

This is a new way to communicate with you quarterly. As trustees of the mission we often talk together and share our observations, but these thoughts, we realise, don't always find their way to you, the missionaries. So we hope the **Bulletimp** will start to change this situation. In this first edition we share our thoughts on taking holidays.

We have increasingly come to understand that holidays are a vital part of a missionary's life. Recently a number of ladies have expressed that they don't get away enough and that they are weary and long for a proper holiday. We list below some of the reasons that have made holidays difficult to take:

- No time
- No money, or not enough
- No one to stand in for us in our absence
- No rush – we will wait until we are home on furlough.

Our reply:

- We agree that the timing of a holiday is important, but saying there is *no* time is stretching it a little. We recommend that holidays are given priority as *extremely important and needful*. Advance planning taking into account the weather patterns, and possibly children's education, can be a great help so that the diary dates can be set. Unless a difficulty of the greatest magnitude arises, the dates should not be negotiable. We also recommend that a minimum of three weeks is taken (and not just for decorating!).
- The issue of money is not so much one of how much we have, but what we spend it on and how we manage it. Budgeting using the previous year's account should be a help. Holidaying in the country of residence should keep the costs down. But if we view holidays as not really a priority, we may never have money for them, or not enough of it. Hopefully we will think about holidays in the same way that we think about a new vehicle, home improvements and furloughs. Once we see and understand the need of a holiday we can genuinely seek the Lord and, amazingly, faith will rise as it does in other circumstances.
- Thinking that we have no one to stand in for us depends on the notion that we are indispensable, which is invalid if considered in the light of the possibility of sickness or death. What then? The availability of a stand-in for particular weeks may be a problem, but if we plan ahead this need not be an issue.
- A holiday on furlough can only really work if we actually go away to a holiday resort, and preferably if someone can pre-book it for us. Not many missionaries seem to be able to combine visiting the family, a church itinerary and taking a three-week holiday. In fact many admit to going back to the field for a rest: this is not good. A holiday is for rest and recuperation.

We do advise you to give priority to holidays not only because they are so vital to your health and wellbeing, but also because they will help extend your capacity and energy for the work and therefore your usefulness. And finally don't feel guilty about taking proper holidays: all your family, friends and supporters take them.

We can help you by talking to your sending church and supporters; we can help you to save by putting aside money from income that comes through our accounts; and we can help you with budgeting. All you have to do is ask.

We believe in the autonomy of both the sending and the indigenous church and the integrity of the individual missionary under the authority of the Lord Jesus.