



The Tate's

Starting N.T. Churches in Kenya



Missionaries to Kenya, East Africa

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“Don't Leave Me Here”

Have you ever wondered if missionaries to foreign countries ever feel afraid? The answer is: "Yes. Often." Sometimes it's when driving on dangerous roads. Sometimes it's when there has been a lot of thug activity going on. Sometimes it's as simple as worrying about your work permit being granted by the immigration department. But there is one moment that occurred recently that sticks in my mind more than usual. It concerns the last time I dropped off the map and went to the bush. I was going to a place I had never been to before, farther than I had been before. That didn't concern me. The problem was I didn't really know anybody in the place I was going. I had met and talked for an hour with one man who lived there but other than him I was going in cold turkey. I had some missionary friends drive me the 7 hour drive up to the village. As long as I was in their vehicle, speaking English, surrounded by familiar things and familiar people and familiar culture I was fine. When we got to the village I grabbed my backpack, tent, and water, said goodbye to my friends and watched them drive away. As soon as they started driving away I was afraid. Now there was nothing familiar. No familiar language; No familiar culture; No familiar surroundings; No familiar people. As I watched the dust settle from the departing vehicle I had never felt so lonely and alone in all of my life. I wanted to call out to them and say "STOP! Don't leave me here! Take me back with you!"

I guess if I had any visions of missionary grandeur before this moment they were all gone now. I lay down later that night trying to sleep. I missed my wife terribly. I wanted to go home. I felt like I was on a different planet and home was as far away as Mars. In effect, home was unreachable, gone. Everything good and familiar had become a distant memory. I began to think: Why am I here? Am I only here because this is what good missionaries do and I want to be considered a good missionary? Am I only here because I am trying to impress people? Am I only here because I am trying to win points with God by putting myself through hardship and trials? Am I only here because of the adventure (HA! Some adventure!). Can I confess something? Because my human, sinful nature has not been totally eradicated yet, all of these elements are probably involved in my decision to go to the bush. But the Pokot people need Jesus. And I hope this is the biggest reason why I would decide to go up there. I am not always excited about what God wants me to do. You probably aren't either. But God's plan is for his Kingdom to spread all around the earth to all the nations, peoples and tribes of the earth. And that includes each of us doing the things he has called us to do. Please pray for me. I want to and will go back. However, the feelings of fear and loneliness are still strong. And pray for my motives. Pray that I would work for the Kingdom of Jesus Christ our Savior and for the glory of God among the Pokot people.

One side news item: Julie and I have taken in another preemie baby. Her name is Tina. We have had her for a week now and I believe she is about three weeks old. She is very, very tiny. When she came to us a week ago she weighed only 2.4 pounds. When I look at her and pick her up I think there is no possible way she can weigh even that much. We cannot know for sure but it is extremely possible that Tina was aborted by her mother and yet lived (they have some kind of drink concoction that supposedly terminates unwanted pregnancies as well as other means of aborting babies).



Tiny Tina

When Tina came to us she was too weak and frail to nurse and so we have been feeding her using a feeding tube through her nose and into her stomach. We plan to care for her and love her for a few weeks until she is strong enough to go to the children's home that has custody of her. She has grown a little stronger since she arrived. Please pray for her strength and health. She is a beautiful little person made in God's image and for His glory.