



FAR REACHING MINISTRIES



THE CALL NEVER CAME

Since the rebel uprising that erupted last December in South Sudan, the chaplains have been deployed to the areas where the fighting has been the deadliest. In the Upper Nile region, where the attacks first began, the loss of human life has been severe. It is on this battlefield where our chaplains have been in the worst fighting and have witnessed trauma and human suffering that few will ever experience.

We reported to you in July that Chaplain Peter Magar was killed in battle near the city of Bentiu, in the Upper Nile region, on May 4, 2014. Peter took seriously the commission of Christ to train and disciple the next generation of chaplains. Men who seek to become FRM chaplains are referred to as chaplain cadets and commonly work side-by-side with our senior chaplains for six months to several years. As they demonstrate, over time, genuine spiritual maturity and a clear calling that God has placed on their lives, they are recommended for formal chaplaincy training at the FRM training base. The cadets that Peter was discipling would have started official chaplain training in May, 2015. We train our senior chaplains to consider the cadets in the field as part of the Chaplains' Corps, and to intentionally invest in their lives and mentor them spiritually.

Due to the capacity and staffing limitations at our current training base, many chaplain cadets wait for a long period of time—sometimes even up to several years—to attend training. Thankfully, the Citadel training school that we are planning to build in the near future will resolve these limitations. Chaplain cadets fill a void where there is a lack of commissioned

FRM chaplains and we have come to truly value the foundation that is produced from their field experience.

Michael, our senior chaplain and project director, said that the men who have served as field cadets are often well known for their hard work and dedication because they have wanted to ensure that they will be accepted into the chaplains' training program. This means that when they arrive at the FRM training base for official training, they are often far ahead of chaplain cadets who have not served in the field alongside our senior chaplains. Field-trained cadets have already been living out their faith in the capacity of a chaplain, and many of them have been tested, tried and forged by the hardships and adversities of war.

As I have tried to convey to you in past newsletters, it often takes considerable amounts of time for news from frontline units to make it to our headquarters. When we learned about Peter's death, we did not know that two field cadets, John Achiek and Philip Chol Chiping, who were serving alongside Peter, were also killed in the service of our Lord. Below is information that we have pieced together from frontline accounts.

Peter, John and Philip were sent into a volatile and unstable area of contention. Reports sent to Far Reaching Ministries' headquarters relayed that the fighting was extremely fierce and that with each engagement the men were thankful to have survived. The unit was originally manned with 700 Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers. After three days of extreme combat, they were down to 400 men. The rapid loss of life gave great ministry opportunities to the chaplains.

Peter and the cadets strove to win as many souls as possible with God's message of salvation. There are no atheists on the battlefield: when men are face-to-face with death, their hearts are open to the hope of salvation that only Christ offers. Because our chaplains know that many will perish in battle, they are willing to risk all for Christ. I have no doubt that many of the SPLA soldiers knew that the days and hours of their lives were numbered. The Gospel seeds planted by Peter and his cadets found fertile ground.

We also learned that the day Peter died, he spoke with his sister. We know that she pleaded with him to return home, but he explained that he would not abandon his post. He candidly shared that the unit where he was assigned to minister to was greatly outnumbered and that they might not survive further rebel attacks. Rebel leaders hired 2,000 Arab Masriya fighters to fight alongside their large contingency of rebel soldiers to overtake Bentiu in

their pursuit to annihilate anyone or anything that stood in their way. Peter prayed with his sister and promised to call when the battle was over.

Peter, John and Philip did not cower in the valley of the shadow of death. They stood strong and showed themselves to be men called of God. Peter led the cadets as Joab led David's army—trusting wholly in the Lord and encouraging them to, "Be strong, and let us fight bravely for our people and the cities of our God. The Lord will do what is good in His sight" (2 Samuel 10:12).

