

ARMED GUARDS

A missionary on furlough told this true story while visiting his home church in Michigan:

While serving at a small field hospital in Africa, every two weeks I traveled by bicycle through the jungle to a nearby city for supplies. This was a journey of two days and required camping overnight at the halfway point. On one of these journeys, I arrived in the city where I planned to collect money from a bank, purchase medicine and supplies, and then begin my two-day journey back to the field hospital. Upon arrival in the city, I observed two men fighting; one of whom had been seriously injured. I treated him for his injuries and at the same time witnessed to him of the Lord Jesus Christ. I then traveled two days, camping overnight, and arrived home without incident. Two weeks later I repeated my journey. Upon arriving in the city, I was approached by the young man I had treated. He told me that he had known I carried money and medicines. He said, "Some friends and I followed you into the jungle, knowing you would camp overnight. We planned to kill you and take your money and drugs. But just as we were about to move into your camp, we saw that 26-armed guards surrounded you. "At this I laughed and said that I was certainly all alone out in that jungle campsite. The young man pressed the point, however, and said, "No sir, I was not the only person to see the guards. My five friends also saw them, and we all counted them. It was because of those guards that we were afraid and left you alone. "At this point in the sermon, one of the men in the congregation jumped to his feet and interrupted the missionary and asked if urge to pray for you. In fact, the urging of the Lord was so strong; I called men in this church to meet with me here in the sanctuary to pray for you. Would all of those men who met with me on that day stand up?" The men who had met together that day stood up. The missionary wasn't concerned with who they were--he was too busy counting how many men he saw.

There were 26.

This is a great illustration of the heaviness of prayer. I was praying this last weekend with a dear friend who reminded me of the seriousness of prayer. All last year as my wife got sicker and sicker with cancer I prayed more and more for her to get better and yet the Lord took her home in November. After that I found myself just praying sort of mechanically out of obedience. That is not the way God intended prayer. I really feel we should always pray knowing that God will and does answer prayer. Maybe not the way we always want but He does answer perfectly. So pray and expect answers. Mean it when you pray it and as I have learned, come to God asking for a clean heart and enjoy the fellowship that prayer brings. Go get 'em!