



# Cambodian Servants

October 2006



## Launch into the Philippines

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When my Dad was killed in 2003, we were communicating constantly as to each others ministry. Both of our ministries were doing leadership training and my Dad was trying to be more systematic in his training like we were doing in Cambodia. My Dad taught his disciples about the importance of having multiple level training programs to address the needs of everyone in the congregation from those with lower education, to those who need more formal education and even those who need very high level theological education. He knew the danger of getting locked into one "universal" program. People learn in many different ways. Since we have our own school, "Antioch Institute", we can tailor make any curriculum for any situation and need that we have. This allows us to design a program especially for the under-educated rural church leaders of Mindanao island in the Philippines.



Antioch Institute Logo in Cebuano

We have two main partners who we are working with, though we will undoubtedly partner with many more people in the future. The backbone for communication and organization of the Antioch Ministry in the Philippines is Dr. Ed Aungon who is a former Seminary president now passionately promoting developing ways to train and educate people in their ministry, outside a traditional theological school; and Ben Embaan, who has the responsibility of overseeing all Tribal work among the Baptists churches, yet widely respected among all denominations.



Steve with Dr. Ed Aungon in the Philippines

## Strategy for Training

The Strategy is not so complicated. The Philippines has more than 1000 theological seminaries and Bible colleges. That is great for the urban areas, but the problem is that for a place like Mindanao, which is primarily rural and agricultural based, urban Bible colleges are not in a place (literally) to assist the rural churches. Also, most of the tribal people have not had a chance to graduate from high school, so they do not qualify to attend. Overall, they have been quite isolated from most training opportunities (except for a few seminars here and there). Our Cambodian training is simple and focused on the rural and under-educated so I think it is a perfect match. Rather than trying to remove people from their churches to train them and then re-plant them back into the church after a few years we are going to equip the church leaders to train their own people and to make every church a Bible School fully equipped to train their own people for ministry, leadership and starting more churches.



## Every Church a Bible School

Years ago we started off going from province to province teaching everyone because we found that most churches were not disciplining their people. Very quickly we found ourselves with over four thousand students being disciplined. Since then, many of the denominations and churches have started their own training programs based on the teaching which we did for them for years. Our Cambodian focus grew to be more on advanced training rather than general discipleship. The Philippines is a different situation completely in that there is plenty of advanced training and basic discipleship going on, however, there is a lot missing. Many, many churches do not have pastors and the church is not growing very well. From our experience in Cambodia, we can design a program to where local churches can train their own people for ministry and even how to start new churches and raise up and train leaders among themselves for the pastoral work among the new churches.



Steve Presenting Antioch Institute

By concentrating on those who will train others, we are not having to individually train thousands of people, but between the approximately one hundred trainers they will all train a minimum of ten people and most will train more than that bringing the total number of people trained to well over a thousand. They are all trained in a systematic way so that we can keep track of individual students needs and we can also judge the abilities of individual trainers based on the "fruit" which they have in ministry (i.e. How many churches were started, how much church growth have they experienced, how many leaders raised up. . .). By fulfilling academic requirements, as well as ministry and character evaluations, they can qualify for Bible School credits and even earn a Certificate or Diploma in Ministry, and later maybe even be able to do a Bachelor Degree like we offer in Cambodia through the Antioch Institute. The beauty of the training is that we are not dislodging them from their church and ministry setting, but they learn while they are doing ministry.

I have often told people, I am not interested in preparing people for ministry. My experience is that while many are taught in "preparation", few when "certified" are willing to go into ministry. I have always preferred to train only those who were actually doing ministry and involved in the local church, because it is not theory for them. . . it is the reality of doing ministry every day which teaches more than they could ever learn in the classroom. On the job training, combined with solid academic teaching and character development are a strong combination to help people fulfill what God has called them to do in ministry and in their church.

Over time, as in Cambodia, they won't even need the regular training as they develop their own ways of training and as they have a large body of curriculum to utilize in training others. I was especially surprised at the great response of having books in the Cebuano language. Few tribal people can speak English, yet there are very few materials available in their language (even after more than 50 years of continuous evangelical missionary presence).

## Cambodians Ministering in the Philippines



Cambodian Team in the Philippines

In December 2005 we began making plans for launching the Antioch Institute in Cambodia. When we set the dates eight months in advance we didn't know how God was going to work everything out. It started by getting 9 free tickets on Air Asia from Cambodia to Malaysia and onto Manila, Philippines. Then we got 10 Peso tickets (\$0.25) from Manila to Davao City for the team. The total trip for nine people, including taxes was less than \$500. It is usually about \$600 per person on any other airline.

What God had in store for the launching of Antioch Institute, was Cambodians sharing with fellow Asians in the Philippines about how the training had changed their lives and their nation. Cambodia is a much poorer country than the Philippines and so a common message to the Filipinos was: "God used us even though we were so poor, so



Mao An Teaching

since you are so rich (compared to us) God can use you even more!" The comparisons were great as the Cambodians spoke how the war and genocide had impacted their country and brought it to a place of repentance and finding Jesus and in war-torn Mindanao that hit a sensitive cord. Toward the end of one worship time, Pastor Ben spontaneously asked the Filipino pastors to pray for the Cambodians. As the pastors gathered around I tried to hold back tears not wanting to be the only one crying. Soon, however, the whole room was crying out to God that Mindanao would experience what Cambodia is experiencing by way of Church growth and change for good.

