

Western PA
JULY 11
2003

campus ministry

This Month's Prayer Needs:

--safety and success of teams involved internationally with "JESUS" film projects

--boldness and urgency of believers in this country to share Christ with coworkers and family despite social barriers

--growth and revival for all the staff attending the conference in Colorado this month

"Go and tell John the things that you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them."

(Matthew 11:4-5)

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A Touch of JESUS...

I was recently asked whether I thought receptiveness to the Gospel varied in urban versus rural areas. While I'm sure there are differences in response among various groups in the U.S., they seem insignificant next to the warm reception overseas to such outreaches as the "JESUS" film.

As I read *A Touch of JESUS* (a book by Paul Eshleman recounting his experience showing the film), I am consistently awed. The courage and simple desire of the nationals to find and share a truth of peace and hope contrasts strongly with the distracted indifference we often expect here.

Somehow, the intense poverty and persecution they face dissolves the numbing social pride we cling to in this country, allowing the God's Spirit to flow freely.

Into all the world...

Like the first-century church, many villages Eshleman describes have seen children healed, sight restored, demons cast out, and Jesus revealed in dreams.

Countries long stripped of religion have seen faith in Christ reawakened in thousands despite the strict surveillance of communist leaders. Churches and discipleship groups spring up to water the new life, as film teams and translators continually bring the words of Jesus into unlikely settings.

After the Gulf War, a U.S. pastor even gained permission from Saddam Hussein himself for the film to be broadcast on national TV to 18 million Iraqi residents.

But in America?

Last July, God broke my own skepticism as I saw 4 cool *American* teens wipe away tears after the same film, a 1970's depiction of Luke's gospel lacking chase scenes, cute girls and automatic weapons.

As God continues to affirm to me His access into *every* life, I wonder if lack of dialogue about Christ results more from nonbelievers' apathy or from my own timid assumptions. What will *we* see happen when we act boldly in faith?

While 1,500 organizations have used the "JESUS" film, Eshleman emphasizes that the credit belongs to God, not any person, group or mission. And if the results have been purely supernatural, why should we assume our country is immune from similar revivals?

As I leave for Staff Training, pray with me that the power of the risen Christ would heal *our* blindness to the reality of the battle He has already won.

In Him,
Carrie