

You're Not Home Yet

An old missionary couple had been working in Africa for years and were returning to New York to retire. They had no pension. Their health was broken. They felt defeated, discouraged and afraid.

They discovered they were booked on the same ship as President Teddy Roosevelt, who was returning from one of his big-game hunting expeditions.

No one paid any attention to these missionaries. They watched the fanfare that accompanied the president's entourage, with passengers trying to catch a glimpse of the great man.



As the ship moved across the ocean, the old missionary said to his wife, "Something is wrong. Why should we have given our lives in faithful service for God in Africa all these many years and have no one care a thing about us? Here this man comes back from a hunting trip and everybody makes much over him, but nobody gives two hoots about us."

"Dear, you shouldn't feel that way," his wife said.

"I can't help it; it doesn't seem right," the husband replied.

When the ship docked in New York, a band was waiting to greet the president. The mayor and other dignitaries were there. The newspapers were full of stories of the president's arrival.

No one noticed the missionary couple. They slipped off the ship and found a cheap apartment on the East Side, hoping the next day to see what they could do to make a living in the city.

That night, the man's spirit broke. He said to his wife, "I can't take this. God is not treating us fairly."

"Why don't you go in the bedroom and tell that to the Lord," his wife suggested.

A short time later, the husband came out from the bedroom, but now his face was completely different.

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“What happened, dear?” his wife asked.

“The Lord settled it with me,” he responded. “I told him how bitter I was that the president should receive this tremendous homecoming, when no one met us as we returned home. And when I finished, it seemed as though the Lord put His hand on my shoulder and simply said: ‘But you’re not home yet.’”

This story, told by an unknown author, makes a very important point. As we end this journey called life, I suspect that when we see what God has planned for those who serve Him faithfully, there will be a revision of all ideas about sacrificial service. We will know then that what we have given up here in this life is worthless compared to what God has prepared for those who follow Him.

On that day, many a president will be ignored while “unknown” missionaries and faithful servants are cheered by heavenly beings of great splendor.

So whatever your role may be in devotedly serving others in response to our Lord’s call upon your life, just remember: You are laying up treasures in heaven, and you’re not home yet.

– Beecher Hunter