



THE SCHLEHLEINS

Missionaries to the Tsongas of South Africa



CLOSER THAN A BROTHER

A Tribute to Missionary Seth Meyers on his 40th Birthday

Hearty friendships have fallen on hard times. In our era of “likes” and “pokes” and emoticons, it is rare to find real, robust comradeship that burrows below the veneer of superficiality and into the depths of what some have called “earnest conversation.” Friendship is like gold. It’s found deep below the surface.

Jonathan had David, Paul had Timothy, Christian had Faithful, Huck had Jim, Sam had Frodo, Sancho Panza had Don Quixote. I have Seth.

On this special day of Seth Collin Meyers’ birthday, I had anticipated listing an accolade for every one of his years. Unfortunately, he’s not turning 15. Since space will not permit this, allow me to express how dear Seth has been to our family and to this country of South Africa.

A TRIBUTE

Seth arrived in South Africa in 2004. He married the next year, and I arrived in 2006. He’s planted a Baptist church, is planting more, and helped establish a Bible institute.

Seth is a born evangelist. He esteems the conversion of the lost more than his necessary food. He has learned the Tsonga language so well that he can deliver it warm and fresh, like a baker’s loaf to a hungry crowd.

Few I know love the Bible more than Seth. In the Meyers’ home, the Scriptures are read, memorized, pondered, preached, translated, and treasured.

Though he has mellowed through the years, Seth is so full of energy a pastor once asked him if his mother took crack. Always inquisitive, Seth once asked a doctor if the portrait on her desk was her grandmother. It was her husband. While

in rural Zimbabwe, we once gave all our cash away to the pastors before realizing we had no gas in the tank. We literally had to beg strangers for money on the arduous trip home.

He has been ever so patient with me. There were moments I scarcely could have shoved my foot deeper into my mouth. There were times I promised to do something, but—like the cupbearer with Joseph—I forgot. There were instances I should have just listened.

As a husband, he is a model of grace. As a father of five, he knows well the condition of his flock (Pr. 27:23).

HOW TO PRAY

I know this is an update letter about the Schlehle family. But by loving the Meyers clan you are loving us. Some of you have faithfully prayed for and even financially supported Seth and Amy though the years even though you do not know them personally. This is loving us by proxy. This is how it should be.

Like the aged roots of a great oak, my life has been irreversibly intertwined with Seth’s. Many in the villages here cannot not tell the difference between us. We ask you not to see the difference either. Ministerial success for one is success for the other.

Happy birthday, brother. May the Lord give you many more years and thousands more spiritual children.

With much gratitude,
Paul & Melinda