

The Limping Messenger

BY JASMIN LOW

A STORY OF A PASTOR WHO FAITHFULLY SHARES THE GOSPEL DESPITE EXPERIENCING PESTILENCE



Strapped in his worn out sandals, feet all covered in mud and dust, Pastor Solomon limps from door-to-door to visit families in the community. This weekly routine has helped him to build bonds with the local community at Kyai Lett Township in Myanmar over the five years of his ministry. From only one household that worshipped Jesus, Pastor Solomon now pastors a church of five families.

During COVID-19, Pastor Solomon had gathered whatever little funds that his church had he has been periodically purchasing rice, onions and salt to support various families in the past few months. With unemployment on the rise during this pandemic, tension has inevitably been rising in families and Pastor Solomon seeks to be a light



in this time of darkness. Clothing himself with the love of the Holy Spirit, he continues to fellowship with believers and build friendships with non-believers in their homes.

While people tend to stay away from hospitals especially during this period, Pastor Solomon who has been doing hospital ministry for over a year, continues to faithfully limp into patients' wards and starts talking to complete strangers.

From ward to ward, from strangers to friends, Pastor Solomon starts his conversation this way: "Hello, what's your name? Where are you from?"

He desires to love and care for hospital patients who might be feeling scared and lonely.



Hence, this has also become a part of his monthly routine. These are redemptive conversations that would eventually lead to prayers and opportunities for sharing faith, hope and love. Pastor Solomon only knew of one hope that he could share with the sick - the hope of Christ. All these while trodding on with a heavy burden - two lumps on his right leg.

It started only as a mild discomfort. Then, the lumps began to grow. Since 2015, upon the discovery of his condition, Pastor Solomon has already gone through five surgeries. From a single lump, it became two, and there was no answer to the reason for this disfigurement. At the beginning, he felt discouraged and couldn't help but blame himself.

“Could it be something I’ve done wrong? I’ve only started ministry for a year here and now I have this growth in my leg? What is God trying to tell me?”

Thoughts like these would haunt him and distract him from fixing his eyes on Jesus. Even doctors couldn’t explain the cause of his lumps. But Pastor Solomon continues to hang on to the truth and goodness of who God is. He was at peace and assured of his salvation. Never mind that God was silent about this situation, he continues to place his unwavering trust in the never-changing God.

Through this trial, he experienced the love and grace of God as his Father and Comforter. Through his pain, he knew the only way to freedom is his unwavering faith in Jesus Christ. He remembered the reason for his faith and his ministry. He remembered how God saved his soul.

At 14, a swim in the river with friends turned into an almost fatal incident. As one of the weaker swimmers, Solomon ventured too far into the waters when the euphoria got the better of him. The next moment, his arms were flailing in the water. Just when he was about to give in to exhaustion, he remembered the Jesus that his Christian father always

talked about. In that state of drowning, he cried out in his thoughts, ‘Save me, my father’s God.’

A rope from a cargo ship dropped into the water and gently hit against his back.

As he was dragged along, he was led to a tree branch and he latched onto it for his dear life. Eventually, his friends found him and saved him from the river. That night, when his father found out what had happened, he said, “God saved you.” But Solomon soon forgot about God and continued to live his life.

At 19, while cycling along a quiet, dusty road in his town, a car collided into

him and flung his bicycle towards destruction.

At that moment, Solomon felt a strong force pulling him to safety. But there was no one. He suffered injuries but nothing compared to his bicycle’s doom. “Could it have been an angel?” he thought. That bothered him, so he went to seek some answers from a pastor.

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"You have been saved by God's grace. God has a plan for you." That was the first time Solomon understood the message of the gospel. On 24 December 1999, Solomon accepted Jesus as his personal Lord and Saviour. Shortly after, his pastor encouraged him to devote his life to serving the Lord. Eventually, a three-month training led to a six-month training, which finally led to a nine-month training before he joined his local church as a full-time youth minister.

On 22 July 2014, Solomon packed his bags and travelled to another town to start a church planting ministry. Hostility greeted him. But after organising a few outreach parties, where hospitality was shown, the locals started to see that Solomon wasn't a threat to them. For his first evangelistic Christmas outreach, a total of 300 people turned up and some of them responded to the gospel.

Whether he has to run, walk or limp, he believes that sharing the gospel is his life's purpose and he doesn't care for big church buildings. He only desires people to experience the life-transforming power of knowing God.

Upon hearing this news, the town council warned him to stop his evangelistic efforts and disallowed him to preach at large scale events. Slowly, Jesus led him to reach out in small groups. Hence, with patience and faithfulness, Pastor Solomon prayed that out of the many families he crossed paths with, one family would come to the Lord each year. True enough, the LORD was faithful to lead one family to salvation each year.

Today, Pastor Solomon pastors a humble church of five families. He continues to trod on with his imperfect yet beautiful feet, to reach out to his community. Over a span of two months of strict COVID-19 restrictions in Myanmar, Pastor Solomon has visited up to forty families. He is working towards reaching out to seventy villages in his township and dreams of starting a hostel ministry to reach out to the next generation.

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