

Faithful to our mission ... in troubled times



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come to you on the water."
"Come," he said.*

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Summer Bible Courier: Trip Update

The two week trip from July 12 - 25 came and went so fast! Though the borders were tighter then we've experienced in the past 12 years, the fifteen workers on the team did an absolutely amazing job! They persisted and didn't throw in the towel even though it was unusually tough. And though many of our Bible loads were confiscated, we were able to successfully retrieve them on our way out of China and then tried again until we finally got them across to where countless hungry souls are waiting!

In all, with the help of a few other workers, well over 4 tons of Bibles and children's Bible training materials were successfully hauled into China for the underground church Christians over the first three weeks of July!

That's 13,398 pieces of literature!

We have much to thank God for, especially considering the unusually tight Olympic security measures we were dealing with. And while China Customs officials did their job in an excellent and friendly manner, our God did a more excellent job! Praise God!

Thanks so much for going, for your prayers, for financially supporting those who went and for enduring the weeks apart from your loved one. God Bless you!



ANOTHER AMAZING DAY ON CHINA'S BORDER!

By Heather; a Summer 2008 Bible Courier

Today was absolutely incredible! I was walking across the bridge that separates Hong Kong from China. I began asking God to tell me what to do..... wait or go? I heard, "Go!" I get to the line for foreigners being let into China. I could see in the distance the room with the guards and the scanner. I asked God again and heard, "Go!" There was no question. I knew I was supposed to confidently go striding in there and God was going to make a way for me to go through. I get through the line and approach the room with the guards and the scanner. I see there are six guards. I immediately hear, "Go!" I see there is no one else in the room putting their stuff on the scannerabsolutely no one else! I immediately hear, "Go!"

I go walking right in there, all the guards watching me. I place my bag on the scanner, go to pick it up on the other end, and turn to walk past all six of these guards. I glance at two of them watching the computer. They get a funny look on their face and then motion the other guards behind them to come look. I thought, "They have me." I kept walking, but to my surprise they were not running out to stop me. By this time I was far enough past the computer, that I looked back to see it was not working right. I get a grin as big as the grand canyon and walk right out of that room..... with all the Bibles. Either God just zapped the computer or His Word was so powerful as it went through the scanner that it broke the machine. God showed me that He is not limited by a scanner! He is not limited by six guards all watching one person! WOW! Praise Jesus!

Because of that, I made a second trip. God made a way.

Of about 600 contacts across China, right now 200 are in immediate need of over 250 tons of Bibles! That's over 600,000 Bibles and represents only the 'tip of the iceberg'! It took the past 3 1/2 years for this new courier ministry to move that amount across the border! Statics show that every Bible taken inside China = an average of 5 new believers!



Doors opening for Vietnam's underground Churches?



During the second week of the Bible Courier work between Hong Kong and China, my home church pastor and I flew to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam for two days to meet and encourage the underground church pastors with a financial gift.

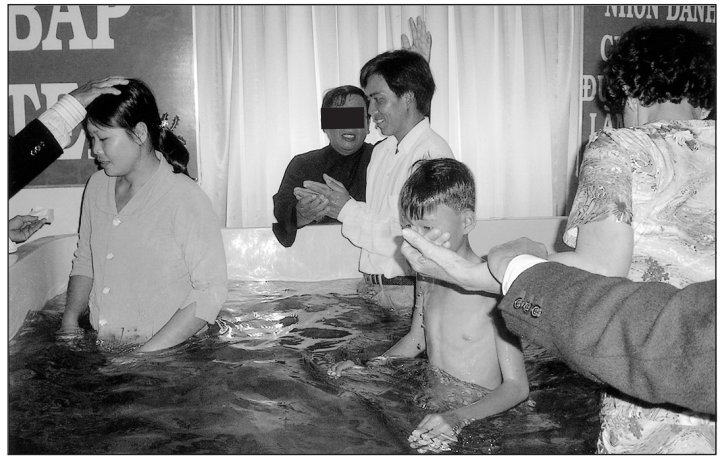
In general conditions remain very difficult for many of these faithful workers, but in some areas there are dramatic improvements being noted. With warming relations between the USA and Vietnam, a new attitude of friendliness is being extended by the government to underground pastors affiliated with recognized church denominations.



