

# THE SCHLEHLEINS

## *Missionaries to the Tsongas of South Africa*



### COMMENDING MY CROWN

#### **Six Ways My Wife Serves on the Mission Field**

Solomon compares a good wife to a diadem upon her husband. “An excellent wife is a crown to her husband” (Pr. 12:4). Over the years, our prayer letters haven’t mentioned my wife much—and that’s just as she wants it. Melinda has a quiet spirit, happy in her domestic duties and not one to post her Ws on Instagram or Facebook.

But she just gave birth and it’s our anniversary soon, so I thought to give her an early literary gift. You have sent us out as missionaries but there would be no work here without her, so what follows are six ways my wife serves on the mission field—all alliterated because I simply can’t help myself.

#### **1. Mrs.**

My wife and I are best friends. We love each other and like each other too, as in, we really enjoy each other’s company. I tell her (almost) daily, “You’re my favorite person.” She tells me (almost) daily, “You’re my hero.” This kind of mutual affection keeps the Marriage Mobile running despite every kind of pothole and carjacker on the missionary highway.

#### **2. Mother**

On 31 March, Melinda gave birth to Emma Valerie (6 lbs 3oz | 20 in). She was born four weeks premature and arrived 30 minutes before I reached the hospital from my trip to Malawi. Melinda didn’t grow up playing mother with dolls, but she now cherishes above all homeschooling her nine children—each of whom loves and reveres her.

#### **3. Manager**

The first words my father-in-law said to me about his daughter was that she could manage a Fortune 500 company. He was right. As most missionaries will tell you,

keeping one’s visas updated seems harder than running Apple or Ford. With great skill, Melinda oversees much of the paperwork of our family and Miseve School.

#### **4. Medic**

Having studied nursing and midwifery in school, she counsels a gaggle of young mothers around the globe on maternity issues. But she holds the golden cup for keeping her active husband and children upright and breathing.

#### **5. Mentor**

Over the years, over a dozen ladies worldwide have lived at our homestead and learned from Melinda’s shining example. Two sterling young ladies from Madagascar join us next week. While she occasionally teaches the ladies in Tsonga at church or the students in English at Miseve, her greatest fruit has come from lessons that were more caught than taught.

#### **6. Musician**

Piano is a skill she developed on her own in childhood. When she committed to missions two decades ago, she sold her beautiful Yamaha and gave up her passion of playing piano in church so that the village congregations could grow. But her gift has made her a favorite invite around the country for all sorts of events (which she happily accepts) and she’s passed her dexterity on the ivories to her children.

My wife knows she’s a sinner in need of daily grace. Yet, she is being transformed into the image of Christ such that her gifts have helped the gospel advance greatly here in Africa.

#### **Prayer Requests:**

1. Pray for the Meyers, who begin their furlough next week.
2. Pray for a family to help with the growing work at Miseve.

Cordially in Christ, Paul & Lindy