

ACTION Newsletter

Action International Ministries

December 2010

Living in Fear During Christmas

By Daren Beck, Cambodia Director
& SE Asia Coordinator

Our hearts
are heavy
that a
people
that God
loves is so
enslaved
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Christmas
season.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.... For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:2, 6, KJV).

Fear is not usually associated with Christmas, but if you live outside the good news of Jesus' birth you live in darkness and should be afraid! The people of Cambodia have lived in utter darkness for thousands of years and their everyday life reflects that reality! When was the last time you threw food at unseen spirits so that they would not cause you harm? How about the last time you tied special strings to ward off bad luck? Or when was the last time you were in awe of a stillborn calf with withered skin; so much in awe that you brought money to lay at its feet to gain favor because you believed it was full of magic power? These are typical of life here in Cambodia. There is not much joy and peace to speak of during Christmas in a place where Christ is not known!

We have been struck over and over again by the great fear that these people, created by God for His glory, are living in every day. The spirit world is alive and kicking here. Satan doesn't have to do

much convincing because the spirit world is already so much a part of their everyday lives and is seen at every turn. As you walk down the road, in every shop and home and under trees are spirit houses (no nativity scenes!) If you arrive early enough at a shop, you can witness the change of the offerings which typically include fresh bananas, tea, various fruits and meats. The wealthier the family, the more elaborate the offering. Then, of course, there are their holidays (Christmas is not a holiday, just an ordinary day) set aside where every good person heads to the temple to take food to appease the spirits. During Pchum Ben, people go to the temple to honor their ancestors and release their spirits from hell, invite them to their homes, and ask for protection!

We were talking with a friend whose family has come to the Lord over the past six years. Her father has not yet come to know the Lord and is steeped in his Buddhist traditions. During the Pchum Ben festivities he began to drink again (something he had given up due to his health). He began to get angry and has taken a downward slide in his health and certainly in his moods. As it turns out, at the core of his being, he is very scared that in the afterlife he will not be cared for and will spend eternity in torment. He is

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Special Edition: History of ACTION

by Andrea Johnson

“...but the people who know their God will display strength and take action (Daniel 11:32b, NASB).”

Action International Ministries is celebrating 35 years of ministry this year. In celebration of this milestone, this edition will focus on the history of the mission. Though Action International Ministries had humble beginnings, it is exciting to note the tremendous growth the mission has experienced over the years and to look forward to many more years of expansion in the future as we continue to serve the Lord together.

In 1961, Will Bruce from Overseas Missionary Fellowship (OMF) and Marvin Graves from New Tribes Mission, along with nine other missionaries and pastors in Manila, organized Christ for Greater Manila (CGM). The first ministry of CGM was called Youth Time; it consisted of large rallies held at the Philippine General Hospital in Manila.

The ministries of CGM expanded the following year to include something entirely new for the Philippines: camping ministry. Churches in the Philippines had never before held family or children’s camps. The camping ministry was a great success and led to the purchase of a large tent for evangelistic meetings. Open-air meetings and film ministry gatherings were later held under this tent.

When Will Bruce left the Philippines in 1970 due to ill health, CGM sought new leadership. Doug and Margaret Nichols were just finishing Tagalog language school with

OMF in the Philippines. The Nichols were assigned in 1972 to direct CGM.

Under Doug’s leadership the outreach expanded to include jail ministry, literature work, bookstores, the opening of the Bible League, ministry to street children and prostitutes, church planting among the poor, gospel advertisements, evangelism, and discipleship and vocational training for street children. Many more Filipino workers became involved in the ministry and the staff of CGM grew to 166 members.

The need for ACTION as a mission was first envisioned in 1972 by a few independent missionaries serving with CGM. Because several expatriate missionaries were involved, it was decided that a mission should be incorporated in the United States to best represent their interests. With this in mind, Action International Ministries (ACTION) first started to function in 1974 in a temporary Chicago office. Soon after, it was replaced by a new office in Bothell, Washington, and was officially incorporated in the state of Washington in 1975.

The first short-term Summer of Service team was sent to Manila, Philippines, in 1979. Then ACTION began to expand its ministry to other parts of the globe. Doug Nichols, Ted Thompson and Marvin Graves conducted a trip to México, Colombia, Perú and Brazil in 1986 to gather information for future ministry to street children in Latin America.

Marvin and Sara Graves joined ACTION in 1981. Marvin was appointed USA Director in 1982 and served in that role until 1996

when he became Director of Recruitment & Representation. Rex and Donna Carlaw were serving in Chile when they became ACTION Associates through the Canada office in 1992. Four years later the Carlaws transferred from ACTION Canada to ACTION USA and became career members of the mission. Rex was appointed USA Director in 1998 and continues to hold that position. The ACTION USA building in Mountlake Terrace, Washington, was purchased that same year.

