



Walt Becker teaching in Orissa

Orissa is a state of India located on the eastern coast near the Bay of Bengal that is infamous for its persecution of Christians. In 1999 missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons were martyred there. Though some of the killers were brought to justice, circumstances remain severe for church leaders. The greatest persecution occurred in 2008 when the extremists burned scores of homes and more than 50 pastors were martyred. Today, India has six states that have passed anti-conversion laws. In spite of being the largest democracy in the world, it is now ranked country No. 22 for severity of persecution!

Pastors in Orissa face immense political, religion, social, and spiritual persecution and oppression, yet they still hunger to be biblically trained. ACTION began working in Orissa in 2009 in response to the needs presented us after the severe outbreak of persecution there. Our missionaries, focused on Pastoral Leadership Development, seek to equip these Christian workers to be able to more effectively lead their congregations and impact their communities.

On his recent 18-day trip to Orissa, ACTION missionary Walt Becker trained pastors, encouraged widows and orphans in their homes, and preached in churches. Walt wrote the following:

Training Pastors in Orissa, India

“At a three-day pastors’ conference in Orissa, I taught seven sessions on the Attributes of God and held a communion service attended by 60 pastors. Many of these pastors have suffered as their homes and churches have been burned and fellow pastors and relatives killed.

“After each session, we formed small groups to discuss each topic and to afford them the opportunity to ask questions. These dear brothers were eager to learn the Word of God and asked many questions to clarify their understanding. The pastors expressed much excitement and great gratitude for the chance to learn from the Bible.

“He expressed concern that the brothers are vulnerable and could be led astray by false teachers...”

“I also had the opportunity to teach God’s Word and encourage widows and orphans of martyred pastors at a small home where 9 widows and 16 orphans live. Conditions are poor, yet they cannot return to their villages because of threats by extremists.

“I preached several times and encouraged pastors at a meeting of village churches in Baramanda. This is the part of Orissa that suffered the most persecution by extremists in 2008 and it is still very dangerous today. We had to delay our visit for one day because one group, knowing that the pastors were traveling to a special meeting, blocked many of the roads. The village pastors are remarkable men of God who risk their lives each day for the gospel’s sake.”

“A local pastor ACTION has been working with has a great desire to be better equipped so that he can more effectively reach the people of Orissa for the Lord. He knows that his whole ministry will be shaped by his ability to “rightly divide the Word of Truth” with the pastoral leadership team God has given him. He has a heart to plant many more churches with trained men of God.

“He expressed concern that the brothers are vulnerable and could be led astray by false teachers if he does not continue to teach them the depth of the Scripture. In order for this to happen, this local pastor yearns to become better equipped so he can teach others and apply the Timothy principle. What a blessing to hear this from this dear brother’s lips!”

Please join us in prayer and ministry on behalf of the pastors in this difficult region of India. For information on how you or your church can be involved, please contact Bruce Ingram, ACTION’s PLD Facilitator.



Local pastors gathered for the ACTION conference

Pastoral Training Fellowship in Kampala

Most Ugandan pastors are not able to acquire a formal Bible college or seminary education because of financial barriers. Seeing this need, missionary Jim Robinette recently began a ministry called ACTION Pastor Training Fellowship (APTF) with pastors who are active in church ministry yet possess little biblical training.

The 12 pastors enrolled in APTF meet with Jim three hours a day for four days one week each month for encouragement and instruction. Jim shares, "The small

group size allows for times of one-on-one counseling and fellowship. One of the young pastors reached an important decision and informed me that God is currently calling him to sit under his pastor's leadership and mature in the faith before planting a new church. Bible memorization is part of the course requirements. One pastor has memorized 1 Corinthians 13 and Isaiah 53 in their entirety. The pastors learn how to apply each step of their learning at APTF in their individual lives and ministries."

God has blessed ACTION Pastoral Training Fellowship abundantly and the pastors are thankful. Pastor Joseph wrote the following to Jim: "I want to inform you that by the mercies of God I am doing what you taught us. APTF has wonderfully impacted my life." Another pastor shares, "I thank God that I was chosen among many to be a student in APTF. I have learned so many things about ministry work and leadership."



Pastors with their gift books for memorization of Scripture



Ugandan pastors taking an exam

Many Difficulties Face a Rural Cambodian Pastor

Daren Beck, ACTION missionary in Cambodia, shares the following: "One of the greatest privileges I have in my ministry is coming alongside pastors who are faithfully shepherding the people God has entrusted to them despite difficult circumstances. Pastor Sothon Pol is one such pastor.

"The rural community in which Pastor Sothon has ministered for eight years is just an hour away from Phnom Penh. Many of the villagers there have lived in darkness for generations and ministry growth is painfully slow. This year drought and floods devastated crops in

this village. Recently the local government authorities refused to sell Pastor Sothon a piece of land because they did not want a church in the community. Despite all of these trials, Sothon remains encouraged and unswerving in his commitment to God and his ministry in the village.

"Would you please pray for Pastor Sothon? Please also pray for me as I come alongside him and help him work through the myriad of issues that he faces as the pastor of a local church. Thank you for your prayers and for partnering with us here in Cambodia!"



ACTION Cambodia's PLD team: Nathan Wells, Daren Beck and BJ Lopez

Training Center Opens for Pastors in Malawi

A pastor without Bible training, study materials, and a high school education just planted the first church in a remote area of Malawi. This pastor tends a small farm during the week to support his family because the people of his congregation are too poor to pay his salary. In spite of these difficulties, this pastor has tremendous love for the Lord and a strong desire to serve Him.

Chet Burns, ACTION missionary in Malawi, says that this story, with minor alterations, could be repeated

several dozen times throughout Malawi. Virtually all pastors in such remote villages are untrained and unpaid.

