



Kürdistan

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Dear Pastor,

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"I felt love for their souls, and longed for utterance to declare unto those poor simple people the holy gospel. I think that when my mouth is opened, I shall preach to them day and night... I feel that they are my brethren in the flesh, precisely on a level with myself."

(Henry Martyn, as quoted by C.D. Bell, 1881).

One of the most pressing issues on our minds, as missionaries, is that of the barrier of language. As I write this letter my wife and I have presented the gospel to every person in our village (and many beyond) that we know who speaks English. There is a sense of wonder, even when we are speaking, that we are doing exactly what we were called here to do. That these words are our purpose and their only hope. We are studying the language and anxiously awaiting the day that we may send the letter that says we are able to share the gospel with **everyone** in both English and Kurdish.

MINISTRY

During a recent trip to Istanbul, Turkey I had the opportunity to meet and develop a friendship with the man in the picture above. His name is Amine (pronounce A-mean). He is a UK citizen of Algerian decent and a staunch believer in Islam. We were both training at the same institute and God allowed a strong connection to develop. We went out for dinner one night and about three sentences into the conversation Amine said, "So tell me what you think about....." Fill in the blank with everything from the Trinity, to the perpetuity of Scripture to everything touching Biblical Christianity. We spent almost three hours talking about the Bible, the Qu'ran, Christianity, God and Jesus Christ. Unlike most Muslims I have dealt with, Amine is not a cultural believer in Islam. He is a true believer. By that I mean he had a choice, he studied, prayed, and subsequently chose to be Muslim without pressure from his Muslim family. As you can imagine this conversation took twists and turns and we went over some very sensitive areas for both of us. He allowed me to openly, and bluntly, share the gospel. You must understand that when I say the gospel I am not simply referring to believing that Jesus was a real person or that he died on a cross. When I say the gospel, I mean believing in the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ according to the Scripture. At one point Amine asked, "What do you believe happens to unbelievers?" I explained to him what the Bible says about Hell, and he gave me a good hearing. Even being from the UK he was not familiar with the differences between the Anglican Church and Bible Christianity. I explained, "We follow the Bible. We do not follow a man. Our doctrines come from God's words in Scripture, and not some man's words that lives in Rome and claims he speaks for God. This is why I start every answer with 'This is what the Bible says.'"

Amine has not accepted Christ as his Savior. In this I am not discouraged or disheartened, but rejoice in the opportunity that God provided. It is not results that we seek here only opportunities to be faithful. We believe that through faithfulness we will one day see the results that our hearts so burn to behold. Perhaps Amine will be won through the testimony of our life, perhaps through our death.

Our desire is results, but our duty is faithfulness.

Your servant,
Matt Haynes



Amine is the man on the far right.
Please keep him in prayer.





The Wife's perspective

Losing Those We Love While on the Mission Field



I'm going to take the liberty to talk a little about what it's like for a missionary to lose loved-ones while being thousands of miles away. It's not easy – let me tell you that. But there is such hope available to a believer when they know their loved-one was also a believer. It stands in stark contrast to what we've seen at the deaths and funerals of people here in Kurdistan. The experience of a Kurdish funeral was one of the most hopeless situations I've ever been a part of. Through both the death of my Papaw last

week and my dear grandmother a few months ago, it's become more evident than ever what hope we have in Christ. I'm going to share a bit of what I wrote when my Papaw passed last week. Maybe it will be a blessing to someone who reads it.

Rev. Art Collins - 1928-2017

"Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory?"

1 Corinthians 15:55

I live on the other side of the world from my family now. I woke this morning to the news that my Papaw had died peacefully as he slept and as I slept. Oh yes, I will miss him! Even now, I can almost feel his big, gentle hands and the way he would pat my face to his chest when I hugged him. I can't stop thinking about those hands! Just one hand would envelop the whole side of my face. I remember the smell of his aftershave and the warmth of his forehead when I would give it a kiss. I will miss him, but you know what I overwhelmingly feel today? Gratefulness. Thankfulness and AWE at the power and mercy of Jesus Christ. Oh Death! Where is your sting? You are powerless today. At least in the life of this man.

I don't have to beg God to receive my Papaw into Heaven. I don't have to mourn like others mourn. I don't have to worry about his eternity. I know he's in Heaven and in the presence of the one and only God – the holy and merciful and loving God. There is NO QUESTION. What perfect peace.

I apologize for treating this like a blog post, but I felt the need to memorialize him as I won't be joining my

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sweet family for his funeral. I miss all three of my passed grandparents today equally. When Papaw died, the flood of memories and loss of all of them came back to my heart. My grandparents are my heroes. Not because they were "in ministry" or incredible heroes of the faith by human standards, but simply because they were faithful to Jesus.

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Sweet Jesus, who brings joy to this life.
Powerful Jesus, who takes the sting out of death.

