

Letters from the Persecuted Church

Spring 2004
Newsletter

*When your words came, I ate them;
they were my joy and my heart's delight, for
I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty."
Jeremiah 15:16*



GO FORTH MINISTRY

An outreach to persecuted Christians since 1986

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Over the past years we have heard repeated requests coming from the Chinese and Vietnamese Christians. "Please help us get Bibles!"

It seems that there are never enough Bibles for them! The fact is, the more Bibles we take to them, the more the gospel spreads. This is resulting in a continually increase of new believers who don't have Bibles. I've included a few letters from them in this report.

Though it is true that in some of the larger cities the Christians have access to Bibles, the vast majority of believers, about 80% who live in the countryside, still have very limited or no access to the Word of God for which they continue to pray and wait for.



The gospel has been rapidly spreading among the H're minority group in Vietnam. These believers have recently experienced much persecution for their faith, including the beating death of their pastor by local authorities. But despite the risks and suffering they continue to boldly take the gospel to surrounding villages both near and far.

Letter #1

The Bible is very important to me. When I became Christian, the first thing that I really wanted is the Bible. I don't know when I will be able to have one Bible. I thank God that in the pass four years many Bibles have been brought for us. I thank God for these Bibles. I am now have one Bible. The Bible is very important to me. I read it everyday. I want every body to have Bible to read but it does not have enough for everybody who can read. There are still have many believers do not have Bible to read. We need more Bibles for them both OT's and NT's but the NT, we need the pocket one.

When I have the Bible to read, it helps me to know God better than before and it draws me close to God each day. It gives me knowledge to teach the believers in our village. If I do not have Bible to read, my life will not know what God wants me to do. If the believers do not have Bible to read, their faith will not grow in

Christ.

Please send more Bible for us because Bible is like food for our spiritual to eat. We have food for our physical need. We also need food (the Bible) for our spiritual need too.

"We do not want the Bible to leave us for a day or night because the Bible is the food for our spirits."

Letter #2

When I first became a Christian, I heard a man spoke through a radio broadcast saying about the Bible. I really wanted the Bible that he talked about. I look for this Bible for a long time but I could not get any Bible.

When Bro. - - found us in 1994, we asked him to bring Bibles for us. Since then he brought many Bibles for us but not enough. In the last four years, Bro. - - told us that he has some friends to help him bring Bibles for us. Since then we got more Bibles.

We thank God for those who love God and provide Bibles for us (the Hmong believers in China). Right now in our area at least one family gets a book. We still need more Bible because one family has two three persons can read the Bible but the Bible is not enough for them. Please bring more Bibles for us.

Letter #3

I became Christian for more than ten years. In Vietnam, there are so many believers do not have Bibles to read. We need more Bible for the believers in Vietnam to read. There are many believers really need Bibles but we do not know where to get them. We heard that the believers in (another place) have ways to have Bibles. We went there to ask them to have some Bible from them. They told us that if we need Bibles, we can go to there and they will ask the people who bring Bible there for us. We came here and meet you here so after we met you, you brought many Bibles for us but not enough for the believers. We need more Bible in Vietnam.

If possible for the future, can you print the very small Bible for us because in Vietnam, there is very difficult for us to carry it with us to every where we go. We do not want the Bible to leave us for a day or night because the Bible is the food for our spirits. Whenever we do not have food for our spirits, it seems we are very hungry for. These for those who have Bible to read. We still have thousands of believers that need Bibles. They need Bible to read. The only comfort us when we face persecution is the Bible. If we do not have Bible to read, we will not live or either we will go back to worship or believe the old way as we believed before when we faced persecution. Many believers are waiting for the Bible.

Letter #5

As I know, the Hmong believers in Vietnam are more than two hundred thousands. I met thousands believers who asked me about Bibles. I did not have any Bible for them. I don't know what to do. I told them that keep praying and asking from God. He will provide for us. There are still many places that I have not met them, they also need Bibles.

