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Treasures Among Us

Linda Davis

Linda Davis is this month's Treasure Among Us. Because she has served as a missionary, she is also featured as a Woman in Missions. She was raised in Oakland, California, where she attended a small Church of Christ of about 100 people. Her dad was Baptist, but her mom was a member of the Church of Christ



Her brother was quite a bit older than she; and when he returned from serving in the Air Force during the Korean conflict, she would hear him talking with her parents. He wanted to go back to Korea and serve as a missionary there, so he first planted her dream of someday serving on the mission field. She was four or five years old then. When she was in high school, she wanted to serve in Italy.

Her brother eventually went to Columbia Christian College in Oregon where he met and married his wife, a Harding University graduate. She was a teacher in a Christian school associated with Columbia Christian. It was she who talked Linda's brother into going to her alma mater in Arkansas, so that was Linda's introduction to Harding.

She left the Oakland area when she went to college at Harding. Even though there were excellent colleges in the Oakland area, she wanted to "see how people live in some other part of the country." Her dad reluctantly agreed to her going but refused to pay for it since there were so many options nearby. After graduating from high school, she worked a year and saved every penny so that she could go to Harding the

next year. Harding is where she met Kirk Davis, who would become her husband. They met at an informational meeting about an upcoming missions workshop in Nashville. They attended that workshop and "hung out" together while there, then dated off and on through their college years. She earned her degree in elementary education, and Kirk got his degree in biology. The missions training they received was from Bible classes at Harding, mission workshops, and the missions internship program. While still at Harding, Kirk and a friend served in a missions internship program in Karachi, Pakistan. While there, they flew to what was then East Pakistan but is now known as Bangladesh.

Kirk and Linda made their first trip to Bangladesh in 1977 as a three-month summer tour immediately after Kirk completed the Missouri State Board of Nursing examination for RNs. Together, Kirk and Linda (and their three small sons) served in Bangladesh for 18 months during 1978-1980. They would have stayed longer, but they had problems getting their visas extended and were forced to come back.

Bangladesh was a newly formed nation, having fought for its independence from Pakistan, and had only been a nation since 1971. It was a very difficult time in Bangladesh as it was a very poor country and people were starving. The population was about 80% Muslim, 18% Hindu, and 2% or less were Christian. The wife of the Saudi ambassador was visiting in the capital city of Bangladesh and noticed the many people from western nations in the country. She encouraged the Bangladesh government to "kick them out." If they did so, Saudi Arabia would give them all the money they needed. Many western missionaries were forced to leave the country during that time.

The Davis family returned to the Los Angeles area for a while, then moved to Jefferson City for a year and eventually back to Rolla during the summer of 1981.

By 1982 their sons were all in school, and Linda started teaching 6th grade in the Newburg schools. She taught there for 24 years before retiring.

Kirk and Linda were married in Germany while he was in the Army. They have three sons—Joshua, Reuben and Judah. Their oldest son, Joshua, was born in Landstuhl, Germany, at the biggest American hospital outside the continental US. Josh and Reuben both served as missionaries in China for several years. They originally went there to teach conversational English to Chinese students at the university. While there, Josh met and married Gaoyan, a native of China. They have two children (Caleb, age 9, and Joy, age 6). Reuben met his wife, Temple, who was from Mobile, Alabama, while they were both serving in China. They also have two children (Asher, age 5, and Simeon, age 3). Judah's wife, Kerri, is from Rolla and was one of Linda's students in 6th grade! Judah and Kerri have three children (Isaac, age 16, Lydia, age 14 and Marah, age 11). All three sons followed Kirk and Linda's example of Bible names for their children.

Some of her favorite memories center on the births of their grandchildren. She loves standing at the ocean at San Francisco Beach or Pacifica Beach and absorbing the tranquil feeling of being one with the Creator. She fondly remembers the hill overlooking Landstuhl, Germany, where she and Kirk were married. Her favorite Bible passage is Philippians 4:4-9 because it tells us what to think about. "The Greatest Command" is her favorite church song.

In fact, church songs are very meaningful to her. She had back surgery a few years ago. During her recovery, there were times when she would be stressed and the tension caused her back to hurt. In the middle of the night, she would go through a song book and sing the old hymns. Doing that helped her to breathe deeply and focus on God. That relieved her stress and tension and gave her relief from her pain. How to slow down and relax during stressful times is one of the most important things she has learned.

