

Helping Missionaries With Our "Tea Bags"!

Something to think about

A number of years ago, I spent several weeks doing volunteer work at a mission headquarters. During that time, I was able to observe the day-to-day life of the people who lived there, as well as of those who were just passing through - on their way to their chosen fields of service.

As with most mission organizations, the workers relied solely upon the financial support of churches and individuals. And often people would donate not only a financial gift, but also tangible goods of various kinds.

Quite thankfully, many of the items that were donated were very useful. Many were direct answers to prayers that the giver might have had no knowledge about. (But God did!)

Unfortunately, there were also the other kind of donation: items that were beyond use, broken or worn out, or simply of no value to missions. And too often, these donations would come with a request for a tax-deductible receipt...

We need to help and to encourage those who have given their lives for the cause of Christ - not only financially, but also prayerfully. But we need to remember that the way we do so is a reflection of our own attitude toward Christ.

Dennis Hinks ©1994, 2004

Background for the "Tea Bag Certificate" (below)

I've heard a story that supposedly happened more than 100 years ago, in which some well-meaning individuals carefully dried their used tea bags and sent them to missionaries. To be fair, tea bags were a lot more valuable back then, and people *did* frequently reuse them. But nevertheless, it still seems to me that it was a rather poor and misguided attempt to do something special for the missionaries! (I'm tempted to use the word "stupid," but I want to be nice!)

Besides... Instead of using 100 tea bags and then sending all 100 *used* tea bags to the missionary, why not keep 50 at home (and use them twice) and send 50 *unused* ones to the missionary? Everyone could still have 100 uses... and you'd save on shipping/postage costs!

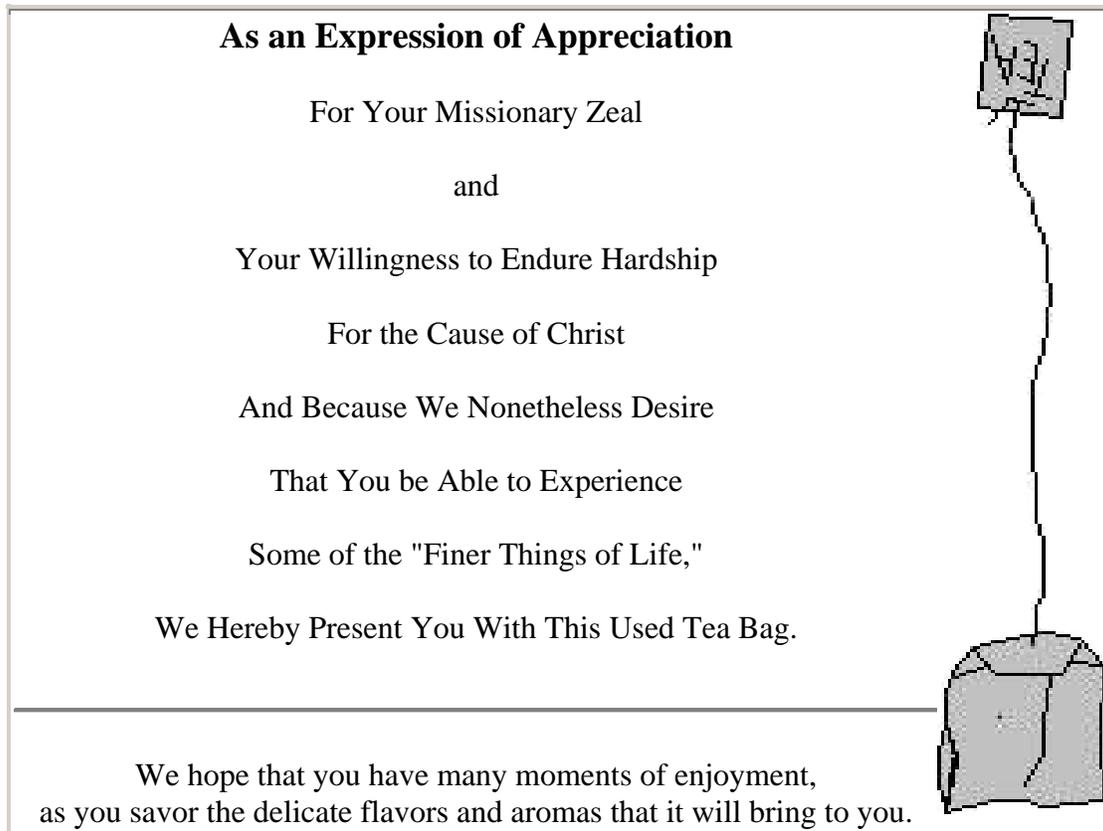
Time for creativity!