There has long been a desperate need for a biblical training school in this region. The Pastors' Training Centre, a free school, was recently opened with the assistance of ACTION in direct response to this need. Led by Pastor Matthes Phiri, the first class has 36 students who attend class once a week and have homework and practical assignments to complete between sessions.



Pastor at an ACTION training seminar

Marriage Conference and Bicycles for Pastors in Cuba



Pastor Angel Mesa Morales receiving his bicycle

Keith and Marilyn Kaynor recently conducted a marriage conference in eastern Cuba, with some of the participants traveling quite a significant distance to attend.

As important as the conference was, Keith and Marilyn had a second purpose for their trip. During their short time in the country, the Kaynors bought 11 bicycles and presented them to pastors and church planters who had been selected in advance by the leaders of the Baptist Convention of Eastern Cuba. Before leaving the island they also left funds for another six bikes to be purchased.

One recipient, Pastor Angel Mesa Morales, has five children, a job that is ending soon, and an extensive rural area to serve. He needed a bike to be able to more effectively minister to his congregation. Pastor Morales sent this

word of thanks: "I will use this bicycle to serve Jesus. I could never have afforded to buy it on my salary. Thank you so much!"

The Kaynors and their colleagues in ACTION's Cuba ministry are raising funds to buy more bicycles in the near future. In fact, this summer Keith has participated in a VBS program where he rode in on a bike and then explained this project to over 300 children and workers.

If you are interested in participating in this project, please contact Brian Stewart in our USA office.

ACTION Pastors' College Needs Teachers

Missionaries Tracy Singleton and Steve Allen teach fifteen pastors and church leaders from various backgrounds at ACTION Pastors' College (APC) in Lusaka, Zambia. APC is a three-year program that requires pastors to teach others what they have learned.

Several APC pastors have already taught the Veritas curriculum to other church leaders, and Tracy recently participated in the graduation ceremonies for 21 students. Veritas is a 60 to 70 hour course on Christian living and ministry skills

and the interpretation of various kinds of biblical literature. Tracy remarked that, "Festive crepe paper and graduation gowns signified how special this day was in the lives of the students."

Approximately 150 pastors and church leaders completed at least one module of Veritas; 66 of them have graduated from the full course and received a certificate and a Life Application Study Bible.

Tracy is eagerly spreading the word about ministry opportunities in Zambia: "We

need a pastoral missionary to partner with us to teach pastors and give them the personal attention and discipleship they need. I am praying that the Lord of the Harvest will provide faithful and mature pastors to join us for five years to strengthen churches in Lusaka through teaching and mentoring pastors."

Would you be a champion for the church in Zambia and challenge a pastor or Bible teacher you know to consider a short-term teaching visit and possibly joining Tracy in ministry for a few years?

A Tribute to Dr. Ron Carlson

ACTION's good friend and colleague Dr. Ron Carlson passed away suddenly on June 16. The Lord used Ron in 90 countries to share the Gospel and equip the saints to contend for the faith. Thousands found freedom from false cults, philosophies, and religions as a result of his faithfulness to his call.

The timing of Ron's passing was especially significant to ACTION Cuba Director, Brian Stewart. He writes:

"My June trip to Cuba with Ron had to be canceled since the authorities there

postponed our visa request. Ron then decided to spend the week on vacation with his wife, Marge. He would have been speaking at a conference in Havana on the day he passed, but the Lord made sure that he was with his wife on that preappointed day.

"When I told Ron that we were not going to Cuba, he had responded, 'There must be a reason in God's sovereign control for the trip to be delayed.' Now we know: God had a more exciting journey for Ron to take that week. You got your visa, Ron — it just wasn't the one we expected."



Dr. Ron Carlson taught worldwide on the false teachings of the cults

PLD Q&A

How would you describe the church in Cambodia?

It is a first-generation church, which is both exciting and challenging! The first complete Bible translation came into the hands of the Khmer less than 50 years ago. While the church saw tremendous growth initially it was decimated by the murderous reign of the Khmer Rouge. As the gospel takes hold and the church again sees robust growth, we believe that the biggest need is seeing the next generation of pastors and leaders equipped.

What are the primary PLD needs?

Biblical literacy has to be the #1 need! Pastors and leaders must commit themselves to the Word, and its proper interpretation and application to everyday life. There are a number of excellent organizations who are providing training opportunities for pastors and there is room for more.

with **Daren Beck**,
Cambodia Director



We also need to move from simply giving out a lot of information, to taking biblical truths and walking alongside and mentoring our Khmer Brothers one-on-one.

What is your team's focus in the area of PLD?

Three areas: training, discipling and translation. Kit Putrakul of our team provides extensive training through Bible Training Center for Pastors. I train and mentor a group of men through a network of like-minded churches. And our translation team is committed to seeing resources given to the church which will transcend our own generation and provide long-term tools.

Do pastors have access to Bible study materials?

There is a limited amount of solid resources available, so we are spending a significant amount of our time and

resources getting additional materials translated and distributed. We are very thankful for ministries like Grace to You and Desiring God Ministries who have given us their permission and blessing to make their resources available here. Nathan Wells and BJ Lopez are working diligently on these projects.

How can others support the training of pastors in Cambodia?

Pray for us, join us or give as you are led! We're looking for men who have a heart for pastoral ministry, experience as Shepherds and who can teach and mentor a new generation of pastors. Our translation team has a list of projects which would make for a great investment in the long term growth and maturity in the Cambodian church. You can also give towards supporting a Cambodian pastor. Please visit us at actioncambodia.org or email me at daren@actioncambodia.org if you have any questions about how you can participate.

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