

Story #1:

How Jesus Saved the Eskimos

“My dear Jens, have you heard of the Eskimos?” Nikolaus asked. “They live in Labrador. They seem to be a violent and savage people! Why, they killed our dear brother John Erhardt!”

Brother John had gone as a missionary to Labrador. His mission did not last long. Soon after he arrived, the Eskimos killed him.

Jens answered, “Yes, I’ve heard of the Eskimos. They are wicked. But if Jesus saves them from their sins, they will be different. They will be new creations in Christ. Someday, I would like to go to Labrador. I want to teach them about Christ.”

Jens Haven was a short man from Denmark. His friends called him “Little Jens.” He lived in a town called Herrnhut (pronounced “hern-hoot”) in Germany. He was part of a group of Christians called Moravians. They had this name because many of them came from Moravia.

Count Nikolaus Zinzendorf was a leader in Herrnhut. He told Jens, “If you want to be a missionary to the Eskimos, you must first learn their language. Go to Greenland. Learn the language. Then perhaps you can go to the Eskimos.”

That is what Jens did. For four years (1758-1762), he lived in Greenland. He learned the Eskimos’ language.

In 1764, the Lord opened the way for Jens to go to Labrador in Canada. Jens traveled with the British. At that time, Labrador was under British control.

On September 4, he met the Eskimos of Labrador for the first time.

One day, Jens rowed his little fishing boat into the harbor. He drew near to a group of Eskimos and shouted to them.

“Come over to me. I have something to say to you. I am your friend.”

Jens was dressed like an Eskimo. He was also short like the Eskimos.

An Eskimo replied, “You must be one of us!”

Jens then said, “I am here to be your friend.”

For the next two days, Jens stayed with the Eskimos. He took out a letter of safe conduct given to him by the British.

He stood up and read from the letter.

“My friends, I am here to tell you that Labrador is now a colony of Britain. The king of that land, George III, has sent me to you. He sent me here to preach the gospel. I ask you to promise to do good and not murder anymore. I will come again next year. I want to tell you more about Jesus who died for the sins of the world.”

The Eskimos received Jens with joy. It seemed that the Eskimos wanted a missionary. Jens returned to Europe and told the Moravians what happened. “Brothers, it is time to start a mission among the Eskimos. Let us return to Labrador!”

The next year, the Moravians returned to Labrador. This time, four men went. Jens and one of the other men stayed in the Eskimo camp.

The Eskimos said to them, "You are not like the other men from Europe. You do not come with guns."

The Eskimos saw that these men were different. The missionaries wanted to do them good. They told the Eskimos, "We would like to purchase land from you."

The Eskimos agreed. Jens and his friend paid a fair price for the land. They did not steal land from the Eskimos. They showed respect to them. The love and honor Jen and the other missionaries showed to the Eskimos opened the door for evangelism.

The Moravians now built mission stations in Labrador. Eleven men and three women came to live in Labrador. There were two preachers, a doctor, cooks, and builders. They made a good team. Doctors cared for the sick. Builders built houses. Preachers taught the people about Christ. The women cooked and sewed. They also became friends with the Eskimo women. The Eskimo women learned to trust these women from Europe.

Each summer, when the ice was gone, a ship came from London. It brought supplies for the mission station. The men at the station sent supplies from Labrador back to London. Seal skins, fox skins, cod-liver oil, and more was sent to London.

Good things began to happen. The Eskimos learned to live differently. They stopped killing and stealing. The missionaries were thankful for this. But this did not mean the Eskimos had been saved. Only Jesus can save us from sin. We cannot save ourselves. And we can only change our behavior so much, without God making us a new creation in Christ.

For almost thirty years, only a few Eskimos turned to Jesus Christ. The Moravians kept praying for conversions.

As they spent more time with the Eskimos, the Moravians learned about the false god the Eskimos worshiped. One of the Eskimos was a man named Tuglavina. He claimed to have power from his false god Torngak. This man acted like a king over the Eskimos. He said his false god would tell him who should live and die. Tuglavina used evil powers to hurt his fellow Eskimos.

