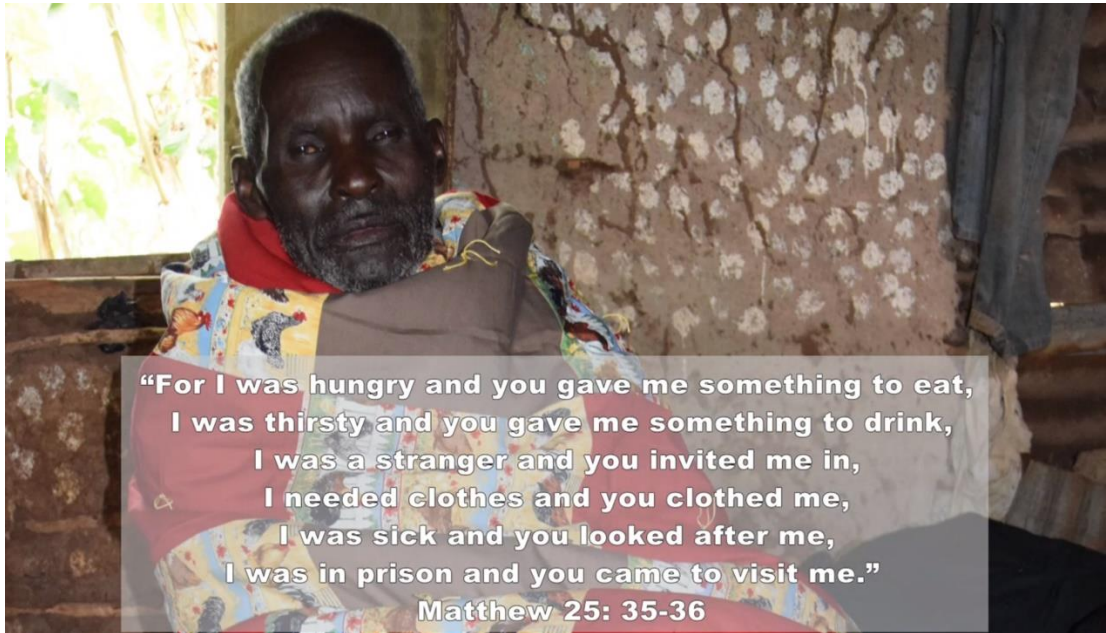


FaithBIT



Transformed: Kelly, Kakasii, Kifalu and Quilts

Reflection by Kelly Kautz

God’s love is transformational, and through God’s Word and presence I am being transformed.

I experienced God’s presence when I was in Tanzania. Kakasii, the owner of Tanzania Choice Safari, loves people and has a generous spirit. He welcomed us to his farm, Kimaro Shamba, and spent time showing us his cows & chickens and banana, mango, pepper, avocado & coffee trees/plants. When Kakasii wanted to check on his elderly neighbor or invite him over for a meal, he simply shouted over the fields, “KIFALU!” and then his neighbor replied by shouting back “KAKASII!” Kifalu lives in a one room mud structure and, because of an accident, he is unable to work in the fields and provide for himself. When he wakes up in the morning, he prays that God will provide him with enough to eat. Kakasii makes sure that Kifalu has food to eat and he is also trying to buy enough bricks so that Kifalu will have a more stable home. When we visited Kifalu, we crowded into his small room to give him a handmade quilt and to pray with him. He expressed Kakasii’s love in this way, “Because Kakasii is my neighbor, is the one who feeds me, I don’t have another person to go to, he’s the only one who’s helping me. I’m very happy. He’s my father, he’s my brother, he’s my mother, he’s everything - especially for food.” God at work through Kakasii.

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” Matthew 25: 35-36



**“Being transformed by
God means being changed
into who God wants me to
be.” - Kelly Kautz**

When we worshiped with Kakasii and his brother at their village church, Kakasii made sure that we were able to follow along with the service in the Swahili worship book and understand the sermon. A barefoot young man who appeared to have Down's Syndrome greeted us several times throughout the service with smiles and handshakes. After worship, we returned to Kakasii's farm to enjoy food catered by women from his church and music from the church choir. After listening to the choir sing for a while, it was time to eat. As we sat in the shade of the enormous mango tree, I noticed that the choir members were receiving heaping plates full of rice but were not eating the meal that had been prepared for us, Kakasii's special guests. I also noticed that his elderly neighbor, Kifalu, and the young man with Down's Syndrome were sitting with us and eating the same special meal that we were. God at work through Kakasii.

"But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed." Luke 14: 13-14a

God continued to chip away at me through His Word during devotions and in Bible Study groups. The words from the Bible, from various authors and from group members seemed to be working together, along with my life experiences, pushing me to think about my faith and opening me to change. In our Monday morning Prayer & Praise group, Philip Yancey, author of "The Jesus I Never Knew," reminded me that during the last supper, Jesus washed the disciples' feet, and the disciples were uncomfortable - it was not customary for the host to wash the feet of the guests! Jesus then commanded his disciples to do the same.

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than the one who sent him." John 13: 14-16

Being transformed by God means being changed into who God wants me to be. The process isn't always easy or clear or fast - and it's never "over." God is transforming me through His Word and through His presence. Again, and again He calls me to serve!

Good & Gracious God, I pray for . . .

*Diligence to seek you
Patience to wait for you
Wisdom to perceive you
A mind to meditate on you
Eyes to behold you
Ears to listen for your word
A heart to love you
A life to proclaim you.*

Benedict of Nursia