



## Encouraging Words with DARLENE SALA

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### A Beautiful Woman

Evelyn Harris was a beautiful woman who grew up on an estate near London—so beautiful, in fact, that men competed for the privilege of painting her portrait.

But with her husband, Jesse Brand, she left the luxuries of London to become a missionary among the primitive hill people of India. There a son was born--Paul, who at age nine went away to England for schooling. During this time, his father died from fever, and his mother returned to London a broken woman, beaten down by pain and grief. When he first saw her in London, Paul remembers thinking, “Could this bent, haggard woman possibly be my mother?”

Against all advice, however, Evelyn insisted on returning to India and pouring out her life nursing the sick, rearing orphans, pulling teeth, clearing jungle land, and preaching the Gospel. She traveled constantly, sleeping in a tiny mosquito net shelter, wrapped in a raincoat with an umbrella propped over her head.

By this time Paul had become a gifted doctor to the lepers of India. When at age 75 his mother broke her hip, Paul asked her, “Shouldn’t you think about retiring? Surely you realize that even the best of people do sometimes retire before they reach 80.” But no argument could dissuade her.

“Paul, if I leave, who will help the village people? In any case, why preserve this old body if it’s not going to be used where God needs me?” It was her final answer.

Paul wrote of her, “In old age Mother was thin and crippled, her face furrowed with deep wrinkles. And yet I can truly say that Evelyn Harris Brand was a beautiful woman, to the very end.”

At age 95 Evelyn died and was buried among her people. But her spirit lives on in the faces of thousands of villagers across five mountain ranges of India.<sup>i</sup> As the Bible says, “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those...who proclaim salvation” (Isaiah 52:7).

<sup>i</sup> Dr. Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, *The Gift of Pain* (Manila, Philippines: OMF Literature Inc., 2000), 306-309.