

CAMBODIAN SERVANTS

**\$1.00 a day
can save a
nation!**

Warning: This edition of *Cambodian Servants* is coming straight from my heart. I am not wanting to offend anyone, this is just an expression of my heart weeping for the lost in this world. Millions of people are dying in the world without Jesus and many Christians don't seem to care. *Pray that God would speak to your heart when you read this.*

- In Cambodia, our ministry is very efficient (perhaps because of a lack of resources). We send out church planters for about a dollar a day. On average a church planter can start 5 churches per year!

- One church (Bethany Emmanuel Church) supported 4 of our church planters for a year and a half. The 4 church planters started 16 churches and helped train others to start an additional 10 churches for other groups. Bethany's total investment was \$3,600 over 18 months. That equals \$16 per day. In that short amount of time 26 churches were planted (\$138.50 per church = cost of 1 microphone in the USA). The following year those churches planted 20 other churches on their own! (That was free!)

- We have invested \$76,800 to train 2,300 church leaders (which is nearly double the combined enrollment of the multi-million dollar institutions of *Dallas Theological Seminary (1162)** and *Criswell College (329)** in Dallas, TX!) Our leaders have started nearly 1,000 verifiable churches. Each student studies 2 years at a cost to us of \$33.40 per student (including books, classes, tuition, food and housing). That is less than the *application fee* to any institution in the United States! 50% of the leaders start a new church in the first year after graduation! Next year we will be starting a full-time Bachelors program and each student will pay only \$15.00 per month for their entire Bachelor's Degree Education. The whole bachelors degree will cost only \$450! (Which is less than the cost of taking one course in most seminaries in the US). *The degree will be fully accredited!*

- In 2001 during a 2 hour "practice" in evangelism, approximately 150 leaders led 1,326 people to Christ! **(That is equivalent to one new Christian every 10 seconds!)**

- The *annual budget* of Words of Life Ministries is approximately: \$30,000 and our graduates are starting about 200 churches per year. **The average cost is about \$150 per church.** That is less than churches in the USA will pay for stationary! Half of that (\$15,000 we will fund out of the business aspect of our ministry!) In the published statistics of the Southern Baptist Convention missions (IMB), in 2002 they had an annual budget of 290.1 million dollars and they started 8,369 churches*. The average cost is \$34,663 per new church. Don't get me wrong I love the IMB, they trained me very well and my Mom is with the IMB and many of my godly mentors. I am just saying, *Words of Life* is very effective and efficient! It makes sense to invest in *Words of Life Ministries* with such great returns!

* All statistics given in this newsletter are based on public records taken from official websites. www.imb.org; www.adherants.com; www.sacs.org

MESSAGE FROM THE HEART

As a missionary in Cambodia for ten years and spending most of my life on the mission field it is clear that I think differently than many people in America and in other developed countries. Honestly, many times I feel very abandoned by the church and friends in America. Some people pledge to pray for Noit and I, but when I see them they are surprised to see me and can't remember my name! Yet they blurt out "I have prayed for you every day." Others tell me they want to support me and the ministry, but the fact is that only 22-25 people out of the thousands that I have spoke to, ministered to, prayed with or known for many years support me or my ministry. Others say, "anything you need just let me know." I would be embarrassed to ever ask for fear they were not serious, but just being polite. I praise God that Immanuel Baptist Church has sent out my newsletter over the years (that is their support for me). Yet out of nearly 400 newsletters sent out to my friends, I hear back from only a few. My monthly goal for personal support is around \$1,200 and that is hard to live on, but each month I receive around \$300 (though at Christmas time people remember the missionaries and give much more). Most missionaries in Cambodia and elsewhere live on much more. The average for personal missionary support is around \$3,500 to \$4,000 a month*. Especially in the summer months I get very few e-mail's, letters or financial support. I hate mentioning money, but I just wanted to take one time and share my heart. I think that you will find this newsletter to be different than previous ones you have read from me. I hope that you know my heart in that I am neither trying to be rude or proud. I would gladly serve God in absolute isolation if He wanted me to.

When I have a chance to get on the internet I like to read about what other people are doing in other countries. I read about country after country. I hear great stories of miracles, church planting and effective ministry. Often, by twist of fate (if there is such a thing) I will meet someone from a country I read about and I ask them about the stories that I heard. Many times, the stories I read about turn out to be highly exaggerated. This is very sad. To some, missions has become a clever marketing appeal. Those who tell the best story (true or not) get a lot of funding, while honest missionaries struggle for funding. The purpose of my newsletter this time is not to just tell



Steve Speaking at Southwestern Seminary

you how God is using us in such a great way, but to try to put it into terms so that you can comprehend how God is using simple people like Noit and I to change whole nations!