The Eskimos feared Tuglavina. Perhaps he would hurt them if they became Christians. This was a big reason why the Eskimos would not come to Christ.

Tuglavina said to the Eskimos, "Our great Torngak controls the wind and waves. It is he who provides food for us. If you serve him, he will provide seals and foxes for you."

Jens Haven told the Eskimos, "Torngak is a false god. There is only one true God. There is only one Savior. His name is Jesus Christ. Repent of your sins. Believe in Christ. Then you will be saved! The one true God is the only One who gives life and food."

Then, in 1793, God changed Tuglavina's heart. He became a Christian. He repented of his wickedness. He was now a humble man. He even joined the Moravians and told others about Jesus. After Tuglavina turned to the Lord, other Eskimos also believed.

The winds of God's grace blew strongly in 1804. The Spirit of God visited this people. Many repented of their sins. The Eskimos were now turning to the Lord!

One man named Siksigak visited the mission house. The Moravians opened the door. Siksigak fell down at their feet. He cried out, "I am a sinner. I am lost. I am going to hell."

“Repent and believe in Jesus, Siksagak. You will be saved. Turn from your wicked ways. God is merciful.”

Siksagak turned to God. Now he was a new man. Before, he had been angry with his wife. But now he loved her again. Later, he became a powerful preacher.

At a church service in one mission station, an Eskimo woman stood up. “I have been the most wicked woman in this land.” She put her trust in the Lord Jesus. The Moravians were astounded. God’s Spirit was filling the land.

The Eskimos turned away from sin and worshiped the Lord. Thirty years of hard work was worth it. God blessed the Moravian mission. Thanks be to God for His mercy to the Eskimos of Labrador!

Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
For He has broken the gates of bronze,
And cut the bars of iron in two. (Ps. 107:15-16)

This story is an excerpt from *Taking the Americas for Jesus*, published by Generations. Get a copy for your family this Christmas at www.generations.org/store

Story #2: How Jesus Saved Brownlow North

Few people who knew Brownlow North would have expected him to become such a gifted and faithful evangelist. For over four decades, Brownlow did not know God. He did not believe in Jesus Christ. He lived for himself. Growing up in England, in a land filled with churches and professing Christians, Brownlow knew about Jesus Christ, but he did not know Jesus Christ.

Until he became a Christian, Brownlow was known for his pursuit of games and sports. He loved to gamble, and he loved to go hunting. The pursuit of pleasure and entertainment seemed to be all that Brownlow's life was about.

But the Lord's hand is not shortened from saving sinners like Brownlow North. And the Lord, in His providence, can send just the right person at just the right time with just the right message. So it was one night when Brownlow was eating dinner in 1839. Brownlow was feasting with some of his friends at a place called Huntly Lodge. The duchess of Gordon was also at the dinner. The duchess was a follower of Christ and known for her godly life.

While they ate, Brownlow turned to the duchess and asked, "Duchess, what should a man do who has often prayed to God and never been answered?" The duchess prayed silently for wisdom. Then she looked directly at Brownlow and answered his question. Quoting James 4:3, the Duchess said, "You ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." The Word of God pierced Brownlow's heart like a sword. He was silent the rest of the evening.

Despite such providential warnings and calls to repentance, Brownlow did not change his ways. He didn't change because he had not yet experienced the new birth. He was not yet a new creation in Christ.

On Sundays, while many gathered to go to God's worship, Brownlow could be seen in the streets. He would pull his dog-cart behind him with a fishing rod and a basket. He was off to fish the entire day. The worship of God's people was of no interest to him. This was the general pattern of his life until God saved him when he was forty-four years old.

One night, in November 1854, everything in Brownlow's life began to change. Often in the years that followed, Brownlow would tell the story of his conversion. Here are his own words of what happened that night.

