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Jan Young

Jan and her husband, Bob, met when they were students at Oklahoma Christian. It was a whirlwind courtship, but their marriage has lasted almost 50 years. In the early years of their marriage, they moved to Michigan. They found many very small struggling congregations in that area. That is when their dream to spend summers strengthening and encouraging small congregations began.

Bob first became interested in domestic missions when visiting missionaries came to his congregation. They were excited about the work they were doing and obviously loved working on the mission field. Bob and Jan already knew that congregations in the northern US were certainly a mission field.

Bob and Jan later moved to West Virginia where he was the head of the Bible Department at Ohio Valley College. Developing interest in missions among his students was part of his work. Later he was director of the graduate Bible program at Oklahoma Christian University. They served 27 years in full-time ministry in six congregations, and 11 years in Christian higher education.

Though they have never lived outside of the US, they work with churches in Latin America. At first Jan felt unsure because she could not speak or understand Spanish. Her service to women mostly has been by example and encouragement, especially to young mothers. It can be a challenging time for them to figure out how to serve the Lord during this busy, time consuming period in their lives. Even though she

couldn't speak Spanish, some of the students knew some English. It was beneficial for all concerned for her to teach them to speak a little English as they taught her to speak Spanish.

Her Spanish is still elementary, but with the help of a translator, she eventually presented some devotional thoughts to the ladies, even though she is not comfortable being in front of adults. She prefers working with the little ones and has taught some of the women there how to teach cradle roll classes for babies. Until then, they had no idea that children so small could be taught. Teaching Cradle Roll classes for 40 years has given Jan an appreciation and love for the babies in the congregations. Hugs from former students are a teacher's greatest reward. And words from mothers, who say their children still fondly remember their first class in Bible school, are also loving rewards and are deeply appreciated!

When Jan learned that not many of the married students' apartments had curtains on the windows at Baxter Institute (a school to train Latin American preachers), she brought bolts of fabric and sewed curtains for the windows, especially for the ground floor apartments.

Jan is a natural hugger and has used that to develop friendships with the people of Latin America. By her example of supporting her husband's work, she teaches women in Latin America to be supportive of their husbands who preach and teach the gospel to as many as they can reach. Bob continues to work helping to develop leaders in the churches there. Once Latin American churches have established formal leadership, they are more likely to become financially independent from American churches. They also become more evangelistic and begin planting their own congregations there.

In their experience of the culture and people in Latin America, they have found a hunger for the truth and a strong desire to be spiritually fed. Church members and leaders often travel many miles and hours to attend a

seminar, often on foot or by overnight bus rides. Many take off work to learn more. They are gracious people with a willingness to share hospitality with the one bringing the Word.

Since Bob's retirement from academia, Jan's focus has changed. She seldom travels to Latin America with him, but she is still very supportive of the work there. In other words, she takes care of things at home so he is free to work in Latin America as needed. Jan says that with Bob's travels and time away, "I am sometimes lonely for his company. I am truly thankful for the technology available today. Skype is now our favorite way of communicating when we are in different parts of the world."

No day is a typical day for them. Each day is new. Since two of their grandchildren are hearing impaired, Jan has enjoyed volunteering at Happy Hands, a Christian-based preschool for the hearing impaired and those with other communication handicaps. Currently she is developing a "Responsibility and Privilege" chart for the grandchildren and Bible lessons to use during Spring Break.

She advises young women planning to serve as a preacher's wife or a missionary's wife to include several things in their preparations. It is important to be godly and spiritual and then choose a mate who has the same values and priorities that you have. Be prayerful, be flexible, and be forgiving. Participate in seminars for marriage, communication skills, and parenting. Find a mentor. Accept the culture, and learn the language.

Jan's work experiences throughout life have varied in some interesting ways. She has worked as a dental receptionist, a bookkeeper for a flooring business, and she has assisted in the Bible Departments at the Christian universities where Bob has worked. She has also helped with lectureships at Ohio Valley College and at Oklahoma Christian University. She also served as church secretary and preschool coordinator.