When I consider the church in America and other affluent nations I want to cry when I hear them speak about their budgets. Of course it is their money and they can spend it like they want to, but I am utterly convinced that most "Christians" in

America do not really believe the Bible and the purposes of God for the salvation of the whole world. Their budgets certainly don't reflect it. I wish you could see what a growing and dynamic church looks like. (World travel is easy, why don't you come and see?) My Dad trained people to start more than 600 churches in just a few years. Can you imagine? My Dad was an Iowa Southern Baptist. As best I can find in Iowa there are about 100 Southern Baptist Churches. He planted six times that in a few years! In 25 years only one family, Marion & Jan Livingston, visited us in the Philippines. In Cambodia I have been more fortunate, I have made many friends who have come to Cambodia on mission trips. In Cambodia the Lord has blessed us very much to be involved in changing a nation. Our students have planted around 1,000 churches in Cambodia and planting many more every month. Almost all were planted among people who have never heard of Christ before they came. This is all done on a shoestring budget and very hard work. My wife and I have dedicated our lives to seeing Cambodia come to Christ! Jesus doesn't want anyone to perish, but looking at the life of many Christians in America you would never know that they cared. Jesus died so that others can live, but we all have the duty to tell them the Gospel and do what we can to accomplish the Great Commission.



The Oldest Church (ruins) in Cambodia!

THE GREAT COMMISSION, IS IT REAL?

Every church I have ever been to proclaims the Great Commission (Matthew 28) as their mission! *Praise the Lord.* Nearly every church I have been to, however, is smaller the next time I visit them and that is not because they are sending out missionaries! Christians are losing ground in the world. One report says that 99.9% of all Christians have never shared Jesus with anyone!* There are 2.2 Billion Christians in the world, but only 648 million profess that the Great Commission is important (these are Evangelicals!)*. Throughout the western world, churches spend approximately \$330,000 per baptism*. To simple missionaries like me, the wealth and luxury of America is shocking; even in the church. I don't think you can imagine what a missionary faces.

- The first time I went to the Stiang Tribe in Cambodia I was shot at with an AK-47 and they tried to fire a rocket at me. Now I go there regularly (every two weeks) to minister to some of the hundreds of new believers in that area. My best friend in Kracheh province, Pin, (and powerful church planter) is a former Khmer Rouge soldier who has killed hundreds. Now he has led hundreds to Christ!
- One Saturday in the year 2001 a huge fire wiped out more than 2000 houses in a few hours. The day before, my students received their diplomas after two years of hard work and one graduate lost his home to the big fire. He escaped with his life, wife and child and also his Bible and diploma. I asked him why he chose those things among all the others. He said they were the most important things on earth to him and could not live without them. Within a few weeks he started a church in a resettlement area.
- I consider a "black out" a test of true worship! Can you worship with no electricity and in 110° degree heat? It is a matter of the heart. Americans have an average of 4 Bibles per person, Cambodian have an average of 2 Bibles per church. Pastor Doun can hardly read, yet has been trained and has started 8 churches. He has lost 9 of his 15 children to violent deaths and disease. He also has shrapnel in his head from a B-52 Bomb when he was almost killed by American bombs during the Vietnam war. (He wasn't fighting in the war!) He is a man of great faith. Real faith.
- One of my students lost a leg 15 years ago to a landmine. Last year he missed one month of class and when he returned he apologized for missing class because he was working in a field and hit another land mine which exploded blew out both his eyes. He has led nearly 100 people to Christ and started 2 churches since then!
- Another student, Visna, started 3 churches before he graduated and spends all his time away from his family planting more churches (around 80 churches now). The family considers it their sacrifice and duty to God. Visna regularly bring back orphans for his wife to care for. I think they are up to 30 now!

I keep thinking that if people really believed the Great Commission in American they would be compelled to do more. I know that I have been called to a special task. The Lord has prepared my life for hardship which most people could not endure. I have lived through countless wars, coups, ambushes, robberies but I do not live a life of fear. I don't fear at all. My Dad did not live a life of fear either and so he was unhindered in sharing the Gospel. Did you know that the last word in the Greek book of Acts is *Akolutos* meaning **UNHINDERED!** My Dad lived life *unhindered* for the purposes of the Kingdom of God. I plan to continue living that way too. Great things are accomplished by a life unhindered for the Gospel.

