



Encouraging Words with DARLENE SALA

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God So Loved that He Gave...

We were in Vladivostok, where we had just spent some very special time listening to Russian pastors share their hearts about their needs. Each family lives on only about \$200 a month. The city looked so run down to me compared with western cities. The main road was okay, but the others had potholes you could get lost in.

Late that evening we went to the airport to catch the night flight to Siberia. You've never seen such pushing and shoving! We stood in four different lines, if you can call them that, and paid for overweight luggage not only on our suitcases but hand-carries too. The plane was old, and safety rules were not followed. Hand-carries went on the floor anywhere you found space for them. The biggest problem, though, were the Siberian-size mosquitoes. Soon I had some pretty big welts on my arms and neck. I was feeling culture shock and thinking, "I NEVER want to come back here," when I noticed the music that was playing—"O Solo Mio." It has Christian words that go, "Down from His glory...my God and Savior came." Suddenly I felt so ashamed. What were a few mosquitoes and jetlag and shoving crowds? If the Lord could leave the glories of heaven to come to earth with all its sin and degradation, what right do I have to complain?

Jonathan Goforth, missionary to China, had no intention of becoming a missionary. But he heard another missionary tell how he was struggling with no success to challenge anyone to come to help him in what is now Taiwan. Goforth wrote, "As I listened to these words, I was overwhelmed with shame....There was I, bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, daring to dispose of my life as I pleased....From that hour I became a...missionary."ⁱ

Let's remember that "God so loved the world that He *gave*" (John 3:16). Can we do less?

ⁱ Rosalind Goforth, *Goforth of China*, publisher unknown.