

God Provides Mushrooms for Student Support

Betty McCarty

Pastor's Wife, Zealand, New Brunswick

A sound financial investment that will yield an abundant return is always money well spent. Likewise, supporting the Ladies Ministries Foreign Bible School Student Support program is a wonderful opportunity to reap eternal rewards. As you invest in foreign Bible students today, you will reap a bountiful harvest of souls tomorrow.

When the missionary arrives on the field, they are limited in what they are able to accomplish. They desperately long for workers and helpers to join them in their quest to reach the masses. They would love to be able to train workers but the cost is so high. That is where you and I enter the picture. By supporting Foreign Bible School Student Support we become an extension of our missionaries, enabling them to reach souls that otherwise would not be reached. By providing training for workers who know the language and culture, we help to maximize the efforts of the missionary to bring in the harvest. By opening our hearts and pocketbooks, we can make a difference in the mission work of God around the world.

Many have asked how the ladies in Zealand raise their funds. Some have felt that surely we must have done a great fundraiser, desperately seeking for the secret to our giving. All you need is a passion for the work of the Lord and a willingness to freely give whatever God provides. God will provide it if you will give it.

But you may say, "How can I give? I have no income."

When my mother was president of the Ladies Ministries at the United Pentecostal Church, in Stewiacke, Nova Scotia, she heard about the Foreign Bible School Student Support program. She wondered just how she would be able to raise the necessary support as she had no means of income. However, she decided by faith to pledge support for one student. She prayed and trusted God to help her fulfil her pledge.

The next morning, she looked out at the hillside behind her home and the fields were covered with something white. She rushed to see what it was and to her amazement, she found an abundance of wild mushrooms growing everywhere! Grabbing her buckets, she began to fill them until she realized that there was much more than her family could possibly eat. Suddenly she knew what she could do. She would sell them, raising the money that she needed for her pledge to foreign student. Every day, like fresh manna, the hills were covered with them. She continued to pick, and sell them at the end of her lane. When enough was raised to cover the pledge, then, the mushrooms stopped. God will always provide the means if you will give it.

Some time ago we experienced a difficult year for many of the precious saints of Zealand. They had raised money for new pews and other expenses and any fundraising that had

been done, had yielded only a few hundred dollars to our bank account. Yet, we presented the foreign student pledge forms and simply prayed and asked everyone to do their best. We pledged and set the offering date for two months later. When the night came, excitement was high as we waited for the money to be counted. The secretary passed me a note. At first I thought it read \$1,100.00 dollars for which I thanked God, knowing that this was probably all the saints could afford this year. But when I saw how the secretary was rejoicing, I took another look at the paper. \$11,000.000 dollars! You need to understand that this was a miracle! We are not rich folk here in Zealand. Only God could enable us to give this amount in just two months. Many who did not have money to give, pledged and gave as God provided. God wants to get in on the giving but He can only give through those who will let Him. I wonder if sometimes God has blessed us with raises and unexpected bonuses so that we could bless His work, and then we have selfishly spent the money on our own desires.

One lady living on a tight budget sold one hundred salad plates from her home to raise her pledge. One night after she gave, pinching her pennies, she stopped at a take-out to get a quick supper for her husband. The clerk passing her the order said, "I don't know why but I'm going to give you this supper at no charge!" God's blessings!

Another lady on a very limited income had pledged a large sum but on the night when our offering was due, she discovered she was \$150 dollars short of her goal. She had been saving for a plane ticket to her granddaughters' graduation and felt she couldn't afford any more. But still feeling that she should give all that she had pledged, she said, "Okay God, I'll give it" and a great peace and joy swept over her. Two days later, someone passed her a cheque for \$500 dollars. Two weeks after that, her car broke down. She still owed \$1500 on the car and couldn't afford to fix it. Someone took her out to dinner and passed her \$5000.00 towards a new car and a short while later someone else gave her \$1500 to pay off the old car. Her payments on the new car are \$50 less than on the old car and her monthly Survivor benefit cheque has increased by \$60! God's blessings! You can't out-give God!

Then we have had a report of a couple whose income had been reduced, and they wondered how they could possibly support the foreign Student fund at this time. However, they took a step of faith and pledged to support two students anyhow. The very next day, they received a notice that their situation had been reviewed and they received an unexpected cheque for over \$900 dollars! God's blessings! We serve a great God who keeps on blessing us!

Perhaps in years past you have been involved in giving to Foreign Bible School Student Support, but now you are letting others bear the burden. God has blessed you so greatly. Will you help the ladies of the United Pentecostal Church to raise the needed funds for Foreign Students this year?

We don't work for prizes, but rather just to be good stewards with what the Lord has blessed us. The cause is greater now than ever before. We must not set back and take it easy. Let us take off our slippers and dust off our work shoes and join the army of ladies of

the United Pentecostal Church. We must do more now than ever before as we race against time to reach our world before Jesus comes.

I challenge you to go to work and see what God will do for you and through you. He may have to grow mushrooms in your front yard but whatever it takes He will provide it if you will give it.

Sister McCarty is the pastor's wife in Zealand, New Brunswick, Canada. The church has an average attendance of about sixty people. In the past nine years the church has given \$70,137.15 (averaging \$7793.02 annually) to the Ladies Ministries Foreign Bible School Student Support program.