Even if you don't go yourself (and calling is important, as is obedience) you can help. God has blessed you with many financial resources. With just \$1.00 a day (\$30.00 per month) we can literally change the history of whole nations. A nation like Cambodia which has a history of horrible suffering and killing is being transformed by the power of God's word. You can play a role in the transformation of Cambodia. The Great Commission is not a suggestion, it is a commandment! How will you obey that commandment?

RETURN TO VIET NAM

In May I had the great honor of going with *Dave Bryan* and *Bill Norton* (from Yuba City, California) to teach a group of leaders in the underground church in Vietnam. We were hosted by the two pastors pictured here. Though they are famous and solid leaders in Vietnam, I will not give their names or the location for safety sake. In the last two years the church in Vietnam (heavily persecuted) has not grown. This is in spite of a massive missionary movement to help them and give money to the people. The mature leaders have told us that this is because of a lack of practical and effective training as well as leaders being dishonest in an effort to get financial gain. Pray for sensitivity in working with the underground church in Vietnam.



VISION OF JESUS' RETURN

One day in January I was going to the unreached people of Cambodia deep in the jungle along with two of our other church planters. We drove, walked, climbed, swam and fought our way through hours of punishing jungle trails seemingly going nowhere. We saw no people, but we were told there were people ahead. Sure enough there was. After many hours with bloodied, dirty and sore bodies we crossed the last river and slowly moved into a large village. The children started screaming "A giant is coming to eat us!" They were shocked by my size. But within 10 minutes the whole village of several thousand people came out to see us. Their first question was "What are you doing here?" So I answered, "We are believers in Jesus and we wanted to tell people who did not know him. Do you know about Jesus?" "Who?" they answered, "Is he a new politician?" Others said "Do you want to make a rubber plantation?" (The name of Jesus in Cambodian sounds like the word for "rubber plantation".) They had never even heard *Jesus'* name.

That night after eating with the elders of the village I was overwhelmed with a powerful thought. What if this is the last village on earth to hear the Gospel? What if when we share the gospel with one more person Jesus returns? Tears welled up in my eyes that night as I drifted off to sleep in a hammock.

In the morning we shared with more people and I asked, "Are there any more tribes beyond here in the jungle?" "Oh yes" they said. "There are the T'moan people who live in the deep jungle two days from here." A thought came over me. What if they are the last? We are so close! We promised to return to the village soon. Outside the village we saw a little hill and climbed to the top and we could see jungle in every direction. For about an hour we prayed and worshiped the Lord at the top of our voice. All three of us committed ourselves to go share Jesus until there was no more places to go. We wanted to see Jesus return streaking across the sky with an army of angels following him.

Where were you when Kennedy was killed? Where were you when the planes hit the towers on 9/11? You will never forget. Those infamous moments will long be forgotten when we sit around the throne in heaven and ask "Where were you when you saw Jesus come across the sky from the east and head into Jerusalem with his army?" I pray I will be in the jungle sharing Jesus with the last one! Where do you want to be? If you are not there yet, what are you going to do to get there? We are close! Are you ready? (Revelation 19:11-15)

FINISHING MY MASTER'S DEGREE

Since the end of July I have been attending the Bethany School of Missions. My Mom misunderstood that the school was connected to Fuller Seminary, though the leaders and most of the professors of the school are from Fuller, the school is actually connected to Bethany College of Missions in Minnesota. (Also, Bethany House Publishers). I am the only American at the school which has students from Nigeria and Ethiopia (in Africa); and Nepal,

India, Myanmar, Vietnam, China, Indonesia and Singapore (in Asia). The professors are equally international. It is the most exciting, practical and innovative school I have ever been too. Though the student body is small, the fruit and impact on other countries is huge. I have already been asked to teach some courses and begin doctoral work next year on a part-time basis when I am able to come to Singapore.

PHILIPPINE CHALLENGE

After my Dad's death, I wanted to find out how I could help carry on what he had started. Visiting the Philippines, I was moved to hear the testimonies from his "disciples." They spoke of his passion to go everywhere and do whatever he could to help them grow in the Lord and start more churches. Dad had just conducted an island-wide event called "Good News Mindanao." They had made plans for many more "Good News Mindanao" events in the future. My Dad's sudden death shook the church. Filipinos never like to show emotion, but most would break down in tears just looking at me since I look so much like my Dad. Complete strangers to me would come up to me and want to touch me thinking my Dad had returned.