She taught the cradle roll class at church for 20+ years. During the week, she taught 6th graders at school, so the Wednesday night cradle roll class, with children as young as three months old, was a good change for her. She also taught in VBS over the years and cooked at Little Prairie Bible Camp when her sons were campers. Kirk served the church as an elder for several years.

They love spending time with their kids, and they have taken their grandchildren to the San Francisco area where she grew up. This summer they are taking some

of their grandchildren to Cape Cod where she and Kirk worked with the church in Hyannis, Massachusetts in 1969. That was the year of the moon landing, which she vividly remembers watching on television.

"Knowledge is Power," by Francis Bacon is one of her favorite quotes. She was an educator for 24 years and did her best to instill knowledge in her students. Her favorite period in her life was her 30's—her children were growing up, she was advancing in her career and was physically able to do about anything. Now she enjoys being retired and volunteering a couple days each week at the Repeat Boutique at the local hospital. She also is involved in the Friend Speak program where she helps international students improve their conversational English—much like her sons did in China. She loves tracing her ancestry. Because of that, she would like to go to Bedford County, Virginia, and to North Carolina to further her research.

She would most like to be remembered for her teaching and hopes her students remember her as being fair and not having teacher's pets. The best advice she wants to leave with others is: trust in God, have faith, and do what's right.

NOTE: *This is the 27th in a series highlighting noble Christian women in the church. We truly have many "treasures among us" in the women who exemplify Christianity in all its facets and have much to teach us all.*

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A CHILD'S HAND

Tonight as I sit and watch my boys sleep, it has been a long few nights as none of us have felt the best. Sometimes when the boys and I aren't feeling well, yet I'm still trying to give it my all, I do get cranky... just a little... (Don't ask my husband!)

So it's been one of those weeks where I've had to take one moment, one step at a time to keep from falling apart. But tonight as the boys snuggled in, both fell asleep facing towards me with one hand on each of my sides.



And so, as many nights, here I sit with God teaching me so many lessons during my nights of grace. As the wind howls about the house and snow slowly covers the field like a glistening white blanket, my children have no fear! Why?

Because they know I'm here; and not only here, but they know my touch. They know I'm watching. They know

the moment they open their eyes and need anything, I'm right here.

And then God reminds me. Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you! Though these last few weeks have felt at times like a winter storm with winds blowing and howling around me, I am able to rest quietly with my hand outstretched, holding onto my Father knowing that He will always protect, always love, always be faithful...and He will never leave my side! He is my strength when I am weak and the treasure I constantly seek, hoping to pass this on to my children.

So tonight...I hope that whatever storm you may be going through, you know that you can rest calmly by holding onto God...by reaching out to Him and laying all your burdens at His feet! Praise the Lord for nights of grace and my two sweet angels that teach me so much each day!

Kim Kemnitzer
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WALKING AGAINST TRAFFIC

Today I walked in a mall in a neighboring city. While my husband was in a meeting, I had a couple of hours on my own. No stores were open yet, so I went to the mall. At first, I automatically turned to the right. On the second lap, I reversed my direction and found myself walking against the normal mall-walking traffic.

It was quite interesting to observe the people. Some were heavy; some were very thin and fit. One lady walked with a noticeable limp. Most were of the senior generation, but there were two young mothers with little ones in strollers. There were pairs of women, couples, and singles; there were even groups of 3-5 walkers. Most were walking in the same direction—I was the oddball. Eventually, a little blue-haired lady with no teeth and no dentures informed me that I was going the wrong way. I laughed and said maybe everyone else was going the wrong way.

It made me think about the two roads Jesus talked about in Matthew 7. He said one was broad and easy and one was narrow and difficult. He said many would take the broad, easy way; but few would take the narrow, difficult way. He said the destinations for the two roads were very different.



We mall walkers were basically “walking in circles,” but I was going in a different direction. Few people made eye contact with me or greeted me, but I made no effort to urge them to change the direction they were walking.