As Peter, the cadets and remaining 400 SPLA soldiers went into the fourth battle, they knew that it might be their last. They reported to their command headquarters that there was a great army arrayed against them. They communicated that they would call when the battle was over. That call never came. At first the command headquarters was not concerned because it is not uncommon for lines of communication to go down for several days at a time. As each day passed, it became apparent that there would be no call from the unit. Peter, John and Philip had finished their race and were called home to glory by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Somewhere on the battlefield lie the bones of our brothers whose bodies were never recovered. They are among the 700 men who perished in the four battles, trying to protect those who could not protect themselves. I know that when they left this earth, they were not alone. They were with the men in their unit that they had led to Christ before their deaths. They now stand among those that wear the robes of the martyred. If Peter, John and Philip could, they would exhort us to seize every opportunity and to make this life count for eternity. I cannot imagine what it must have been like to be at one moment, fighting for the souls of men on earth, and the next to be hearing the Lord say well done, my son, welcome home! The reception that they must have received, as men who gave their all so that others might live, must have been incredible. I am thankful they now sit among men such as Paul the Apostle, Charles Finney, Hudson Taylor, George Müller, Pastor Chuck Smith and all their fellow chaplains who have gone before them.

This now brings the number of staff members that FRM has lost to 20. We know that they are on the other side of eternity waiting for us. As a ministry, we realize that the years ahead of us will be difficult and the loss of life will most likely be high. I have always said that if you are going to work in a war zone, you have to be prepared to take casualties. If you are not willing to take casualties, you have no business working in a war zone. We are committed to the exhortation that the Word gives us to,



Left with nothing



SPLA soldiers being transported to the frontlines



Refugees fleeing the violence



Tanks destroyed in fierce fighting



POTATOES FOR GRANDMOTHERS

Together we will *"pour ourselves out for the hungry, and satisfy the desire of the afflicted..."* Isaiah 58:10

When the former Soviet Union collapsed, so did the life savings of many people; the little money they had has become worthless. Many of the Russian elderly struggle to pay the heating bills with the small pensions they receive from the government – leaving little for food. It's that time of year again to begin collecting donations for our yearly project: Potatoes for Grandmothers.

A gift of \$300 will help one family with staples like: potatoes, beans, rice, flour and sugar. While this may seem small to most of us, it will bring great joy and needed relief to many weary souls who we desire to bless with the love of Christ. We will begin distributing the food to the elderly this January.

Kindly notate "Potatoes for Grandmothers" on the enclosed gift card along with your donation.

SUPPORT A PERSECUTED PASTOR



ISIS's campaign of terror has taken a very heavy toll in Syria and Iraq; especially with their violent and systematic targeting of Christians. Middle East Christian pastors, who are in the direct path of ISIS, have counted

the cost of following Jesus Christ and are risking everything for the sake of the Gospel. As believers, we must stand with them as they reach out to those who are suffering through unimaginable fear and uncertainty.

To support a pastor with a \$50 automatic monthly donation, please indicate "Persecuted Pastor" on the enclosed card or contact our US office at +1 (951) 677-4474.

The need is extremely critical and it is our prayer that we can make a very real and lasting impact in a very dark part of the world.

"...run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame..."

Remembering those who gave all,

Wes Bentley

Wes Bentley

Far Reaching Ministries' latest fallen chaplains are:



PHILIP CHIPING

Served as a field chaplain cadet, with a deep love for the Lord and a heart for the lost and suffering. He was 40 years of age and left behind a wife and seven children.

JOHN ACHIEK

Served as a field chaplain cadet and was gifted in evangelism. He was 25 years of age and left behind a wife and three children.



MEDICAL RELIEF: SUDAN CRISIS



Having 400 chaplains on the ground, we have a strategic advantage to answer the cries of the helpless and to provide and distribute medical supplies in the name of Jesus.

Our desire is to raise the necessary funds to purchase, transport and deliver critically needed supplies to the worst hit areas as quickly as possible.

To be a part of this ministry outreach, please indicate "SUDAN CRISIS" on the enclosed gift card. Any donations will ensure that we respond in a manner that will have a great and lasting impact for the glory of our Father.



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