Make your own "Tea Bag Certificate," complete with tea bag! Present it to your favorite missionary - along with something else that is more practical! *Make sure that you do better than those well-meaning individuals of a previous century!*

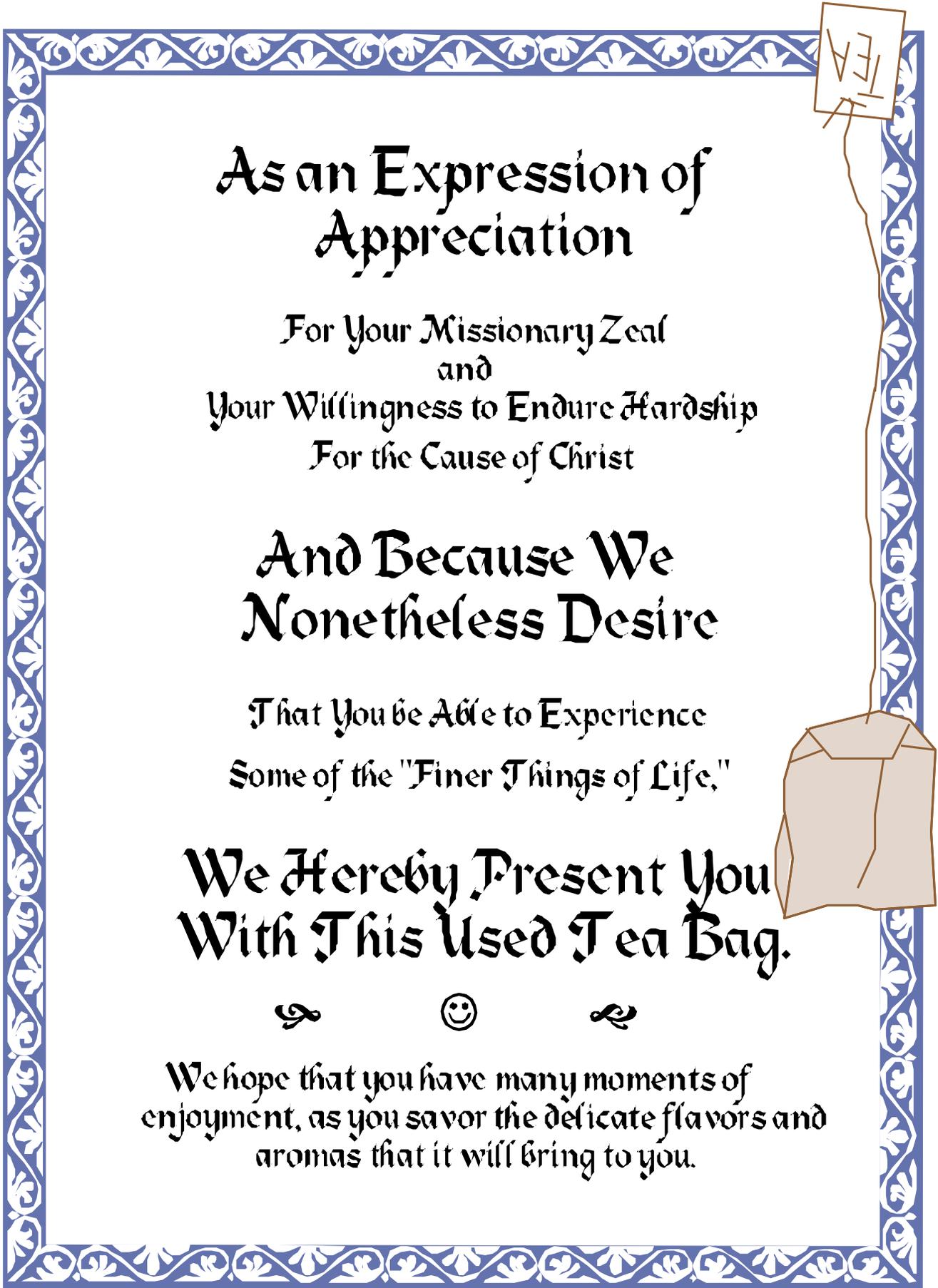
The message (above) is serious, but the certificate (below) is intended to be humorous. Copy the words and use your creativity to make an "official-looking" certificate.

This was originally done in 1994. The original certificate was printed using an appropriate-looking font ("Old English" or some type of calligraphy). Instead of a picture of a tea bag, an authentic used tea bag was attached - carefully dried, of course!

Here is a "rough draft" that contains the words for the certificate:



On the next page is a link to a **PDF** example of a certificate. Being only an example, I did not go to great pains to get a "certificate-looking" border and I kept the file size small (resulting in grainy text). I included the tea bag *drawing*, since I can't attach a real tea bag in a PDF file! Finally, since I used clipart for the border, and am putting it on the internet, I had to attach the strange copyright notice at the bottom - the "licensor" (or something like that) made me do it!



As an Expression of Appreciation

For Your Missionary Zeal
and
Your Willingness to Endure Hardship
For the Cause of Christ

And Because We Nonetheless Desire

That You Be Able to Experience
Some of the "Finer Things of Life,"

We Hereby Present You With This Used Tea Bag.



We hope that you have many moments of
enjoyment, as you savor the delicate flavors and
aromas that it will bring to you.