Hundreds of Vietnamese pack into a hotel banquet room this Spring and again in July to hear the gospel openly preached, many for the

Now after many years of severe persecution, nerves are being tested as some pastors are daring to step forward into a new and shaky relationship with their government. This is only happening in a very few city areas that we know of and for the most part, the rural areas and mountain highlands still face severe opposition from local authorities. But regardless, it signals a new attitude that we pray will spread and bring relief to Christians who have suffered so much for the name of Jesus Christ.

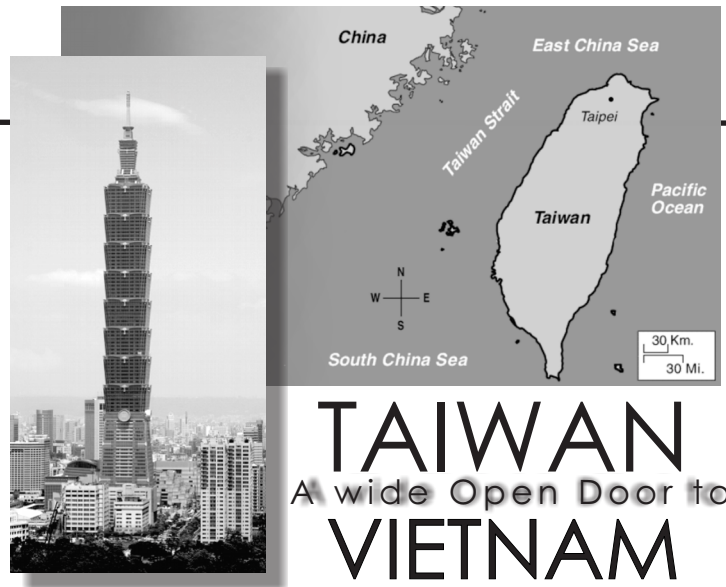
Of course this raises a lot of suspicions and questions in my mind as we are learning that some of the underground



Over 100 new believers receive water baptism in an open meeting authorized by officials who within the last two years had severely persecuted the same pastors.

Christians that we support are very eager to move forward to meet the requirements for registering with the government.

Please pray with us as we search for God's direction in how best to support and counsel them as they step out by faith on these uncertain waters.



TAIWAN A wide Open Door to VIETNAM

After saying our 'good-byes' to the Bible Courier team at the airport in Hong Kong, I set off in another direction to Taiwan. There I met with Brother Barnabas (not his real name), a Vietnamese, who moved there with his family one year ago.

Since their arrival last August God has greatly blessed the efforts of Barnabas and his wife who are pioneering a new ministry to the Vietnamese migrant workers there. Most of them come from Vietnam on a two year contract either as factory laborers or domestic helpers, though some ultimately have married into Taiwanese families.

Most of these Vietnamese work 12 - 16 hours a day with only two days off a month! There are around 250,000 currently working in Taiwan and until very recently, there has been no Christian outreach to them.

Brother Barnabas has found a very rich and ripe harvest field among this 'harassed and helpless' community. Within just one year five congregations have been planted from far south to the northern tip of this prosperous island. As the gospel goes

out, the people respond very quickly and with deep conviction - unusually in tears of repentance as they hear of God's love through Jesus Christ for the first time.



Barnabas and his wife with a group of new Vietnamese believers meeting in a factory workers lounge. These ladies work 12-16 hours a day with two days off a month, yet eagerly find time to meet around

The new believers are growing up very quickly. They are very aggressive in sharing their 'new life' with their colleagues as well as in phone conversations to their families back in Vietnam. This has resulted in a number of new believers in Vietnam. As some of the workers contracts have come to an end these new Christians are going back to Vietnam and have already establish a few small congregations of brand new believers. Obviously Barnabas and his wife already their hands full with God's blessing!

