

Endurance: On the Road with Jesus
Adapted from *Hero Tales, Volume III*, by Dave and Neta Jackson

Once a privileged “Southern Belle,” Lottie Moon became “all things to all people so that she might win some,” as she served on the mission field in China.

I listened to the moaning wind outside and looked wishfully at my bedroll on the warm kang, a brick sleeping platform. There was a pipe running from the fireplace in the main room to the kang. Shivering, I thought, *Maybe this isn't a good day to begin an evangelistic trip into the country.* I'd much rather stay in my snug little house in Tengchow.

But soon my fellow missionary, Sallie Holmes, was at my door with two sedan chairs, each one carried by two helpers. Mrs. Holmes was a veteran at “country work,” but this was my first trip. The first day we visited six villages, drawing a curious crowd whenever the helpers put down our chairs. “Foreign devils!” some jeered. But others wanted to touch my clothes. I gathered the children into a yard and told them stories about Jesus while Mrs. Holmes taught the adult women. Men hung around the edges of the crowd, listening.

The first night I was so tired, I wanted to fall right asleep. But as I unrolled my bed, villagers crowded into the room, and several women and children crawled right up onto the kang, eager to talk some more. When my voice gave out, the villagers were content to just stand and watch as I tried to eat my supper of mein noodles, onions, and broth.

This happened night after night. After a day of traveling in the sedan chairs and witnessing in six to ten villages, I could barely keep my eyes open. But curious villagers crowded into our room to ask questions: “Are you married? Do you have any children? What—no mother-in-law? Where do you live? How many brothers? Who is your mother? What is that needle for? Who are you writing to?”

One morning as we sat cross-legged on the kang and ate our breakfast of boiled millet and vegetables, I said to my companion, “There are thirty pairs of eyes watching us. I just counted!”

But in spite of the long, weary days, I was amazed at how eagerly the country people listened to the Gospel of Jesus. A roomful of dirty bodies smelled pretty bad, but as I rubbed shoulders day after day with the simple country people, I began to enjoy their sense of humor, friendliness, and eagerness to learn. “I have never gotten so close to the Chinese people since I've been in China,” I told Mrs. Holmes one night when the last visitor had finally left us alone. “I feel more and more that this is the work of God.”

The two of us never knew where we were going to sleep. The inns were filthy, with soot-blackened walls and insects in the mats. One night we slept in a farmer's shed. “Just like Jesus,” I thought, as I looked at the cornstalks and farm tools. “No place of His own to lay His head.”

Finally we wearily turned back toward the city of Tengchow. As I was being carried in the bouncing sedan chair past the ripening fields, I thought out loud: “Now I understand a little more how Jesus felt walking through the countryside. People crowded around Him every moment, wanting to touch Him, to hear Him speak. He hardly had time to eat! He had compassion for the people and didn't turn them away. But...surely He must have gotten tired. How did He keep going?”

Thinking about the Gospel story, I knew: Jesus took time to pray to His Father in heaven.

As the walled city of Tengchow rose on the horizon, I, Lottie Moon, knew where I, too, would get the strength for “country work”—from turning to my Father in heaven.

We develop endurance for our daily Christian life by turning to our only source of strength—the Lord.