



BAPTIST MISSIONS TO FORGOTTEN PEOPLES

Thriving Together as Friends



Jonathan & Rachelle Lyons
President

Baptist Missions to Forgotten Peoples is a joint effort. I have said for years that everyone in ministry needs friends. The sooner we realize that we are not competitors, but co-laborers, the sooner we will be more effective in our labor together for the Lord. We thank the Lord for the many types of friends who work together to help BMFP reach its highest potential.

Leadership Friends: The BMFP leadership and office staff are not just a group of people who work in an office on a day-to-day basis. We are friends who enjoy working together for the common cause of helping and assisting local churches and missionaries. We enjoy being around each other. Many times, we get together outside of the office to do different things. We help and encourage each other. We are not just coworkers; we are friends!

Laboring Friends: The Lord has provided BMFP with wonderful board members and administrators who work on behalf of our missionaries. Over the years, the Lord has grown our friendships, and we are always excited to be able to get together to plan, encourage, and fellowship. Our labor becomes joy as we get to serve together!

Loving Friends: We often say that BMFP is a family! The Lord has blessed us with some of the best, loving missionaries that anyone could imagine. We are not perfect, and yes, we have our issues at times, but it is a joy to be able to love on and encourage our over 120 missionary families around the world! When the BMFP family gets together, lasting memories are made!

Linking Friends: Finally, there are the pastors that support BMFP and our missionaries. What a joy to work alongside those who have entrusted us with the watch care of their missionaries. The common cause of getting the gospel to a lost and dying world links us together. Only eternity will tell the impact all these friendships will have on souls around the world! Thank you for being a friend of BMFP!

Do No Harm

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man"
– Psalm 118:8

One of our duties as Christians and missionaries is to help people understand that their dependence should be on God rather than man. Our godly vision, under the Great Commission, should lead us to put a plan in place as to how to live this out. Oftentimes, we think we are doing the right thing to help others, when in practice, we are causing long-term hurt.

It has been said that in order to be a leader, you must be a reader! As those in ministry, we are called not only to trust God, but also to grow in wisdom, and one way to do that is by being lifelong readers. I believe it is of utmost importance that those in ministry continue reading and learning at every opportunity. One book that influenced my understanding of modern missions was an unusual book called "Toxic Charity," by Bob Lupton. He was a veteran urban ministry leader with over forty years of experience. In his book, he offered some profound insight as to how churches and missionaries can actually harm those whom they desire to help. I (and I suspect many others) had no prior knowledge of this important subject matter before reading this book. Here, I will share five important observations that he made concerning how harm is inflicted unintentionally by churches:

1. They do for nationals what God intended and expects them to do themselves.
2. They resolve crises for nationals by superseding cultural norms.
3. They employ and/or overcompensate nationals against culturally acceptable financial norms.
4. They hire nationals to do the work of the ministry meant to be a voluntary giving of themselves.
5. Instead of growing the church through faith and obedience to develop a ministry of mercy to their own, they grow a church to be dependent on them, never developing faith, obedience, or mercy of their own.

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Eli & Katie Guiltner
BMFP Missionaries in Japan

**Continued from front page
by Eli Guiltner**

Unfortunately, as a missionary, I have personally witnessed these actions performed and have resolved to prayerfully use caution and seek wisdom in these areas. Unintentional harm is inflicted, especially in the area of finances, given that as Americans, we are some of the richest people on earth. Is that next multiple-thousand-dollar project potentially creating unnecessary dependence upon us rather than God? I believe it is vital to carefully consider these points and to consider how our own ministries may be hurting those whom we intend to help. If we can learn from our mistakes, we can further the cause of Christ for world missions!

**God Keeps His Promises
by Rachelle Lyons**

About 8 years ago, I believe I was going into depression. I didn't realize it at that time. My mom was diagnosed with cancer, and they gave her 18 months to live. I was traveling every weekend to help take care of her and also caring for my aging father. It was very difficult to see my mom, who was our spiritual rock, in constant pain. Especially knowing that this terrible disease would eventually take her life. Along with that, there were other family and work issues that we were trying to navigate.

One day, I found a missionary blog that talked about depression. As I listened to it, I realized that the points made were all promises that are found in the Word of God. I also realized that they were the same verses and counseling that I had given to the ladies in our church. It was not that I didn't know them. It was that I was so concerned and so focused on my feelings that I was not focusing on the Word. I decided then that I needed to take my own counsel and put into action the promises that God has for me.

The word promise, as a noun, is a declaration assuring that one will or will not do. As a verb, promise is to give an assurance of; undertake in the future.

The Bible is full of promises that we can claim. In Hebrews 13:5, He promised He "will never leave us nor forsake us." Romans 8:28 gives us a promise that

"all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Mark 10:27 tells us, "with God, all things are possible." When we are faced with exceedingly difficult situations, claiming His promises will encourage us to keep going on and not quit.

Third Culture Kids (TCKs)

These kids want to belong and to feel normal. However, when they are constantly being prodded and questioned about their "weird" life, they are reminded how normal they aren't. Instead of quizzing the differences, it is better to form friendships around common interests and experiences.

News from the Field

**Jim & Ruth Bianchi
Canada**

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Last month I had a most unusual phone call from a lady that knew my name but couldn't speak English. I simply replied that, "I am Pastor Bianchi" and ask her, "how can I help you?" At that moment she gave the phone to her daughter who knew English. She told me that their family was from Iran and they spoke Farsi.

She said they wanted to change their religion from Islam to Christianity. I asked how she got my number? She said from the immigration official. This had to be from the Lord, because I don't know anyone in immigration! So, I met the family at a Tim Horton's and talked about Islam and the difference in Christianity, with the 20 years old daughter being my interpreter. They were all ears, yet I realised that the mom was the one truly interested. I knew they were not ready for a formal invitation to accept Christ. So, I simply invited them to church to experience a Christian service. They came and stayed for the fellowship too. I told them that I didn't know of a good Farsi speaking church. But if they would like, I would be willing to meet with them and help with learning English and the Bible. They thought that was a wonderful idea. Long story short, the mom and daughter came to our home on Thursday afternoon and I led the mother to Christ. She was in tears!

Ruthie and her hugged and shared tears. The next Sunday, I baptized her in the chilling "polar bear cold" waters of Lake Ontario along with two other ladies at our church BBQ picnic. It was truly a special day (and a hot one at 90 degrees). Pastor Jack Young (Lighthouse Bible Baptist Church, Webster, NY) was our guest speaker that day. His morning and afternoon messages were deeply inspirational. The Lord is doing marvelous things in Toronto!

***"A leader in the church is much more than one who holds an office. He has been divinely appointed to his position. Therefore, there were some characteristics that were not to be permitted in a church leader's life."
- Bill Bradley***

***For Thou Shalt Go To All That
I Shall Send Thee***



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