Every day I come in contact with people who are apparently on the broad, easy road. Do I make an effort to engage them and change their spiritual direction? The little blue haired lady probably didn't care about my ultimate destination, but at least she pointed out that I was going the wrong direction. I do care about the ultimate destination of the people with whom I come in contact; but too often, I don't engage them. I don't warn them. I don't try to change their lives in an eternal sense.

Mall walking is good exercise, and it gives me time to think, to reflect on deeper things than I do when I'm at a computer or when I'm entertaining myself with electronic gadgets. My exercise today has more benefit to me than just toning muscles and getting my heart rate up for a little while. Paul said that physical exercise profits us little, but he encouraged us to run the Christian race with all our might. Mall walking is even more appealing now than it was when I arrived at the mall this morning. It has a deeper meaning now than it did when I started the day.

Evelyn Waite
©March 5, 2016



CLOTHES PINS

A few months ago, a neighbor of ours was having to sell his belongings. He was advanced in age and needed the help an assisted living environment provided. His adult children had gone through his possessions and were having a yard sale to help defray the costs of his new living place.

As I walked among the items, I saw a wire hanger holding a cloth bag full of clothes pins. It immediately took me back to my childhood days of helping my mother hang the wash on the line. With five children in the family, I can tell you we did quite a bit of laundry!



Since the invention of the clothes dryer, not many of us hang clothes on the line anymore. But stop for a moment and think about those wonderful little things known as clothes pins.

Most of the time, it would take more than one of those wooden clips to hold a garment on the line. One on each leg of a pair of pants, or on each shoulder of a shirt. A sheet required a whole line of clothes pins to keep it in place on the line. If the wind was really blowing that day, maybe

even more clothes pins would be needed to keep things from flying off the line.

I sometimes use them to hang a skirt on a hanger in my closet. My husband may use them to keep pressure on a broken item he is trying to glue back together.

Each pin in itself may seem inconsequential, but each fulfills an important job. One clothes pin cannot hold the entire laundry, or even hold a skirt on a hanger. But when several are used together, they can accomplish their intended purpose.

Of course, we are more important than clothes pins, but the principle of working together is an important one. No one person can do the work of the church by himself. Each member has to do his part, no matter how small it may seem. Only by working together can we accomplish what needs to be done.

Lorna Smith, Lubbock, TX
©February, 2016

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RIP VAN PINKIE

As I am writing this, nine months have passed since my right arm was crushed in a work accident. Although the arm will never fully recover from such a massive injury, it is still healing; and I get more use out of it almost every day now.



There was quite a bit of nerve damage, resulting in loss of feeling. Most severely affected was the ulnar nerve, which passes near the elbow and, among other things, provides sensation to the little finger. For most of the last nine

months, my right “pinkie” has been numb, which has been somewhat of a mixed blessing.

During that time I have been careful to examine it regularly for cuts and burns because, were the wound to become infected, I might not notice it until gangrene set in. We don’t enjoy pain, but it is our body’s early warning system against infection and, thus it is essential to our health.

Recently my “pinkie” has been slowly waking up, and I can tell you it has been a rude awakening. As in the story of Rip Van Winkle, who slept for 20 years and awoke to a changed world, so my finger is having a bit of trouble adjusting to the physical changes brought on by the injury.

The “awakening” of a conscience that has been “slumbering” for an extended period of time may cause

a similar kind of discomfort. Consciences must be trained and exercised to function properly (Hebrews 5:14, Acts 24:16). A conscience that has been cauterized by willful sin (see 1 Timothy 4:2) or atrophied through disuse will not respond kindly to rebuke. In such cases the truth will most certainly hurt. For many, the trauma involved in reactivating a dormant conscience is just too great; and they hurry to lull it back to sleep.

However, for those who seek salvation, a functioning conscience is not optional equipment. It is an essential “early warning system” against infectious sin; and without it, we cannot remain spiritually healthy for long. The pain of being “cut to the heart” by the bitter truth may be hard to endure, but such chastening is necessary if we wish to produce the “...peaceable fruit of righteousness...” (Hebrews 12:11).

Miken Hinton, Lexington, Oklahoma
via Voice of Turth International

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With God

Tired of being strong –

Everything going wrong?

*But don't give up today
because*

Everything will be okay.

Keep your head held high

And aim for the sky.

Anything is possible

With God by your side.



Keri Ratcliff, age 16

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