

# \* MCCRACKEN MEMO \*

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## *New LIFE...*

Tea Bar hadn't started yet. The young Kurdish man entered the office agitated, expectant. Rawa, one of our Iraqi volunteers, translated the Kurd's flood of Arabic words. "He says he needs medicine," Rawa said. The Kurd leaned over and pulled his shirt up, unwrapping an abdominal brace to reveal a back laced with scars. "He only has one kidney," Rawa translated. Then he removed one of his shoes to display another physical malady, and the small office suddenly reeked of a misshapen foot that most likely hadn't been washed in a very long time.

"Tell him," I said to Rawa, "that I'm very sorry, but we can't do anything for him unless he has a prescription, and even then we may not be able to help him."

The Kurd, named Ariwah, continued speaking, even though the interpreter was the only one who could understand, but the tone of his voice, the pleading of his eyes conveyed his desperation anyway.

"How old is he?" I asked.

The young Kurd's voice broke as he replied. Rawa translated, "Twenty-six...and he misses his family."

"Tell him I'd like to pray for him," I said. "I'm so sorry that there's nothing I can do for him except to pray, but somehow the answer to his problems are in God. Even though the Kurd couldn't understand the English words used, he seemed touched that someone showed compassion as God broke my heart and opened my tear ducts."

"He says, thank you very much," translated Rawa as I shook Ariwah's hand after the short prayer. The young man wrapped his brace back around his waist and walked out of the office looking subdued, depressed.

"Thank me for what?" I asked, "I'm not able to do anything. I wish there were something I could do."

After the tea and bread had been served, the young Kurd was one of a handful of men who stayed later to watch the end of the Jesus video playing loudly in his own dialect. Then he found Daniel, our Kurdish translator, and the two of them approached me, Ariwah wearing a big smile on his face. "He wants to tell you," Daniel said, "that he thanks you for your kindness to him. He doesn't want anything from you. He only wants to tell you thank you because the tears of a Christian make him want to put his faith in Jesus."

Then Ariwah turned and entered the Seeker's Class.

Two weeks later I saw him and asked how he was doing. With a joyful expression he recounted the events from the day we met. "I didn't tell you on that day, but after you prayed for me all of the pain left my body. But what led me to Jesus were your tears for me. Now I am following Jesus...I have been baptized and am studying the Bible with someone...Nobody will ever turn me away from Him because He is the Truth."

Please pray for Ariwah's continued growth in this new life in Jesus.

Due to changing financial structures at International Teams, our monthly support needs will be gradually increasing another 8.5% between now and 2004. Please make this a matter of prayerful consideration. Checks may be made out to **International Teams** with an indication of the

designation (i.e., for the McCrackens, for The Refuge, for the Helping Hands ministry, etc.) in the memo portion of the check and/or with an enclosed note, and sent to: International Teams, 411 West River Road, Elgin, IL 60123-1570.

### New Ministries...

In the last six months, the Lord has allowed us to improve, or add to, our existing ministries in the following ways :

- Increase the number of English classes each week
- Increase the number of Greek classes each week
- Offer beginning German classes
- Offer beginning Italian classes
- Offer COMPUTER classes
- Offer a 3-level rotating course of Basic Discipleship Lessons. The first level includes 8 lessons which answer the question "Who Is God?" The second level includes 8 lessons which answer the question "Who Are You?" The third level includes 8 lessons which answer the question "Now What Are You Going To Do?". The lessons are all gathered in a notebook, translated into the major languages, and given to the refugees when they begin following Jesus. Classes are offered three times a week so they can be completed in 2 months.
- The "Timothy Project", a weekend of intensive discipleship from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, where we study the Word together, worship together, pray together, play together, eat and sleep together with about a dozen new believers at a time. We hope to pull off these "Timothy Projects" 3 or 4 times a year.
- The "Athens Guest House" is a small apartment that we are renting specifically for our short-term teams and visitors who come to see us in Athens. Bed and breakfast for \$8 per person per night is a hard deal to beat, so plan to come see us (for vacation or with a ministry team— just let us know ahead of time so we can make sure there is space for you).

## PRAYER REQUESTS

- \* *Continue to pray that God will provide a large **facility to house homeless refugees** ("The Refuge")*
- \* *Pray for God to send **laborers (especially men)** to help us in the harvest*
- \* *Pray for the **many new converts (mostly former Muslims)** who are meeting Jesus in Athens, and for an effective discipleship ministry among the very transient refugee believers*
- \* *Pray for our **short-term teams** that are serving with us this summer*
- \* *Pray for more **local believers** get involved in our ministry*