There have been many joys and rewards in their work with the church. For instance, Holmes Road was (in the 1970s and 80s) and still is a racially diverse congregation (whites, blacks and Hispanics). During their service there, they experienced love, growth, and acceptance. The hardest thing about living in Michigan was not being able to travel "home" very often, especially during the holidays. But God provided them with a family while they were "away" from their physical family. They learned the importance of traditions. Some of their family traditions included inviting widows of the congregation to their home for a holiday meal, inviting their sons' teachers for "holiday goodies," grilling steak for Christmas dinner even when it was snowing outside,

and sharing Christmas dinner with new families in the church who also were too far away to "go home."

"Being a minister's wife and a missionary's wife seems natural and consistent with our dreams, hopes, and answered prayers. It is our life together with victories and disappointments, made richer by knowing that our God is blessing and always has blessed us as we strive to fulfill His will in our lives together. Seeing Him work in our lives has strengthened and increased faith and love for the church and for one another."

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Butterfly Praise

On a cold February weekend, when other folks' minds were on the Super Bowl and Ozark tourism was at its lightest, my husband and I got away for a Branson weekend. It was a good bit different than a summer or autumn trip there with the infamous Highway 76 bumper-to-bumper traffic; in the late winter we had the streets, the restaurants, and the stores pretty much to ourselves. More than anything we just wanted a quiet couple of days away and a change of scenery, but we had packed our cameras with the vague thought that we might see something intriguing to photograph.

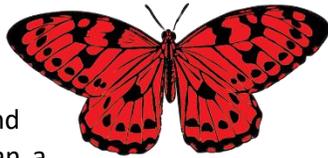
After spending time at the outlet mall and planning dinner for our favorite barbecue place, we decided to invest an afternoon with The Butterfly Palace. We'd driven past it many times on the way to and from Silver Dollar City, when our children were little, and often commented that it might be fun to visit but somehow had never done so. So slinging our camera bags over our shoulders, we embarked on a photography venture.

If I'd once entertained the notion that the entire, palatial structure was filled with butterflies, I was soon enlightened. (Most of it's a gift shop, actually). But climbing to the top floor, in a room calibrated to the temperature and humidity of a rain forest and filled with tropical plants, one comes upon a space that is fluttering in a multitude of colors, shapes, and patterns.

Soon our minds were occupied in the world of ISO, aperture, and shutter speed, as we tried to capture images of the little creatures floating, darting, quivering, and pulsating around us. Once we'd settled on the best camera setting, though, I began to marvel at the close-ups that filled my viewfinder. There was the sophisticated and stylized



black-and-white butterfly, the intense black and red butterfly that beat its wings frantically and never lighted for more than a second, the broad-winged butterfly whose fuzzy antennae and elongated body comically resembled an old man's face.



And then there was that large one whose closed wings displayed brown swirling patterns resembling an antique paisley shawl. But when he opened his wings – well, it might as well have been a different butterfly altogether – for the other side was a deep cerulean blue



etched with thin filaments of coal black. As I gazed at those wings slowly waving open and shut, scattered words from the Psalms

came to my mind:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands...

All you have made will praise you, O Lord...

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord...

In that moment, I forgot the technicalities of the camera, I forgot our plans for the evening, and I forgot any cares that had weighed on my mind. For in their beauty and delicacy and diversity, those butterflies, gathered from tropical rain forests around the world into a little room in the Ozarks, illustrated the words of the Psalms and praised their Creator with every beat of their wings.

So, too, does the highest mountain – the dormant tree waiting to come alive again in spring – even the little houseplant in the corner silently performing its God-ordained process of turning sunlight into food. So, in

accord with the closing words of the old hymn, let us take this to heart:

All things praise thee – Lord, may we!

Ina McKune, Rolla, MO
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EMOTIONS OF THE CROSS

Sometimes I think I am more concerned about the procedure of what I am doing during communion rather than why I am doing it. Often, I lose my concentration, and I have to remind myself to “feel” the magnitude of what we are doing.



