



HEIRS OF THE PAST, CHILDREN OF THE PRESENT, & MAKERS OF THE FUTURE



Paula Busuulwa reflects on how our heritage as Christians and health professionals outworks in our calling and our responsibility to the generations coming up behind us.



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attended a Church of England all-girls school a stone's throw from the CMF Offices in London. Each year, in the middle of March, we would mark the school's annual commemoration service by walking to Southwark Cathedral and wearing a rose to remember the payment for the school's rent when it was initially founded. This was a symbolic way of reminding us of our school's heritage, celebrating the past and looking to the future, helpfully summarised in our school motto '*Heirs of the Past, Children of the Present, and Makers of the Future.*'

Now one may be wondering what any of this has to do with the celebration of CMF's 75th birthday? Surely a school anniversary and the charity

established to unite and equip Christian medical professionals have very little in common. Yet, as I was thinking about the forthcoming celebrations, I was reminded of how much we owe to those who have gone before us, even as we celebrate what God is doing in the present and what is to come. On a more personal note, I was reminded of the faithfulness of God to me, and how the ministry of CMF has been instrumental in my faith journey.

heirs of the past

As a secondary school student, I looked to the older girls who had a gone before me as an inspiration and example, they were in some ways the heirs of the past.

Last October I had the privilege of attending the CMF Seniors Conference, and I shared more about this in the last *Triple Helix*. The whole conference was a fun and unique experience, hearing the stories of the past and seeing the faithfulness of God to so many older and wiser brothers and sisters. Whilst this was inspiring, what was the most remarkable was the willingness of these older clinicians to inspire and support the next generation of junior doctors.

As current junior doctors, we are all building on the foundations laid by our many predecessors; those who taught us, directly and indirectly. They are the Pauls to the many Timothies of CMF, including me.

children of the present

It's quite possible that if you are reading this article, you are one of the hundreds of students who joined us at Yarnfield Park for the recent CMF Student Conference. I am always inspired by the enthusiasm, zeal, and commitment of our student members, some of whom travel several hours from the farthest corners of the British Isles and beyond, to attend the weekend conference. This year, we were reminded of the very real challenges the biblical Daniel faced, and that we, like him, must remain firm in our convictions, to serve Christ despite the many hostile environments we find ourselves in.

I know that for many of us, it was in our student years, even whilst we were 'children', that we came to faith or made it our own for the first time. And it was quite likely we also became members of CMF. As I listened to this year's student talks, I was reminded of how I, seven years prior, had sat in those same seats at Yarnfield Park, as a final year student, excited for what lay ahead but also aware that I, like Daniel, would have to make a commitment to stand firm. Looking back, I cannot say that I have always chosen the right path, but I am so grateful for the firm teachings I have received as a 'child' that point me back to Jesus.

makers of the future

As an eleven-year-old walking to Southwark Cathedral, I would have never thought that I would be back there again on a warm July morning over twelve years later, graduating from medical school, but this time with purple sash rather than a red rose. This remains one of the most significant moments of my life, not least because it took place in the cathedral I had visited since I was a child (quite literally). But it also marked a transition, from

student to doctor, from child to adult. Of course, graduation is really only the beginning, and nearly seven years later, I can see the many ways I am not the same doctor, or indeed person, I was in July 2017. I have learnt so much both as a doctor and a Christian. I can honestly say that God has used medicine to sanctify and mould me more than I would have expected. I still count it a privilege to be a part of the medical field, being the hands of Christ to people in their most vulnerable and memorable moments.

Recalling my first Junior Doctors Conference in October 2017, only two months into working as an FY1, I remember being so excited to see other juniors putting Christ at the forefront of their careers. At that time, I would have never thought that I would have the opportunity to help organise this

conference and serve in the way I have been able to on the Junior Doctors Committee. I definitely would not have thought that so many amazing individuals within CMF would become dear friends to me, and that together, we would help build up and inspire the next generation of doctors, the makers of the future.

conclusion

Drawing back to the title and inspiration for this piece, '*heirs of the past, children of the present, and makers of the future*', I see how this is not only relevant to my school life, but to the Christian life as a whole. We, as Christians, are heirs and co-heirs with Christ, heirs to a glorious inheritance

bought with something far better than roses; the blood of Christ. Within CMF and my wider Christian life I am thankful for those who have gone before us, helping us to see and savour Christ more fully.

We are also children of the present, which means that even though we may feel like we have much to learn and many skills to develop, we are still of great worth and value as children of God. If you are a student today, you have a number of opportunities to serve your friends in vast and unique ways, being a sweet aroma of Christ and light in your universities and medical schools. In the words of Jim Elliot '*Wherever you are, be all there! Live to the hilt every situation you believe to be the will of God.*'

Lastly, we are makers of the future. This is the hardest and possibly weightiest of our roles. But every decision we make to serve God, wherever he calls us to in medicine and beyond, is building a lifetime of decisions that, hopefully, lead us closer to Jesus. We are making our future every day, through the way we live our lives before a watching world, and for his glory alone. ●

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key points



- Looking back and learning from those who have gone before us, living and dead, it is vital to understanding who we are and where we are now.
- We live out our present calling by standing firm on the foundation laid in us by our predecessors.
- We too will pass on that heritage to the generations coming up behind us, so we need to continue to build on the rock that is Jesus.

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