The Hmong believers in Vietnam's great need now is leadership training or learning Bible because when we become Christians, no one teach us the Bible. Not even learning Bible, the Bible itself some people have not seen. I know that it is very difficult for us to bring Bibles from Hanoi but we have to go and bring them to the believers. Many believers got caught by the police because they carried Bibles to the believers.

We also need you to print the song book for us because we are really need the song book. I hope that you will bring more Bibles and song books for us. We also thank you very much for all of you who print the Bibles and bring them for us. We do not have anything to give for you or to be a gift for you but we pray God to bless all of you who love us and do everything to help us to grow in Christ. Thank you very much.

Letter #4

I am from the Black Hmong minority group. In our village, we have 90 families. All of us are believers. We became Christian through a young lady who came from the Christian family. She got married with one of our sons. She told us to listen to the Hmong broadcast in FEBC. When we listened to it, the whole village become Christian. After we became Christian, we heard the pastor told us in the radio broadcast that we have to read Bible. We did not know what is Bible. We knew that there is a Chinese Church that locates about 6 hours from riding bus.

We went there to look for Hmong Bible but they did not have any Hmong Bible for us. They gave us some Chinese Bibles. We did not know how to read it. We brought them to some believers who could read Chinese to read them.

We did not know where we could get the Hmong Bible until Bro. - - came to our village, we told him to bring Bible to us. The year after he came back to visit us, he brought some Bible for us. That was the first time that we saw the Bible. We were very happy to have Bible to read. After that, he brought more Bibles for us. Right now, almost every family has Bible to read. We still need more Bibles because in one family, we have two three people can read the Bible but there is only one Bible.

The Bible really helps me to know Jesus Christ and teaches me to live a holy life to Christ. After I have Bible to read, my life have changed to live closer to God. I am a leader in our church. I know that if the members of the Church do not have Bible to read, their faith will not grow in Christ. We need Bibles but we do not know where we can get them. I thank God that after Bro. - - visited us, he brought many Bibles for us but not enough for everybody who can read the Bible. We still need more Bible. Please bring more Bibles for us. Thanks.

Papa D. is an underground church pastor in Vietnam whom we've mentioned in past letters from time to time. When he recently learned about the beating death of a pastor from the H're minority group, Papa D. went to them and took up the work of their martyred leader. Needless to say, it was a very dangerous decision that he made and it came with no guarantees that he would not be the next martyr.

In fact it wasn't long before the local authorities learned of his mission and gathered a group of men to beat him. But this time the entire village, both Christians and non-Christians, came to his defense and protected Papa D. from physical harm. Unsure of how to handle the crowd, the police proceeded to impose heavy fines against him and those in his group. But even that backfired and the most they ended up paying was about US\$1.20 - equal to about a days wages in that part of Vietnam.

With God's help and intervention, Papa D. has continued on in his work and has raised up five new Christian leaders from among the H're tribe who have begun evangelizing in new villages, some quite far from their homes. As new souls are being added to God's Kingdom, the need for Bibles and discipleship training is rapidly growing. These young leaders are committed to the task and are making huge sacrifices, traveling long distances on foot to encourage and teach these new believers, all the time knowing that at any moment they could also pay the ultimate price as their former pastor had for this 'illegal' activity.



A Christian leader praying for a Christian H're family. Please pray for these brave evangelists, their families, and their work.

Papa D. mentioned to me as he finished reporting these recent events how much he wished that each of these five young Christian leaders among the H're could at least have a bicycle so that they could spend less time away from their fields and families. I asked him how much a bicycle would cost. "About US\$50.00 each," he said.

I just had to laugh! How wonderful the Lord is! Just a short time before the Lord had miraculously provided the money - though we didn't understand why it at the time - so that we could immediately help Papa D. with enough to purchase four bicycles.

It happened like this...

The \$300.00 miracle!

It happened on our most recent trip to China and Vietnam towards the end of March. It was a rather different sort of trip this time. For one thing, I didn't have a team of people with me as I normally do. That in itself was a refreshing experience allowing for some precious opportunities to meet people while on a very flexible schedule. I was free to just 'go with the flow'. One of the things on my 'to do' list was to deliver the quarterly supply of support money for 13 Christian leaders and families that Go Forth Ministry supports in Vietnam.

