

## *Cross-Cultural Perspectives from the General Director*



### *Deaf by Choice*

Ever notice that hearing can be turned on or off, at will? I think it was Charles Swindoll, years ago, who related the following synopsis. In the stillness of the night, a mother, who normally sleeps soundly, can hear the cry of her little baby. She jumps out of bed and like a speeding bullet is at the crib ready for the early morning feeding. All along, the father, in the same room, sleeps undisturbed. He is oblivious that his wife has been up several times in the night.

What is the difference? Both have the same ability to hear. The maternal instinct of the mother is sharpened to when the slightest movement in the crib brings her jolting out of bed. She slept with one ear open, while her husband slept with both ears closed. He was deaf by choice.

And men seem to have that unique capacity. A wife tells her husband something, and hours later he insists she never said it or he never heard it. The truth is, he didn't. He was deaf by choice. His wife's voice and persistent speech go in the proverbial "one ear and out the other" never making contact with the brain. (Of course, I might add, this phenomenon never happens to me. Ha!)

Open ears and a willing heart have always been prerequisites to hearing from God. With the hustle and bustle of life, it is sometimes difficult to hear His voice above and beyond all the others. Are you listening? That is the best place to begin. Have ears attuned to what the Spirit is saying. No wonder, seven times in the Book of Revelation, John admonishes, "Hey, guys! Hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches!" God was trying to get their attention. Some of them were plainly deaf by choice.

As missionaries, it is easy to pass over the voice of God, because it is all too familiar, or because we choose to deaf by choice. We need to be sensitive. I pray that you and I will hear the voice of God above all the others that jostle for our attention. It was His voice that directed us into missions to start with. It continues to keep us field-bound. Remember the young mother. She slept with one ear open. The father slept, with both ears closed. Open your ears! God may be trying to speak to you. Let Him never find you...deaf by choice.