Dr. Wayne Whitbourne was appointed ACTION Canada Director in 2002. In 2007 Nelson Reed was elected International Director and Doug Nichols became Founder & International Director Emeritus.

Action International Ministries now has over 265 missionaries from 18 countries with ministries in 25 countries including Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, India, Malawi, México, Nepal, New Zealand, the Philippines, Spain, Uganda, the Ukraine, the United Kingdom, USA and Zambia.

Not content with this expansion, over 200 additional missionary positions have been identified, catalogued, and publicized, including needs on existing fields and potential worker slots on new fields planned to be opened. Please pray for additional workers to join Action International Ministries. If you are interested in serving the Lord with ACTION, please contact us.



Worldwide News Briefs

Following are some stories of how God is currently working through the ministries of ACTION missionaries worldwide:

Asia

Philippines

Carl and Lisa Loewen direct Honest Hands Discipleship Home for former street boys and school dropouts. The goal of Honest Hands is to disciple, encourage and challenge young men from rough backgrounds to grow strong and deepen their faith in Jesus Christ as they serve Him.

Carl writes, "We have had challenging times recently at Honest Hands. We had a wonderful first semester this summer, but there are many issues now. One student, Mac, dropped out of the program due to lack of interest and the unfortunate reality that his uncle is a pastor of a cult. Mac's family was attending a solid Bible study, but now has returned to the services held by the cult. JR quit when I would not allow him to take a break from the program for a month to enroll in a computer course. We tried to convince him to remain in the program until graduation, but he was not interested. Reynald has been absent for the past few weeks. We recently heard that he spent a week in jail and is now too ashamed to come back.

"This has affected the remaining young men enrolled in the program and the overall mood at Honest Hands. We pray that God will draw each of these boys to Himself and that they will come to see His plan for their lives. Please pray that we will be able to counsel and encourage the young men at Honest Hands when they struggle with lack of direction, energy and courage."

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reminded of this every year when the people of Cambodia go to honor their ancestors but his family refuses to go to the temple because they are now "Jesus followers." Now here is a man living in light of eternity! But his eternity is full of fear and dread!

Our hearts are heavy that a people that God loves is so enslaved to fear this Christmas season. The Cambodian people are truly walking in the darkness of the spirit world. They live in the shadow of death.

The Lord offers freedom from this bondage! He is the Great Al-

mighty God that has all power over this world and all that is in it. He has the power to bestow peace on this nation gripped with fear. Please pray with us that the Cambodian people would see the great light of Jesus Christ this Christmas. Please pray that they would be called to our Wonderful Counselor and the Author of all peace.

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Latin America

Colombia

Raquel de Jesús has been a missionary in Colombia since 1994. She currently is involved in discipleship and leading Bible studies in her ministry to former street kids and their families. Raquel recently shared about a student named Brandon who is impacting his family for good and pointing them toward the Lord.

Raquel writes, "It is always encouraging to know that the children who come to our ministry center are shining the light of Jesus in their homes. Brandon came to know Jesus at an ACTION camp several years ago when he was 12. He has regularly attended Bible classes at the ministry center since then. Brandon is now ministering to his mother and urging her to seek Christ.

"Brandon's mother told me that her son is not only taking care of her physically, but also encouraging her daily in her walk with the Lord. She said he is continually reminding her to be a good testimony to family members and encouraging her by his faithful example. Both Brandon and his mother followed Jesus in baptism recently. We are so grateful to see the young people from our ministry center impacting their homes for Christ!"

Prayer Corner

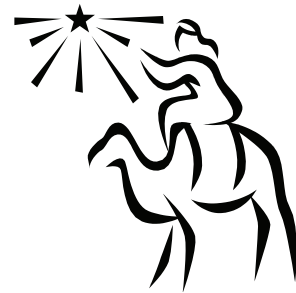
Please pray:

- That the young men who have dropped out of Honest Hands will seek Jesus and His will for their futures.
- That the remaining young men and leadership at Honest Hands will grow strong in the Lord and diligently study and teach what is required of them.
- For the continued spiritual growth of Brandon and his mother in Colombia.
- That other young people in the ministry of Raquel de Jesús will share the Lord with their families.
- For additional missionaries to join Action International Ministries worldwide.

—Andrea Johnson

Memorial Gifts

<u>In memory of</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Designation</u>
Howard Class	Greg Class	Matt & Becki Beack ministry
Ann Motts	Sylvia Singleton	Bibles for Zambia



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