



Monday Matters

December 1, 2014

Quitting is not
an option!

The group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean north east of Australia is known as New Hebrides Islands. The people of these islands were cannibals. When John Williams went there as a missionary, they killed and ate him. That was in 1839 and it shook the whole world.

John Paton was born in 1824 in Scotland. As an early teenager he had yielded his life to Christ. He was praying with a deep desire to serve the Lord. He attended Theological College in Glasgow and devoted himself to the backward people living close to his college. Nobody turned to the Lord in the beginning but through it all he was faithful in his ministry and continued it without losing heart. That made him achieve the impossible. Many began to turn to the Lord.

For ten years, he served the Lord among these people. It was then that a Presbyterian missionary shared in a meeting the need for a young man to work among the tribal people of the New Hebrides Islands. He heard the Lord's still small voice telling him to commit his life to the cause of the tribal people in the Hebrides. John Paton readily obeyed the call, stood up and said he would go. At the age of 34, John Paton, with his young wife Mary Ann, left for the Hebrides Islands in the year 1858.

Over the years that followed John Paton experienced many tragedies and situations on the islands. His wife and child died within a few short years of ministry. His life was constantly under

threat. The tribal people stole everything he had. Through it all he continually asked God for his protection against the cannibals, the evil spirits and the sorcerers.

Paton translated the Bible into the Aniwa language. After 10 years of hard work, the gospel began to spread in many of the Hebrides islands. By his efforts, orphanages, churches and schools were built. A school exclusively for girls was also started. With the spread of the gospel, incidence of social crimes and murders drastically reduced. More missionaries came and worked in the 30 islands of New Hebrides. A Bible School was started to train local evangelists. John Patton toiled in Aniwa until the end of his life, January 28, 1907 at the age of 83.

John Paton's ceaseless and untiring work brought to the fold of Christ even man-eaters. Through it all - fear of death, death of his beloved wife and son, loss of possessions and unbearable sufferings - it didn't deter him from going ahead with his commitment to love Christ and to preach the gospel. As the song "Through It All" says, **"I'd never know what faith in God could do. Through it all, I learned to trust in Jesus. I learned to depend upon His Word."**

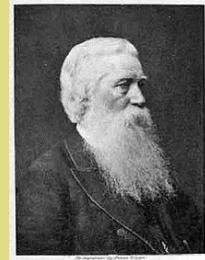
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Through It All

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