During the time I spent with the pastors, leaders and missionaries I was moved thinking about one thing. Traditional missionaries (evangelists & church planters) are not needed anymore. There are more than 50,000 evangelical churches in the Philippines*. Tribes that I had visited as a kid learning to be a church planter that were pagan twenty years ago, are now 20-30% evangelical Christian. Of more than 80 million people in the Philippines, less than 5 million claim to be anything other than Christians (catholic or protestant). The five million are where work needs to be done. These are the Muslims; the ones who killed my father, along with many other church leaders and missionaries over the years.

The work in the Philippines needs to change to equipping the national leaders to do the job themselves. That was my Dad's passion. The Philippines is already sending many missionaries out to other countries (including the USA, Singapore and Cambodia!). They don't need people to tell them what to do, they just need missionaries who are willing to stand *behind* them and support them. My Mom can still play a great role here! She is a wonderful support person! Please pray for my Dad's "disciples" and for myself in knowing how best I can help them in the future to be all that God wants them to be!

WORDS OF LIFE MINISTRY STAFF

The Words of Life Ministry staff are the best in the world! They are all dedicated Christians and church leaders who serve God first! The sacrifices that they make to help equip the Body of Christ in Cambodia are tremendous.



Weekly, they go through jungles, cross rivers, push themselves out of the mud, change tires (*in the last trip we had 4 flat tires in one day!!*), cast out demons, and give their own clothes to poor people (*last year at a funeral Narous noticed the father of the girl who died did not have a nice shirt, so he took off his and gave it to the father, taking the fathers torn rags to wear himself*). They are all under paid, but I give what I can. Everyone in Words of



Life has learned to depend on God! This rag-tag group of highly motivated ministers of the Gospel are literally changing a nation, village by village and province by province. We are actively praying now that God would use us to train Cambodians to go out as foreign missionaries! When we travel (pictured) we always put about 10 people in our little 4 seater pickup! No complaints! We have had as many as 35 in the little pickup, but we broke a shock doing it!! **Words of Life Staff are the greatest servants of the Lord anywhere!**

VERY PRACTICAL WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- Invest **\$1.00 per day** (\$30 per month or \$360 per year) into Words of Life to change a nation!
- If you are a member of a Southern Baptist Church, your missions budget is probably linked to the Cooperative Program (CP). Great! That is for the SBC. Please consider giving from a **Benevolence Fund** to support Words of Life Ministries.
- Take up a special **love offering** for Words of Life.
- **Support a local pastor** personally to receive Bible and Ministry Training (\$35.00)- Why not support a few?
- Provide a **Academic Scholarship** in *Your Name* (or someone else) for students in the Bachelor Program (\$450).
- Provide for a **full month of training** in Words of Life (\$1,200). \$1,200 trains, houses, and feeds 200 students per month!
- **Supply Bibles to a whole church!** (\$300) Bibles cost \$6.00 each and the average church size is 50 people.
- Help **Print Leadership Training Books**. We can publish a 200 page book for less than \$1.50 per book! (*You will never look at a bookstore the same again!*) One print run costs us \$1,500. We have published 50 new books in the last 4 years!
- **We Need Dirt Bikes for the Jungle Ministry**. Each used Dirt Bike –motorcycle (250cc)- costs \$2,500.
- Send a personal **encouraging e-mail** or ask specifically how you can help the ministry. (Please no SPAM though, I have no time for that.)
- **Pray daily** for the ministry and **ask** for current requests.
- **Donate Christian books** to our school library.
- Help support me (Steve) to finish my **Masters and Doctorate degrees**. (This helps in providing accreditation for our students and giving them future options for advanced study.) Total: \$15,000.

WHAT NEXT?— SENDING DONATIONS

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Mobile: (855) 12-831506

E-mail:

steve@asiaforjesus.com

NOTE:

New E-Mail



For information on any item listed above, please contact Steve and Noit directly in Cambodia. Address and E-mail listed above.

Details of Supporting or Sponsoring Individuals in Words of Life Ministry:

Sending Money Directly to Immanuel Baptist Church will be kept in **Confidential** records and not released to anyone (even myself) unless you give the church permission to in writing to do so. This is for tax deduction and tax law purposes. The only way I know about specific donations is if you tell me!! (*Send me an e-mail or letter.*)

If you want to support a church leader for training or specific project of the ministry (listed above) please contact me so that we can send you information and the testimony of the person you are supporting so you can pray for them effectively.

Sending Donations from America:

Send Checks **Clearly Marked FOR Words of Life Ministries**, but made out to *Immanuel Baptist Church*.

Immanuel Baptist Church

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For Transferring funds (*Electronic Funds Transfer*) directly into the Words of Life account in Cambodia, contact Steve Hyde Directly. (For Singapore, Malaysia and other countries.)