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witness...

I was privileged to be in several of the Vietnamese meetings during my short stay in Taiwan over one weekend. In that time six people received Jesus as Lord and about 10 others received the 'baptism of the Holy Spirit'.

I want to tell you a little story about that, but first of all, I'll just mention that I am keenly aware that there's a vast number of opinions, concerns, and definitions about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit that often define entire church denominations. I'll be the first to state that I don't have all the answers, but I do know that there is a command given to believers by Jesus to 'receive the gift of the Holy Spirit', the same term used by God when He said to John the Baptist that Jesus would "Baptize with the Holy Spirit"; Acts 1:5, John 1:33-34.

Anyway ...back to the story.

Two days before I arrived in Taiwan one of Barnabas' key leaders inquired as to why people never responded when she shared the gospel with them, which she did enthusiastically and frequently, while on the other hand, when Barnabas shared the gospel, dozens of people had received salvation. Barnabas explained that the reason was because she was speaking from her mind and not her heart. In other words, you cannot use the 'flesh' to give birth to something spiritual.

"Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.

Flesh gives birth to flesh, but Spirit gives birth to spirit." John 3:5,

He then proceeded to tell her that a Westerner was coming

who would teach her about the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and when she received it, she would have power to be an effective witness. I had no idea of this conversation when I was invited to preach two nights later and spoke on the subject.

While preaching about the Holy Spirit that night, I noticed a lady who cried throughout most of the message. Afterwards, she eagerly prayed, inviting Holy Spirit to baptize her. I still didn't know about the earlier conversation with Barnabas nor had he suggested or hinted about what I should have taught that night.

It was just two days later that this lady experienced the power of the miracle at work in her. She had been sharing the gospel with her brother-in-law for a long time, but he had flatly rejected Jesus. Now the opportunity came again. It happened only one day after her brother-in-laws' wedding when, just coincidentally, she met him. Once again she shared the gospel as before. But this time, to her surprise and utter amazement, both he and his brand new bride eagerly knelt and prayed to receive Jesus Christ.

I wish you could have heard her shouts of joy!

"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.

Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." (Jesus said)

By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to this time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 7:37b - 39

Ministry Opportunities

A huge cry has arisen for Bibles in the Irrawady Delta in Myanmar (Burma) where the lives of so many were taken or devastated by Hurricane Nargis.

One denomination reported that more than 40 of their churches were completely wiped out. The pastors and the congregations have just disappeared, being swept away by the waves.

Go Forth Ministry is helping to raise funds to print 20,000 Karen Bibles to send to this highly populated region.

You can help!

One Karen Bible costs only \$4.25

(20,000 Karen Bibles will cost \$85,000.00)

China Bible Courier Mission 2008

Plus an exciting new outreach to Vietnam!



China, Hong Kong & Vietnam

November 9 - 23, 2008



Underground churches across China are in immediate need of over 600,000 Bibles and that's just the 'tip of the iceberg'! The Bibles are ready and waiting to go across the border. You can help!

For details go to:
www.go4thinjesus.name

Sign up deadline:
September 27, 2008

Faithful to our mission ... in troubled times

Without question we are living in very uncertain times. It seems that 'end-time' Bible prophecies are rolling in on us at an accelerating rate. As we are being pushed to make unwanted changes, people's confidence is being shaken. News reports lead us to believe that we will not be able to maintain our 'normal' lifestyle for much longer. Many, of the systems which this world offered us yesterday guaranteeing security and a bright future are now being shaken on a global scale. As one person recently said to me, "The whole world seems topsy-turvy."

Meanwhile the world is putting its hope and trust in its most brilliant thinkers who continually push forward for answers, pulling political and technological wonders out of the hat which seem to keep us just one step ahead of an ever encroaching threat of some sort of global disaster (as long as we can afford the cost).

