

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 60

Dearest Grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with the wisdom of being skeptical. The Scriptures are filled with warnings about false prophets and false teachers. That's why we are told to "test everything" (1 Thess. 5:21). This includes, of course, even the letters you receive from your Grandpa.

Recently Sarah Jane was listening to an anthropologist on the radio. He is apparently a famous man with many honors and degrees. During his lecture he made reference to five Christian martyrs killed by the Huaorani Tribe in the jungles of Ecuador. He insinuated that these missionaries died because they made the mistake of dropping photographs of themselves to the natives. He said that these stone age people had no concept of two dimensional people and concluded that such must have come from the devil. And then added, to the laughter of his audience, that they were probably right.

Grandpa responded with this:

I was saddened by Wade's bias against missionaries. The suggestion, for example, that the missionaries to the Huaoranis were killed because they dropped two dimensional pictures leads one to ask the obvious question. If they killed the missionaries because of the pictures, why did they kill everyone else? For an interview I conducted with one of the killers please link to

[1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70STTWk3L6c&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70STTWk3L6c&feature=youtu.be)

I hope you will take time to watch this interview!

It seems to be increasingly popular to make fun of missionaries and criticize those who follow Christ. So this learned professor was on safe ground in the academic world. From my perspective, however, his comments did not stand the test. The Huaoranis are considered by some to be the most violent tribe on earth. They not only killed all outsiders who came into their territory, but 60 % of the deaths within the tribe came when they killed one another.

Steve Saint, a personal friend, is the son of one of those martyrs. Steve was just shy of his 5th birthday when his father, Nate, was killed. The killers were then called "Aucas". This is a derogatory name meaning "naked" or "savage". They prefer to be known as Huaoranis which means "the people". This tribe has no history of a chief, counsel, or any form of government. Every Huaorani did that which was right in his own eyes .

In a previous interview with Steve he told of guiding 34 American college students on a tour in the jungle. A special village has been constructed where outsiders can learn primitive ways. The students, of course, pay for this privilege and this money provides the the Huaoranis with a source of income. After several days in the jungle one student said that in her research she found that some

very violent people once lived in the area. She was curious as to what happened to them.

Steve replied that the people there, hosting them in the camp, were the people she had read about. The American students didn't believe it. Steve then asked them to pick any Huaorani and ask them where their father was.. While Steve translated, the first three selected all gave the same answer. They spoke and gestured leaving no doubt that their fathers had all been speared to death. The fourth Huaorani selected was Pota, the wife of Mincaye. She pointed to a man standing near by and said that he had killed her father, mother, and brothers. One young college student expressed concern that he had just been sitting by that man not knowing he was a serial killer. "My God" said another, "we are four for four, is it safe to be here?"

Then Dawa, the wife of another converted killer named Kimo, stood up and volunteered her story. Kimo, her husband, was sitting next to Steve. She pointed at him and explained that he had speared to death her father, and mother, and her baby sister that was still nursing. Kimo had also killed her two brothers and her grandmother.

Then Steve, who realized that none of them knew his story, stood up and put his arm around Kimo and said: "This man also killed my father, now you are six for six". (For your information, Kimo is now an elder in the Huaorani church and one of the two converted killers who baptized Steve Saint and his sister into Christ.)

Before the missionaries brought the Gospel to the Huaoranis the tribe had been reduced to only about 500 and was on the verge of extinction. The missionaries had guns and could have easily killed the men who speared them to death. They, however, like Christ, determined to die rather than kill. While there have been many cruel and corrupt people masquerading as Christians, these faithful martyrs were not that way at all. The only blood they shed was their own.

The need for skepticism is not only important for those of you in college, but it is also important for everyone. When we lived in California John and David came home one day inquiring about a friend named Jim who claimed to be able to hide behind a bush and pounce on rabbits before they could run away. "Jim the rabbit catcher" became a proverb in our family. So many years have gone by that Jim may now be a college professor.

That's why it is important for you to "test everything".

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce