

Kafui Dagadu

I went into this mission trip thinking I would be some sort of ‘Super-Missionary-Man,’ similar to a Superman-type figure completely set on fire for God, used by Him to accomplish so many great things. In essence, I thought I needed to be ‘perfect,’ in a perfectly healthy condition, and doing any and everything I could to be a great missionary. But this dangerously ungodly and selfish “conviction” was shrouded in my own pride and based on my performance and accomplishments in the field and not rooted in a right, humble heart.

What I found in places of my heart were critical thoughts of the leadership and traces of a self-righteous attitude which sought to exalt my self higher than others. I prided myself on my ‘humility,’ which was just another form of pride, just a more concealed, hidden form of it. I had forgotten that the acceptable sacrifice to God is a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, and this is something He will not despise or reject, as Psalm 51:17 says. Instead, my menacing thoughts of superiority served as a breeding ground for eventual discord amongst the team.

It didn’t take long, however, for God to step in and allow me to be humbled by a severe sickness, three days into the trip. I woke up one night and vomited and had diarrhea everywhere but the toilet, until I finally made it to the bathroom for another round of the same, completely messing up the entire bathroom. And when I thought this episode was over, to my annoyance, it continued throughout the morning and for the rest of the day. While it was still night though, through my dry heaving, sobbing, and wrestling with thoughts of, “What are you trying to teach me, God?” parts of the experience were comical while others were penitent and painful. I knew there was a purpose to this intense sickness. But in the lowest moments of my sickness, I heard the voice of God speak to me, “*Kafui, you think you’re so humble? –Watch me humble you.*” This spiritual purging and cleansing manifesting through physical means was necessary for God to use me for his purposes as

a humble worker. God had to break me and He got me to the place where I had a broken and contrite heart.

In my sickness and sludge, the two people of whom I thought I was either better than or could do their job better came in at two different points that night to use the bathroom while I was in there. And they were the *only* two other people to come in, besides the person helping me while I was in there. God made it ever too clear to me, the wrong I had in my heart, by having the two people who I exalted myself higher than, come in and see me in a state of humility.

Although none of this had been voiced to them, I had held these thoughts in my heart, which is just as bad, if not worse. We are held to a higher standard because we no longer have to actually commit an act of sin, that 'act' can take place in our minds and hearts.

But even though my private, prideful thoughts surfaced, God cleansed me after some much-needed repentance. He still ended up using me through my sickness and once I recovered, the Holy Spirit was at work in me reaching, convicting, praying for and with others, helping me to encourage, and touching the lives of His people in Peru and on our team. It was remarkable seeing certain prayer requests answered the same day and God refresh His people and change lives. No, I didn't have to be perfect and I should not have sought to be in perfect condition to be used by God for His purposes, but God accepted a broken and contrite heart and worked through my weakness. For His strength is made perfect in our weakness.

I lost over 12 pounds in the span of a couple of days and got the sickest I've been in my life, with uncontrollable body functions, but I was humbled, and I give glory to God for my brief bout of sickness. Now my time in Peru was not solely characterized by my sickness, for this was only one small aspect of the trip. I learned so many more lessons about ministry in general, myself, God and His love, and His world that I could go on and on. And if God wills me to go on another mission trip, I will go without hesitation and strongly encourage you to do the same if it is His will for you.