Randy Fath who was accompanying me on this trip had just read the story of Jesus feeding the 5000 in his daily devotion guide that morning. Having finished with that reading, he casually flipped back to the Old Testament and 'just happened' to open to II Kings 4, the story of the Widows Oil. He told me later that he had wondered why God brought these two similar stories to his attention that day and was anticipating something 'special' might happen.

While Randy was having his devotions, I was preparing for the day ahead. I carefully counted out the two packs of \$100 bills, plus a twenty, totaling \$1820, the three months of support money I was to give. Really, I had prepared it carefully! I had one pack of ten \$100 bills and another pack of eight. These were kept in a separate envelope. I count it again carefully, just to be sure - for at least the fifth time. This was just before Brother N. came to our little hotel room in Ho Chi Minh City that morning. I knew the amount in the envelope was right!

I thought that it would be best to count the money once again in front of Brother N. so that we would be no question between us of the amount. First I counted out the little stack of ten \$100 bills. Then I counted out the stack of eight \$100 bills. But amazingly it totaled up to \$900! I put the extra \$100 aside, certain that I had made a mistake. I counted again. And again I counted \$900! Once again I put the extra \$100 aside with the other \$100.

This really didn't make any sense to me! I knew without a doubt that there was only \$800 in the stack. But I had already found an additional \$200. How could this be? I counted it again. Again there was \$900! Now I had an extra \$300! I was very perplexed, but had this sneaky feeling that God was up to something. Randy was just quietly observing. He understood. But me? Not a chance! I was just happy that our rapidly shrinking budget had gotten stretched and I just assumed that perhaps in my old age I had finally forgotten the simple art of counting to ten.

I counted the stack of \$100 bills again. This time I counted the accurate amount. I counted it several more times before I finally handed the \$1820.00 over to Brother N., \$300 richer on my part. Or was I?

God had his plan in this - of course! Just a short time later Papa D. came into the room and as a passing comment mentioned about the need for several bicycles. It didn't take long to understand why we had the extra cash. I quickly gave him \$200 for four bicycles. But I still had the other extra \$100 and was left to ponder what other 'need' would yet arise.

It didn't take long. On our arrival in Shen Zhen, China a few days later, I was absolutely amazed to be met at the front of the hotel by a snow haired, dear saint of a lady we had known years before but had lost all contact with. Traveling by herself from her lonely home on the China side bordering North Korea, she had arrived safely in the city with intentions of heading directly on to Hong Kong. But before reaching the border, her passport was stolen - a major headache for an American in China in a hurry and on a limited budget. For her, applying for a new passport would mean about a week-long stay at the hotel in China where we 'just happened' to also be staying.

It was a wonderful reunion! Later, in a typical question missionaries often ask each other, I inquired how her finances were holding out.

"I'm OK", she replied, in a typical 'faith' missionary response.

"But that's not what I asked," I challenged. And after taking the time to press for details, I found that she didn't have the money 'in reality' (yet) to pay the impending hotel bill. How wonderful to be able to tell her how the Lord had already prepared the money ahead of the need. Not a few tears were shed as this dear ladies' faith became the reality of the Lords promised provision to her, a limitless source that those who 'live by faith' must repeatedly choose to rely on.

And the lesson of the \$300? Hmm... Perhaps Randy has the answer! For myself, I'm reminded that God really, REALLY does love us and that we really, REALLY don't need to worry - about anything - except our obedience and love for Jesus ...and what a long way I have yet to go in that I might add! Thus the lesson is simply all about Gods wonderful, amazing grace!

A 'good news' update!

In our last newsletter there was a copy of a letter from a Vietnamese man whose house had been burned down twice and who had been frequently beaten along with other family members for their faith. This man had requested permission from the officials to rebuild his house but the terms for approval required him of renounce Jesus Christ. A friend of ours in another ministry who had the original letter reported this mans case to the U.S. Ambassador for Human Rights.

