So I tolerated RVA out of respect for my parents & their work. I was able to survive because of their love and support (ie. the Blessing)

#### IV. What of the Harvest?

1912 One of Dad's first concerns was building a road to make it possible to haul up supplies from the rail-end at Kisumu. He convinced several hundred Africans to bring their hoes & build the road. They removed boulders by building a fire around them until they were red hot, then pouring cold water on the rock & it would crack. They then could remove it piece by piece. Amazingly, in eight weeks they had a rough trail to Kisumu and could bring in supplies with the spring wagon & mules. Later Dad bought a Harley-Davidson motorcycle & still later a Model T Ford, & he built many roads.

On furlough in 1928 Dad convinced the Mission Board to buy a sawmill. We had a waterfall on the Logoli River so he installed a turbine generating 80HP. His circular diston saw was 62" tall to rip through the huge logs of beautiful hardwood in our forest. I used to love going to the mill begging Dad to let me turn of the turbine & watch all the machines start up with the awesome power of the waterfall---it was a thrill!! Then I would ride the carriage as it brought the huge log towards the singing circular saw--it would slice off a slab like magic. Then the Africans would turn the log with anchor hooks & the log would be brought back again & again as Dad orchestrated the sawing.

As a result of the sawmill, Dad could start a Technical School where he taught the Africans a 4 year course of building from the foundation, to making bricks, to framing, to making beautiful furniture. Upon graduation each boy received a tool chest full of new tools. There are still building contractors in Kenya who were trained at Kaimosi. The sawmill eventually supplied water and electricity to the mission, especially the hospital. It ground the corn into posho for their staple food--they eat it as gruel for breakfast , and for dinner as thick corn meal mush. Before the mill, women had to grind the corn between 2 stones!!

I loved hiking through the forest with Dad to pick out the next trees for the sawmill. My love for nature began with those hikes, collecting orchids, ferns, butterflies & learning about forest life.

Dad would try to approach the coffee shamba from a new direction each time because the Africans are masters at "goofing off"---they'd post 'look-outs' to warn them of Dad's approach & he knew it! We would sneak up on them & when he caught them sleeping or not working he'd dock them a day's wage & give them a Biblical admonition about 'the sluggard'. He had devotions with all his workers at 6:00 AM every morning.

Meanwhile, Mom was teaching the Africans to read & write their own language. After a few weeks the students would exclaim, " Oh! Now those letters are talking our language to us!!" They were eager students and very bright. On Sunday morning at 6:00 AM Mom met with the leaders and pastors teaching them a Bible lesson which they would go out to the surrounding villages & teach the people. Remember, they had no written language, no book of the Bible--they had to memorize the story & a key verse to tell the Good News of Jesus and salvation. In our tribe, there was a dense population of 1200 to the sq. mile. I never went to sleep without hearing the drumbeat of a heathen dance or funeral or some tribal ritual. We had hundreds of thousands all around the Mission.

That's why the missionaries soon started boarding schools, first for the boys, then later the girls. Here is one of the first girl's testimony: Mwaidza "You know our parents didn't want their girls to go to school. It was alright for the boys. But the girls were only good for hard work, gardening, cooking, and carrying wood. Then they would be sold as wives at 14 to the highest bidder, the one with the most cows to pay for her. I used to long to go to school, but my parents said I could not. Finally, I just ran away from home and joined the boys at school. My parents beat me, but I continued to go. How wonderful it was for me to find out God loves us

girls and Jesus died for us too, not just for the boys. I'm so glad that now the girls can go and stay at the boarding school."

The missionaries soon discovered that these boys and girls needed to stay at the mission and be disciples away from the heathen influence of the witch doctor and his wicked tribal rituals. Then when they graduated from H. S. they would marry one another and go back to their village as a team of 2 or 3 couples. They would start a bush school for the village children and a church and evangelize.

This same Mwaidza married Joseph Ngaira, they went to Malva, had 8 children and were the best evangelists. Their oldest son Benjamin has a M. A. from Oxford & held a high office in the government. Just one generation from heathendom. The harvest truly was great and the Friends Mission raised up hundreds of indigenous workers among the Africans. Our evangelist, Jefferson Ford, traveled all over our district, meeting with the elders, teachers & workers. He held conferences regularly in each area. The work expanded north to Mt. Elgan, probably 70 miles. Several different Bantu tribes were evangelized, thousands saved.

Then came Satan's most devastating attack. The Friends Mission Board here in the US became liberal in the 1920's. When we came on furlough in 1935 they announced to my parents that they could not go back--the sawmill would be closed down, the translating of the Bible suspended, Bible school closed down. They wanted Dad to go back and close down the sawmill and the technical school & then come back here.....He refused to go alone & took Mom and me paying our way himself.

The liberals launched an all out attack on the 3 couples who were evangelical missionaries & sent out 3 unbelieving "social action" couples to replace the believing missionaries.

I was 16 or 17 at the time and saw first hand the lengths liberals will go to. They are Satan's agents who masquerade as christians. My parents & the 2 other couples prayed, waited for God to defend them & didn't counter attack. The African elders wrote to the Mission Board and said they would leave the Friends and go to the AIM if Hoyts, Fords & Kellums were sent back to the States. It was such a victory!! The Mission Board had to recall the social workers or lose their mission.

This process took 2 years, but as I watched my parents suffer and agonize I became very convinced about spiritual warfare, Satan's tactics and, thankfully, God's sovereign power to overcome incredible obstacles. The liberals had the money, the authority in the Mission Board and they were sure they would be able to take over the African missionary work. But God gave the victory.

This occurred the same year my brother was killed while in his last semester at Dallas Seminary. He was going to be a missionary and his death was very difficult for my mother especially. She had many long sessions of prayer the first two weeks after his death, until she could "pray through to victory".

The final 12 years of their mission work were wonderfully productive & they came to the U.S. in 1946 in time for my wedding in 1947.

#### V. Caleb's legacy: an optimistic view of old age.

J. Oswald Sanders wrote about Caleb in his book Promised Land Living that the "passing years had done nothing to quench his faith in God or dampen his ardent spirit."

That could well be said about my parents in the latter years. Dad took a job at Friends University as a museum curator, golf coach and general contractor in charge of renovating & preserving the 100 year old administration building. The museum was on the 4th floor and he climbed those 4 flights at least twice a day,