In the month of November 1854, one night when I was sitting playing at cards, It pleased God to make me concerned about my soul. The instrument used was a sensation of sudden illness, which led me to think that I was going to die. I said to my son, "I am a dead man. Take me upstairs." As soon as this was done, I threw myself down on the bed. My first thought then was, "Now, what will my forty-four years of following the devices of my own heart profit me? In a few minutes I shall be in hell, and what good will all these things do me, for which I have sold my soul?" At that moment I felt constrained to pray, but it was merely the prayer of a coward, a cry for mercy. I was not sorry for what I had done. But I was afraid of the punishment of my sin. And yet still there was something trying to prevent me putting myself on my knees to call for mercy, and that was the presence of my maidservant in the room, lighting the fire.

Brownlow was afraid to cry out to God. He was embarrassed and was afraid of what the maid would think. But by God's grace, he did it anyway.

By the grace of God, I did put myself on my knees before that girl, and I believe it was the turning-point with me. . . . By God's grace I was not prevented. I did pray, and though I am not what I should be, yet I am this day what I am, which at least is not what I was.

The next day, Brownlow announced to those in his house, "I am a changed man." He began writing letters to his friends to let them know what had happened. Many were amazed to hear about this change in his life. Had God really saved Brownlow and changed him? After forty-four years of sin, some doubted it. But the change was real.

Brownlow loved the Lord Jesus who had redeemed him from sin. And having received such grace, Brownlow wanted others to know about the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The Lord began to provide numerous opportunities for him to share the good news. He began to distribute tracts and Bibles to the people around town. He did not always find it easy to share his faith. But the love of Christ constrained him to speak on numerous occasions.

In the years that followed, Brownlow became known throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland as a preacher of the gospel. And the Lord used Brownlow to show forth His saving power by bringing thousands upon thousands to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

In 1859, Brownlow preached in Northern Ireland. The response to God's Word was momentous. It has been estimated that some 100,000 people joined the churches in Northern Ireland. In August of that year, Brownlow visited Londonderry. Newspapers estimated that 4,000 to 5,000 people gathered to hear him one Sunday. This gives the reader a sense of just how large the crowds were at times. Brownlow traveled throughout England and Scotland, speaking to massive audiences of a similar size to that of Londonderry.

Some might wonder at God's providence in Brownlow's life. Why didn't God save him when he was twelve or seventeen instead of forty-four? Couldn't Brownlow have been used for many more years for good? Of course, we can never question the wisdom of God. We can know with certainty that the Lord had a purpose in redeeming Brownlow when he was so old. It was in this way that Brownlow learned just how deep Christ's love is and how amazing God's grace is.

It was Augustine who said, "The more desperate was my disease, the greater honor redounded to the Physician who cured me." That was Paul's testimony as well. He considered himself the chief of sinners. And yet, he says, "the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant" to him (1 Tim. 1:14). And so it was with David who testified that God "brought me out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock" (Ps. 40:2). Praise be to God for redeeming sinners like Brownlow and sinners like you and me!

Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving,
And declare His works with rejoicing. (Ps. 107:21-22)

This story is an excerpt from *Taking Europe for Jesus*, published by Generations. Get a copy for your family this Christmas at www.generations.org/store

Story #3:

How Jesus Delivered an Armenian Christian Family from Harm

In 2010, a father, mother, and three children from Armenia packed up and moved. Their lives were in danger in their own country, so they left. After a while, they entered the country of the Netherlands.

“What will it be like in this new land?” one of the children asked.

“I don’t know,” the father replied. “But we’ll be safe here.”

Life was very different in the Netherlands. The family were strangers here. They had to learn to speak a new language. This language was Dutch. The children had to go to a new school and learn many new things. This was scary, but it was also a relief. The children knew their family would be safe in this new country.

Hayarpi was the oldest girl in the family. Then came her sister Warduhi. Their brother Seyran was the youngest. Together, these three children and their parents started a new life in the Netherlands.

For eight years the family lived in this Dutch country. Their father asked the government of the Netherlands if he could keep his family here. At first, the government said yes. Then, in 2018, it changed its mind.

“You can’t stay here any longer,” it said. “You must go home to Armenia.”

“But our lives will be in danger if we go home,” the father explained. “Please let us stay here where my children and my wife and I will be safe.”

But the government refused to let them stay. “You must leave our country,” it said. Then it sent policemen to arrest the family and send them back to Armenia.