Christians are not immune to this growing turbulence which is opposing our families, jobs, schools, churches, and nation. But perhaps most frustrating is how our personal call and ability to serve the Lord Jesus is being opposed.

This rising storm is forcing us to make choices like some have never dealt with before; to choose between remaining faithfully obedient to the mission Jesus called us to and our natural instinctive fears to turn our full attention to maintaining our own personal comfort, security, and ultimately, our very survival.

How can God's people stand confidently in turbulent times and threat of loss while continuing to press forward with the mission God has given us individually and as a church?

Jesus has given us a very clear illustration in the story of how his disciples faced a traumatic night on a stormy sea to help us answer this question. This story comes from Matthew 14:22-32 with added details from Mark 6:48 and 52.

Immediately Jesus made the disciples **get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side**, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. **He was about to pass by them, but*** when the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

"Come," he said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

*They were completely amazed, for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.***

This is a living story that has been repeated thousand of times, in thousands of different ways, in the lives of thousand of other people who, like Jesus disciples, have been called to "Go". Called

*Mark 6:48

**Mark 6:52

to go to the other side of the lake. Called to go to the neighbor on the other side of the street. Called to go to the other side of the country and even to go to the other side of the world. Sent by their Master, often in a season of greatest personal trial and sometimes without ever even being told why or what to do on arrival. Called to go by faith. To go and love, go and give, go and speak, go and be, go and do. Called to be Jesus hands, feet, voice, ears, and heart.

The story tells us that faithfulness to the mission is not about knowing all the facts first. Obedience is not conditional on God's assurance to us of guaranteed personal safety. It's not dependant on tried and proven systems, methods, experience, knowledge, or standards for success and failure. Obedience to God is simple. It's about ...faith in His faithfulness, and to what extent we choose to acknowledge that in varying circumstances.

Storms come! That is a fact. We will have them! Most of the storms we face today are very different from the one described in the story, but can shake us just as dramatically. These storms hit our systems of security we thought could not fail us.

Today we face economic instability, job insecurity, climate changes and unprecedented natural disasters, wars and rumors of war, moral chaos, family breakdown, mental breakdown, political turmoil, with truth itself being debunked and devalued. We're a free society addicted to petroleum, increasingly complex and more powerful digital technology, and political correctness that forces tolerance of 'everything'. We pride ourselves in achieving the Great American Dream but are insured up to our eyebrows because we fear it will fail. Deep down - we know better as we continue in an exhausting struggle to stay within the safety our 'boat' that, for many, is not getting them to where God's called them to go. We know that God really has the right plan; He's promised us that! We can and must step into that plan so we can keep going forward in what He's called us to. We can - if we will only just...

As God's people we must, **MUST**, stay focused on Jesus! He has already 'commissioned' and told us what we must do! Now, if we are willing, He invites us to abandon our failing strategies and systems of security that so often are really getting us nowhere - and come to where he is. Then, as we step out, He steps in!

The lesson: From either within or outside our methods and systems, we need Jesus. There's an amazing, victorious, joyful journey for us **if** we stay focused on Him and the mission He's called us to live - by faith. Faith, not in systems, but in Him alone.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support. I know some of you are facing difficult times, so your gifts, prayers, and concern for people around the world to hear the gospel and grow strong in Christ are so precious! For most of you, you don't get to see the hundreds of soul being saved that you are actually directly involved with. But God sees! And though most of those who benefit from your involvement will never know who you are in this life, one day we will see each other face to face and - then we will know! Thank you!

Here at home Daisy, begins another year of teaching Release-Time for Christian Education in the public school. Ellie (21) is pursuing the call of God on her life in Hong Kong. Lee (23) remains focused on his music / ministry while Jonnie (15) 'endures' 9th grade.

Days, months, years slip by so quickly, don't they? It really feels like Jesus ought to be coming back before too long! I want to be found ready, watching, and faithfully at the work Jesus has given us to do, don't you?

Blessings!

Wendell & Daisy Martin