What are the “emotions” surrounding the cross and Jesus’ crucifixion? Perhaps they might include the following:

1. Fear: What are we going to do now? Is the earth coming to an end? I thought we were going to have a king! Are they going to come after me now?
2. Love: It is hard to comprehend that Jesus would do this for us. *Lay down His life for us?! Thank you, Jesus!*
3. Guilt: All of us sinners share some guilt and some responsibility for Jesus’ death. Is it my fault that He had to die?
4. Amazement: It is so dark out here! The earth is shaking! Surely, this man was (is) the Son of God!
5. Anxiety: Jesus’ mother—perhaps wondering about her future. Jesus—taking care of her while dying.
6. Sadness: The apostles losing their spiritual leader. For a moment, they might have thought, ‘all the things Jesus went through—and this is how it ends? We thought our place was secured!’

I am not sure about all the emotions of that important day—I am only speculating. However, I want to be able to *feel* these emotions, to be able to fix my attention on Jesus and His sacrifice, and to partake of these emblems in a manner that will honor what He did for us.

Communion thoughts presented by Mike Martin
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Just Wondering...

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. They said therefore among themselves, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it,

whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things. (John 19:23-24)

I wonder...which of the four soldiers won Jesus' tunic? Was he a young man who had been pressed into the service of the Roman army? What was his character like? Did he have any feelings of compassion for this man who was being crucified before his very eyes? Had his heart already been so hardened by his military training and experiences that this was just another duty?

I wonder...what was the lasting result of that day on this soldier? Was he just in a hurry to get back to his game of lots? Did he ever wonder about the guilt or innocence of these victims of crucifixion? Was he listening and wondering when Jesus told the thief on the cross, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise." (Luke 23:43) Did he ever wonder about this man who could speak of Paradise in the midst of torture and agony?

I wonder...what happened to this soldier after the fact? Was he later taught and converted? Was he, like the Jews in Acts 2:37, "cut to the heart"? Did he also ask, "...what shall we (I) do?" Was his life ever changed by what he saw and heard that day? Did he treasure this garment that had belonged to the Son of God? Or did he simply use it to cover himself on a cold night?

I wonder...what were the lasting effects of having "won" the tunic that had belonged to Jesus, Son of the Most High God...

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken." And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."(John 19:31-37)

I wonder...which one of the soldiers thrust his spear into Jesus' side? Could it have been the same one who had earlier won the tunic? Was he battle hardened? Had he plunged his spear into many



other men in times of battle? Was this just another stab of the soldier's spear as in so many battles? Did some of the precious blood of Jesus splatter on him? Did he ever realize what that blood represented, what it means to every human ever born? Did he ever realize it could mean true freedom for him?

I wonder...how did he sleep that night after having been at the foot of the cross? Did the moans and cries of those being crucified trouble his sleep? In his dreams that night, did he hear Jesus' voice saying through his agony, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." (Luke 23:34) Did he ever realize that he was one of "them"?

I wonder...did this soldier tremble when darkness covered the land for three hours—in the middle of the day? (Matthew 27: 45) Did it cross his mind to wonder how Jesus could be concerned about his mother while he was dying on a cross? (John 19:36-37) Did he think of his own mother and wish he could see her again soon? Did he ever shudder when remembering Jesus' cry of, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46) Did he tremble with fear when the earth quaked and he heard his own centurion declare, "Truly this was the Son of God!?" (Matthew 27:54)

I have many questions about the soldiers who were there on that day, but I have no answers. The Bible does not tell us anything more about them. We don't know if their lives were changed by the events of that day. We don't know to what other duty stations they might have been assigned. We don't know if they heard converted Jews bursting with the news of this Messiah, about freedom and salvation in the Son of God. We don't know if they ever encountered anyone from Cornelius' household and heard how salvation had come, even to the Gentiles, through this Jewish Messiah. We don't know if they ever heard any of the apostles preach the gospel. There is so much we don't know, and yet, I wonder...

Evelyn Waite
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