# Philippines: Land of Color and Contrasts



Fruits, especially Mangoes, are delicious



Even Vegetables look delicious!

The Philippines is a very beautiful country, but the locals will tell you “beware of the peace and order.” That means to watch out for communists, Muslim terrorists, revenge killings and the ever present attempts to overthrow the current government (whoever that may be). The Philippines has been a “Christian” nation for nearly 500 years, but politically, spiritually and economically it has always been unstable. As Christians we believe that Jesus is the answer, and that true life change comes with surrender to Jesus Christ. While there have always been unstable political leaders vying for power in the Philippines, what they need is to make Jesus Lord of the Philippines and of their own lives to see the beauty of the Philippines grow.



Public Transport: “Jeepney”



Local “Mom and Pop” store

## Why the Philippines?

Many have already asked me whether I am going to move to the Philippines? Will the ministry continue in Cambodia? Let me assure you that all our ministries are not only continuing, but expanding in Cambodia and beyond our borders. God has given us a great team of people to work and partner with and as the Lord leads us to expand the ministry of Words of Life and Antioch Institute, he also provides the people necessary to oversee and take care of the daily operations of the ministry. The Lord has enabled me to oversee a very diverse ministry, yet all centered around one general theme of equipping people to do HIS work! The more we equip people, the more ministries we have and the more ministers we have to do HIS ministry.



**Bill Hyde**  
Martyred in Davao City, March 4, 2003

I will avenge my fathers death. . . Through love.

When my father was killed I flew with my wife immediately to the Philippines, but the fastest way for us to get to the Philippines was on Kuwaiti Airlines (a Muslim airline). Sitting on the plane, I tried to pray and think about all that was happening when the Lord began to speak to me and I wrote on the Kuwaiti Airline stationery what I said at my fathers funeral. Part of what I wrote was that I would “avenge my fathers death” but not to do so in the way that Muslim terrorist do, but to do it through love. Bringing the Antioch Institute to Mindanao, right where my Dad was killed, is not only to honor my fathers legacy, but to fulfill a promise I made to God to do something about my fathers death. . . Repay it with love. By strengthening the churches in Mindanao, the ultimate goal is to permeate the whole island with Christ’s love and bring peace to that land.

## Partnership In Ministry

Working in the Philippines is not a lone ranger operation. It is a partnership between various organizations, missionaries and churches, and will continue to grow as others want to partner together as well. The two main partners are CRI (Church Renewal International– Philippines) and the Mindanao Tribal Convention of the Southern Baptist Convention. The tribal convention targets some 40 different ethnic groups on the Island of Mindanao of which there are 2.8 million people which does not include 13 Muslim tribes with another 3 million people, nor the other 9 million “lowlanders” which live in and around the tribal areas. There are other churches taking part as well, and other denominations as well who are classified as “lowlanders” from nearly every region on Mindanao. The island of Mindanao alone is as big, and populated, as all of Cambodia.



Ben and Eddie with the Cambodians

## Philippine Financial Needs

The financial needs to operate nearly one hundred training centers impacting a minimum of one thousand students in the rural Philippines is very minimal compared to the benefits and the number of students involved.

Annually, our main expenses will come to about **\$31,800**, which is only **\$31.80** per student annually, and only **\$318.00** per training center.

### Expenses:

- Printing of Books : \$10,000\*
- Food for trainers: \$4,000
- Scholarships (Travel expenses): \$4,000
- Housing/ Campground: \$4,000
- Travel from Cambodia: \$5,000
- Local Coordinators: \$4,800  
\* (8 books per year, for one thousand students)

Dr. Aungon likes to state that “we are building software, not hardware.” If we invested in buildings and infrastructure it would take millions of dollars to do what we are doing, but the churches have the existing hardware (facilities) already in place, we are just helping them to develop the software (the training program).



Please pray for us as the training will begin in late November this year and additional training every three to four months after that.

## Basic Training Plan

The basic plan for training in the Philippines is focused on equipping an Antioch Institute faculty of approximately one hundred trainers from more than ten tribal groups and several denominations on the island of Mindanao. These trainers come, almost exclusively, from very remote areas of the island of Mindanao which do not have regular access to training.

We will go to Mindanao from Cambodia, along with gifted teachers from the States, Malaysia, Singapore or other countries, according to the topic, for a one week training in a central location on Mindanao Island (probably Davao City). There will be 3 to 4 trainings conducted every year.

Dr. Ed Aungon and Ben Embaan will represent the concerns of Antioch Institute for the Philippines and will be the main contacts there. They have worked tirelessly on a voluntary basis to get this training in the Philippines.

Trainers will be responsible to train at least 10 people who they recruit locally. We are still accepting applications for those who want to be trainers but as of August, there are about 80. I expect that number to rise as more people learn about Antioch Institute.

What we are providing for the students is the cost of the training time together (food, housing. . . ) and for a selected few scholarships which will cover their travel expenses. We will also provide 10 copies of each training manual, as well as training videos. Beyond that students will have to purchase their own books.

After approximately five years of training, they will have enough training and materials to run their own schools.

## Contact Information



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[www.asiaforjesus.org](http://www.asiaforjesus.org)

## DONATIONS:

For donations to Words of Life Ministries/ Antioch Institute in the United States please contact and send donations through the Church of Glad Tidings.

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Any checks sent to the church should be made out to “Church of Glad Tidings”, but clearly marked FOR: “Words of Life Ministries”.