



Pinehurst Post

We exist to love Jesus and live for Him.

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Lottie Who? by Ryan Reese

We envision a congregation whose love for Jesus and one another leaves a clear and compelling witness for Christ.

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

Luke 2:14



Strangely enough, Lottie Moon made an impression on me long before I attended or joined a Southern Baptist Church. Each Christmas season our family would take one of our few visits of the year to my grandparents' Baptist church. The earliest memories I have of the place include the "Lottie Moon-O-Meter" posted by the door every December. My young mind could not fathom what they were going to do to Lottie when the mercury in the thermometer reached the top, but I had a hunch it involved a mission to the moon. I had a bit more to learn about the woman.

It turns out Lottie never went to the moon, but in 1873, she sailed for China instead. She would serve the Lord there until her death, on Christmas Eve of 1912. Though she has long been regarded as the "patron saint" of Baptist missions, her life as a missionary was anything but glorious. Lottie experienced what many missionaries still endure—loneliness. Her first three years on the field were spent ministering alongside her sister, Edmonia, who arrived in China a year before Lottie. Her sister was not suited to the task, and returned home after four years. While Lottie had been exasperated by her sister's "good for nothing behavior," she wrote to her home committee that "I really do think a few more winters like the one just past would put an end to me. This is no joke, but dead earnest." The loneliness increased when she left the missionary team in Tengchow, where she ran a school for girls, for the remote city of Pingtu. For years she was the only missionary in Pingtu. Though a young man from home asked her to marry him twice, she refused. Yes, she loved the man, "but God had first claim on my life, and since the two conflicted, there could be no question about the result."

Like many missionaries today, she also struggled amidst the slow progress the gospel was

making in her city. Standing at only four feet tall, she would sometimes stand in her rickshaw and raise her voice to be heard. This gave her trouble with the Foreign Mission Board *and* the locals. The men at home claimed she was violating Scripture by acting as a male pastor. The Chinese locals would shout "woman devil" when she passed down the narrow village streets. To the Mission Board she responded by asking them to start sending men immediately if they disagreed with her methods. She pointed out slyly that "it is odd that a million Baptists of the South can furnish only three men for all China." To the Chinese, she responded with patience and love, slowly building relationships with the women of Pingtu. In 1887, God opened the floodgates, when three strangers knocked on her door. The men were curious about the "new doctrine" all the women were whispering about in Pingtu. These discussions led to the establishment of a church whose Chinese pastor, Li Shou Ting, would baptize more than a thousand converts in its first two decades of existence.

Lottie thought this work of God was worthy of the support of Christians back home. In the same year, she wrote to the Baptist Women of Virginia suggesting a special Christmas offering to support foreign missions. By 1888, the Woman's Missionary Union had formed and they took up the challenge. The adopted goal of two-thousand dollars was exceeded by a thousand, which meant that three new missionaries would be sent to the Chinese mission field. And the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering has been doing the same ever since, now raising upwards of 20 million dollars a year to support international missions.

Who was Lottie Moon? A woman who gave her very life to engage unreached people

with the gospel. She died as one still in need of funding. The Boxer Rebellion brought suffering and famine to millions in China at the end of the nineteenth century, and Lottie Moon died of starvation while boarding a boat to come home. She was seventy-two years old and had given her last dollar and breath in service of the mission in China. One hundred and twenty-three years ago, Ms. Moon thought there was no better time than Christmas to give financial gifts to help spread the fame of Jesus. Today, I still find that reasoning hard to argue with. During the month of December you have the opportunity to give money that is channeled *directly* to our Southern Baptist missionaries all over the world. They, like Lottie Moon, have made great sacrifices for the gospel. Let's make sure their work continues. Please consider giving cheerfully and generously to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.



¹ Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 295.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 297.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Leon H. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville: Broadman, 1987), 418.

⁷ Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*, 298.

My Grace Is Sufficient for You by Brian Watson

The last few months have been interesting for me, to say the least. A herniated disc, some pain, a lot of down time, and a surgery have taught me a few things. Here's what I've learned.

1. *The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps (Proverbs 16:9).* I had planned to have a very busy fall. In addition to my work at church, I was going to complete a few little projects at home during the end of the summer, and I was going to take three classes at seminary this semester. I have tried to stay on top of things at church, but I had to work primarily from home. The pain in my lower back and right leg forced me to give up the projects at home. And though I attended two weeks of classes at the end of August, I had to drop out of seminary this semester. So, I had my plans, but God changed them. I still do not know *why* God changed my plans, but he did. It's always a valuable lesson to know that God is greater than we are.

2. *Pain, disease, and death are part of the curse.* When we face physical trials, we are not victims. Our injuries, diseases, and deaths are part of the curse, the fallout of sin. I think we all have a sense that these injuries, diseases, and deaths are not the way things ought to be, but they are part of our experience because of sin. Our

indignation over disease and death points us to eternity, as we groan for redeemed bodies (see Romans 8:22-25). We all hope for a time and place where there will be no more death and sin. This is one of the things that makes Christianity different from other faiths. We don't long to be removed from this world, to become a disembodied spirit. We long for Jesus to return to make this world perfect. How great it will be to one day have glorified bodies, to live on a new earth with no more sin, death, or pain. As it says in Revelation 22:3, "No longer will there be anything accursed..."

3. *Our physical condition can limit our service, make us depressed, and make us feel worthless.* There were times when I felt depressed and not very helpful to anyone. It's hard to serve others when you are in pain or when you are incapacitated. I know that many of us are physically limited, and I can now sympathize with you. It's important to remember that we are not loved and accepted by God on the basis of our physical fitness, our service, or our good works. We are loved and accepted on the basis of what Jesus did in his life, death, and resurrection. God has a purpose for your condition, even if you do not know it. Remember that Jacob was given a limp and Paul was given a thorn in the flesh. God may intend to teach us humility or dependence. He may be giving other

people an opportunity to serve us. So, if you have an illness or some type of handicap, know that you are loved by God. And if you can't serve in some ways, know that you can always read your Bible, pray, and encourage others with your words.

4. *Whatever pain we feel, Jesus felt more.* At the low point of this experience, when I was feeling the most pain, I was comforted by the thought that Jesus knew pain. He was tortured and he died a horrible death. He felt more physical pain than any of us will likely feel. I'm sure he felt more emotional pain that any of us will ever feel. Some people think that the presence of evil in the world is proof that God doesn't exist. They are wrong. The fact that we believe things are evil means that there is an objective and ultimate standard of right and wrong, and this comes from God. Though the presence of evil is somewhat mysterious, God is not indifferent to evil. God became man in order to deal with sin and evil. (It's good to remember this at Christmas.) Jesus felt all the pain that we feel, and more, and he was tempted in every way that we are, though he did not sin. Our great High Priest is able to sympathize with us, and it is a comfort to know that he is interceding for us in heaven.

Pinehurst Family Christmas

Join us for our Third Sunday Fellowship on December 18 at 6:00 p.m. We will sing some favorite Christmas songs and hymns and then will head to the fellowship hall for delicious Christmas desserts.

Bring a friend and a dessert to share.