Since that time the man's situation has dramatically improved and the supervisors of the commune where he lives have been replaced.

It is reported that this is the first time the Vietnamese government has by their actions acknowledged that their have been errors – it should be noted that this has happened JUST in the last few months while many people have been specifically praying for this man!

You can GO!



Sign up now

for the next Bible Courier Mission Trip!

Note: We can accommodate only ten people per trip

**Summer 2-week Bible courier trip to
Hong Kong, China, & Vietnam!**

June 7 - 20, 2004

The trip includes 4 or 5 days in Hue and Hoi An, Vietnam. The estimated cost for this trip is \$2080.00 (not including a suggested \$350.00 - \$450.00 for food and sightseeing)

**Fall 2-week Bible courier trip to
Hong Kong and China!**

November 7 - 20, 2004

The estimated cost for this trip is \$1880.00 (not including a suggested \$250.00 - \$300.00 for food and sightseeing)

This price includes your visas, daily courier travel expenses in and out of China, accommodations, and airfare. Not included is food. You will need an additional \$250.00 - \$300.00 for food and any sightseeing costs.

HOW TO SIGN UP: Please contact us as soon as possible and no later than 8 weeks before the departure date. Send a \$300.00 (tax-deductible) down payment to 'Go Forth Ministry'. Please mail it to: P. O. Box 17, Apple Creek, OH 44606. The balance will be due one month before our departure.

PASSPORT: Make sure that your passport has 4 or 5 blank pages for the many stamps you'll be getting on your frequent trips through Hong Kong and China immigrations. If you don't have a passport or if it expires on or before the date of our arrival back to the USA, please make sure that you receive a new passport before the sign-up deadline (it usually takes from 2-4 weeks to process).

Opportunities to invest in God's Kingdom!

Vietnamese pastor support

Go Forth Ministry is financially assisting 13 pastors/Christian leaders and their families in Vietnam. Though our goal is to see them fully self-supported, this is not happening - yet. You can financially help assist a pastor or, even better, discuss with us ways to help them become self supporting. We have ideas and are working towards that end but we really need involvement from someone gifted in business.

Until then - it costs between \$35.00 to \$50.00 to help a village pastor and family for one month. There are many already serving, but literally doing so on empty stomachs.

\$30,000 for 10,000 Hmong Bibles

With the success of the printing and distribution of 5,000 Hmong Bibles, we are now making plans to begin printing another 10,000 copies. The cost for this will be about \$3.00 per Bible. We are hoping to reach our goal of raising \$30,000 by the middle of this summer. Will you pray about being a part helping to get God's Word to these precious Hmong people?

\$3,500 needed to finish the Recovery Center for leprosy victims in Vietnam.

After several years of delays, the land purchase in central Vietnam has been approved and building has begun for a simple facility where people with leprosy can go to recover from related surgeries and medical procedures. The village where these outcasts from society are forced to live is a painful 20km walk from the hospital. No recovery rooms are provided for these victims though, so Brother H. has regularly taken these suffering people directly from surgery into his one room home where he and his family care for them as best they can. As a result, hundreds have come to know the Lords saving grace!

Papa D.'s House

About 3 years ago our dear friends home was completely destroyed by village officials because he was holding Christian services in it. We would like to help him finish rebuilding on some other land his family owns. The remaining cost is about \$5000.

"The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ"

New opportunities have recently been made available to possibly get an official ISPN number from the government of China to legally print this book for resale in that country. To date we've been able to print and distribute about 100,000 copies 'unofficially' in China and many thousands more in Hong Kong and beyond. Please pray for Gods favor as we pursue this opportunity into uncharted territory.

Thank you, thank you, thank you! Thank so much for your prayers, encouragement and support! We really mean it! And we say thanks, not just from us, but on behalf of so many unseen people in different cultures and nations who eternally benefit from your investment in them. God bless you!

Serving Jesus with joy,

Wendell & Daisy Martin