“What will we do?” Hayarpi asked. “If they send us back, we might get killed!”

“We must find someone to help us,” the father said.

Quickly the family left their house before the police arrived. They went to find help. But where could they find someone to help them? Where could they go? Where would you go to find help?

The father knew where to go. He said, “We must go to the church. Maybe the pastor can help us.”

When they got to the church, the family told the pastor that the police were coming to arrest them.

“They want to send us back to Armenia,” the father explained.

The pastor listened as the father spoke. Then he thought for a few minutes.

“Some people in Armenia might kill you if the police send you back,” he said. “We must find a way to keep you safe. We will help you.”

Then the pastor smiled. “I have a plan,” he said. “We have an old Dutch law in our country. This law says that a policeman can’t arrest someone during a church service. Police aren’t allowed to come into the church and interrupt us while we worship God. If you stay inside our church, you will be safe as long as our church service lasts.”

“But how long will it last?” the father asked.

“As long as it needs to,” the pastor replied.

Silently a police car drove up to Bethel church. Bethel was a small red brick building in the city of The Hague. A policeman got out of the car and walked up to the church. At the door, the pastor met him.

“Can I help you?” he asked.

“Yes,” the policeman answered. “I’m here to arrest a family from Armenia. I believe they are inside your church.”

“Yes, they are,” the pastor said. “But our church service is going on right now.”

“I’m sorry,” the policeman said. “I don’t want to interrupt you while you worship God. I’ll just wait until the church service ends. Then I’ll arrest them.”

The pastor shook his head. “This service won’t end,” he said.

“What do you mean it won’t end?” the policeman asked in surprise. “All church services end.”

“This one won’t,” the pastor replied. “It won’t end until the government says the family can stay in our country. It won’t end until the family is safe.”

“Then your church service would have to last forever!” the policeman cried.

“Our service will last as long as it needs to,” the pastor said.

“That’s silly!” the policeman said. “A church service can’t last forever!”

“Our service will last as long as it needs to,” the pastor repeated.

The policeman stared at the pastor. “Are you serious?” he asked.

“Yes, of course,” the pastor replied. “This service will last long enough to keep this family safe.” Amazed, the policeman turned and walked away.

The pastor knew he would need help to keep the church service going. He called other pastors around the city. “Will you come and preach at our church?” he asked. “We have to have a very long service, and I need help.”

When the pastor explained about the family from Armenia, many other pastors came to help. They came from all over the Netherlands. Pastors from other countries flew in, too. All across the world, pastors came to help with the church service in the little red brick church in The Hague.

Inside the church, the pastor made a room where the family from Armenia could live. They ate and slept inside the church. They worshiped inside the church. The children even did their schoolwork at the church.

Day after day, the church service went on. Night after night, people came to join the service. Pastors preached. People prayed. The congregation joined in praise to God.

For weeks the church service went on. Hayarpi and her siblings were surprised that so many people came to help them. “How is this possible?” Hayarpi asked. “We have been living in this church for weeks. But people are still coming. Pastors are still flying in from all parts of the world to help us.”

Her mother smiled. “Seven days a week we praise and worship God,” she said.

“Yes,” said Hayarpi. “It makes the flowers in my heart grow. It makes me thankful in a way I’ve never been thankful before.”

Hayarpi looked at all the people in the church. They had come from far and near. They spoke many languages. But they were all part of God’s church around the world. They were all one family in Jesus Christ.

“I was afraid before,” Hayarpi said. “But now I have hope. God has given us this love as a gift. We are safe in His house. We are safe in the arms of Jesus.”

For months the church service lasted. For over two thousand hours, people kept coming to worship God together. Almost a thousand pastors or preachers came to help. More than 12,000 people came, too.

Then, after 96 days, the government changed its mind. In January 2019, it said, “We will let this family stay in the Netherlands. We won’t send them back to Armenia.”

Great rejoicing filled the little church on that day. God had answered their prayers! He had kept the family safe. And now He had given them a new home to live in!

Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness,
And for His wonderful works to the children of men!
Let them exalt Him also in the assembly of the people,
And praise Him in the company of the elders. (Ps. 107:31-32)

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